

I am a survivor, a musician, and an advocate.

As a survivor of sexual assault and intimate partner violence, I know firsthand the absolute and total devastation these acts of terror have on the lives of victims. I know what it's like to lose an entire day because my body has remembered things I want to forget and I cannot get off the couch. I know what it's like to cry in shame over my body's betrayal. I know the cold fear that moves over my skin when someone stands too close, too drunk, for too long. I know all the ways one can punish their own body for what it endured. I know blame, and ridicule and intimidation.

As a musician and performer, being a woman in a scene overrun with cis men comes with its own brand of fight-or-flight mode. I will never forget the first time I was made to feel unsafe at a show, and creating a place of safety and community for myself, my bandmates, my crew and my fans is an absolute non-negotiable to me, and, thankfully, to my bandmates as well. When I first saw that "that band" had immediately removed their virtual presence following Kristina's episode of Enough, I felt so full of hope that a change was coming. I actually cried through a giant smile in my therapist's office the following day, telling her that finally, FINALLY, men had fucked around and found out. I was giddy with elation. And then...in the days immediately after, seeing nothing but silence from other bands and musicians just absolutely destroyed me. Just knowing that there were folks out there turning a blind eye again and again as their friends' dirty secrets are drawn out into the streets was crushing. It left me feeling unsafe, angry, and hell-bent on influencing change.

As an advocate, I am able to make space for hope. Hope is the one thing that can **never** be taken from us by the people who assault and abuse us. Hope is the elixir of survival. It allows us the opportunity to seek out all the good things the world has to offer, and is the catalyst through which sustainable change is made. I always use an analogy of Alchemy in my own journey through healing - hope has allowed me to take my own painful experiences and turn them into something good. Something powerful. The community that has been created out of this shared trauma, and within the space now being created here at The Punk Rock Therapist, is the greatest act of Alchemy, and the most beautiful, unshakable middle finger of all.

There is nothing, NOTHING, more punk than that.

Becky Fontaine || Vocalist || The Iron Roses