

*@punksforsurvivors (they/them) – leftist organizer, former A-F patron, Our Punk Rock Community moderator, survivor (not of JS)*

I've dedicated years of my life to community organizing and leftist activism, including sexual violence awareness and prevention. For me, punk rock has been an inspiration to keep going even when the fight against injustice and oppression feels unwinnable. There's always a song to remind me that I'm not the only one who still believes that it doesn't have to be this way. That's what initially drew me to Anti-Flag several years ago.

I am a survivor, although not of Justin. Still, there was a time where, looking back on it with what we now know about him, it could have been me. Why else would a man like that pay so much attention to an 18-year-old who came to the show alone? I am all too familiar with how the betrayal of reaching out to people who you expect to help, people who have made our shared values into their entire personhood, and receiving nothing but blame and denial in return is absolutely shattering. All my love and solidarity goes out to every survivor, especially those harmed by Justin.

Idols rise and fall, they come and go. But that drive to change the world that their music speaks to is still alive and well within our hearts. The fall of one band doesn't erase what we believe in or what we can do as a community. And what we can do is keep each other safe. We can make this right. "We protect us" is a promise we should all strive to keep.