

Concerts - Kora Smith

Title: Concerts at What Cost?

Subhead: Students spend money on concert tickets while prices are rising.

Loud music and flashing lights fill the T-Mobile Center on Feb. 8 for Tyler the Creator's Concert. The loud teenage crowd of about 18,000 people singing along to "See You Again" is heard in the arena.

Artists including Kendrick Lamar, SZA, Forrest Frank, CG5 and many others are taking the stage this year, and students are spending their savings on tickets. Music fans are willing to spend between 100 and 499 dollars, according to CNBC.

According to headphonesty.com, "Buying concert tickets used to mean choosing between good seats and great ones. Now, it often means choosing between going into debt and seeing your favorite band."

The amount the average student in Missouri makes ranges between \$12.84 and \$17.36 an hour and they work around 15 hours a week, since finding free time to work while still in school is often difficult. This can result in smaller paychecks, making ticket purchasing even harder.

"I couldn't really spend money after because it took my whole paycheck," junior Caleigh Brownfield said.

Students have missed out on opportunities to experience concerts because of high prices.

"I was going to go to a Benson Boone concert, but it was over \$400 for seats that weren't even that great," junior Evan Cramer said.

But why are concert tickets so expensive?

“Tours are expensive. You’ve got the cost of the merchandise, the transportation, the hotels, the equipment and the tour manager. That has to be accounted for.” Pop music artist CG5 said.

Not only are prices high, but just buying a ticket is a challenge in itself. Students use Ticket Master, SeatGeek and AXS to purchase tickets. These apps and websites will also require a purchasing fee, which just adds to the concert expenses.

According to The Hustle Daily, “When we analyzed fees on 40 tickets to recent concerts, including the Eras Tour, the average fees took up 28% of a ticket’s face value.”

Ticket buyers are often required to set an alarm to be on time to join a queue and then wait in the queue for an indefinite amount of time. Once it is the buyer's turn to purchase, they are often faced with the reality of seeing the show sold out, prices are too high and time is just wasted.

Another common problem is scalpers. Scalpers buy concert tickets and then resell them for a much higher price, especially when the demand for them is high. In 2022, Ticketmaster violated federal antitrust and unfair competition laws and misled consumers in the sale of tickets for The Era’s Tour, according to Rolling Stone. This resulted in a lawsuit against Ticketmaster.

According to the lawsuit, Ticketmaster allowed 14 million unverified Ticketmaster accounts and other bots to participate in presales. Because of this, millions of real fans were unable to purchase tickets.

“I don’t think I paid a good price for my tickets, but I bought them when they were all resale tickets,” Brownfield said. She ended up paying about \$600 for a total of two tickets, including tax.

The costs of concerts doesn’t stop at the ticket, though. Because of high ticket demands, some concertgoers have to cover the costs of travel. People also spend on an outfit for the show and

buy artist merchandise once they get there. This was displayed in Taylor Swift's "The Eras Tour," which started Mar. 17 2023 and ended Dec. 8, 2024.

According to U.S. Travel.org, "Swift fans—"Swifties"—averaged \$1,300 of spending in local economies on travel, hotel stays, food, as well as merchandise and costumes."

After many costly sacrifices, students are still willing to attend concerts.

"I really wanted to go to this concert because I loved the album and it is my favorite of his, so it is so special," sophomore Joey Wilson said.

Some students see concerts as more than an evening out. They are special and memorable to students.

"You never know when artists will stop going on tour or stop making music, so this could be a lifetime opportunity," Brownfield said.

From an artist's perspective, concerts can be more than just listening to live music. Concerts are a place to make new friends as well as memories; the money will come back, but the opportunity and experience can only be lived once.

"This tour tells a story, people love to sing along with my songs and get pulled into the story. It's a great opportunity to be with other people who belong to the CG5 fandom," CG5 said.

Links:

<https://www.axs.com/events/727415/cg5-tickets>

<https://www.ticketmaster.com/>

<https://seatgeek.com/>

