

Personally I know a lot of poker players in the Australian poker community, having played a substantial amount of live and online poker. I have made a lot of friends in the poker community. Some I would even classify as being my 'best friends'. We actively discuss poker and various strategies to employ. I know an abundance of poker players, however none of these I would consider to be problem gamblers. I do however know a few problem gamblers outside the poker realm. They like to play casino games such as roulette and pokies (non skill games) with no edge. They have lost a decent sum of money playing these games in the long run, however I know a lot of poker players who actually make a consistent living from the game they adore.

I still to this day thoroughly enjoy playing online poker. I began playing poker back in 2006 when I could no longer play any sports (mainly Football) due to excruciating shin splints. Poker was the perfect competitive substitute (I am a very competitive person). If it wasn't for poker I have no idea how I'd fuel my competitive drive. I enjoy working on my game to attempt to beat my opponents. This is a skill game like any other. Tennis, Football and Golf are obviously prime examples of skill games with a little luck involved. Poker is no different.

I enjoy taking part in many other activities asides from poker. I like to take my dogs for walks, play golf, exercise at the gym and go out with friends. I would like to think that my life is perfectly balanced. I wouldn't change a thing.

I have been playing poker now, both live and online for over a decade. I love the game and I'd like to think that after all this experience that I'm a solid player. I have rarely had a negative experience with poker; the majority of them have been extremely positive. Online poker has been a great stepping stone and learning tool for me. Online poker enables you to play multiple hands at once and fine tune your game much quicker than a live player ever could. This has stepped up my game drastically and I've some some large live scores as a direct result of my hard work and experience online.

I believe the new act should outlaw gambling games on the internet such as roulette, slots, etc. However online poker, a skill game, MUST be omitted from this bill. It is absolutely ludicrous to parcel online poker together with other 'negative EV' games such as roulette and slots. You won't allow us to play a skill game on the internet, but you'll happily allow us to walk down the street to pump our earnings into pokie machines. Now how disgusting is that?! Not only this, but you're still allowing us to play live poker. Live players, in case you were unaware, can lose much much more than any online player could. Live tournament buy ins are astronomically high (sometimes reaching \$1m usd in the USA, whereas online the most expensive regular tournament you can play in is \$1050 usd).

I implore you to make the correct decision and allow us Australians to continue playing the game we love.