



SOMEWHERE *HEAVY METAL THERAPY* I BELONG

Guide to Gigs and Inclusivity

2022



Introduction

Here we present a collection of experiences from the followers/roadies at heavy metal therapy about gigs and what might be challenging about them in terms of feeling accepted, being able to access them and having a good time. It is designed to be helpful to fans, musicians and venues around how we can all work together to make gigs as inclusive as possible. However, we recognise these are only a subset of experiences, positive and more difficult, and won't reflect all of the spectrum of what can be hard about gigs. There are some bits we would like to cover in more depth so we'd hope to add to this over time. We've packed this thing full of resources though, so if you want to explore more, you can. There are some parts of these stories that might be triggering for some, with references to trauma, discrimination and emotional distress – so please be careful as you go.

Heavymetaltherapy.co.uk



IN A GIST

Was everything worth it: Fuck. Yes. Do it. Go somewhere metal alone and curious. We are all mad here and if you are feeling judged and strange we don't give a fuck.

I love festivals. At the late age of twenty five I discovered them and it's an event that I get both excited about and dread. Excited because I love the music, the press of bodies, the chants, the jokes, the 3am putting the world to rights with strangers sitting in fishing chairs, the A-pocalyptic mosh pits and the intense vibration in the air of several thousand happy metalheads.

Dread is a feeling it took me a while to understand. I have always been apprehensive about going to festivals. At first I put it down to the difficulty of camping away from home but it isn't that. I was an Army Cadet for years and have no issues living off nearly no sleep and eating ration packs so old they could legally have sex.

At most festivals, like most gigs I have a constant underlying fear of being judged. Yeah, weird I know. After decades of headbanging with a culture of wonderfully acceptable people I still have that feeling of being out of tune, out of place out of the same experience others may be feeling.

So what do we do when we have thoughts like that... we fucking challenge them. We take the little bastards to a metal court and we prove the fuckers wrong.

Bloodstock 2021. Signed up for it as soon as tickets went out. I also avoided my usual behaviour of checking who was going and basically having more confident people hold my hand. As it happened a lovely chap and now good friend said he would be there.

MENTAL HEALTH

BEN

SURVIVING A FESTIVAL

Here is where it all fell wonderfully apart in the best possible way. Bloodstock is a black spot for telecommunications. If you don't have a CB radio, signal flare or voice like Brian Blessed you will lose people. I did not know this and it was great. I couldn't camp with friends and promptly lost them for all of 2 hrs over 4 days. Upon entry a lovely chap called Ashley helped me with my bags. When I got to my site I was met by lovely strangers who fed me beer, helped me with my tent and we went to see bands together (Lawnmower Death was the first live act I saw in two years and I am not ashamed to say I cried with joy).

Was everything perfect; No. I left early Sunday cos I struggled. In hindsight I was really low that week anyway and if I hadn't gone I probably would have spent that weekend in my dressing gown trying to distract myself from the horrible thoughts bouncing in my brain-meat. Doing three out of four days at a festival was heroic.

Was everything worth it: Fuck. Yes. Do it. Go somewhere metal alone and curious. We are all mad here and if you are feeling judged and strange we don't give a fuck. We love you and will feed you rum and jump around with you. Go somewhere metal. Have fun and do what you find value in.

So Ben's top tips for attending festivals with a mood disorder and more issues than Marvel Comics:

-Don't drink too much or do too many drugs: The atmosphere is awesome, you are awesome, everyone is awesome. Try and enjoy it with minimal intoxicants.

-Pace yourself: Miss a band or two, It's okay. If it gives you time to crash out, freak out or just chill, embrace it. Plan your festival around it though.

-Get out of the fucking tent: Get up. Get out. Throw some water in your face and get back on it you magnificent bastard.

-Accept that something will fuck up and be okay with it. I arrived late and the ticket company lost my ticket. My tent broke. I forgot the sleeping tablets I was on. It was okay tho. I asked people for help and you know what they became?

My festival friends.

Get out there and remember: No thought of misery is universal. Metalheads get you. You are amongst friends. Prove your thoughts wrong and if they don't take no for an answer, tell them to go fuck themselves.

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT METALHEAD

SANJAY

TRAUMA

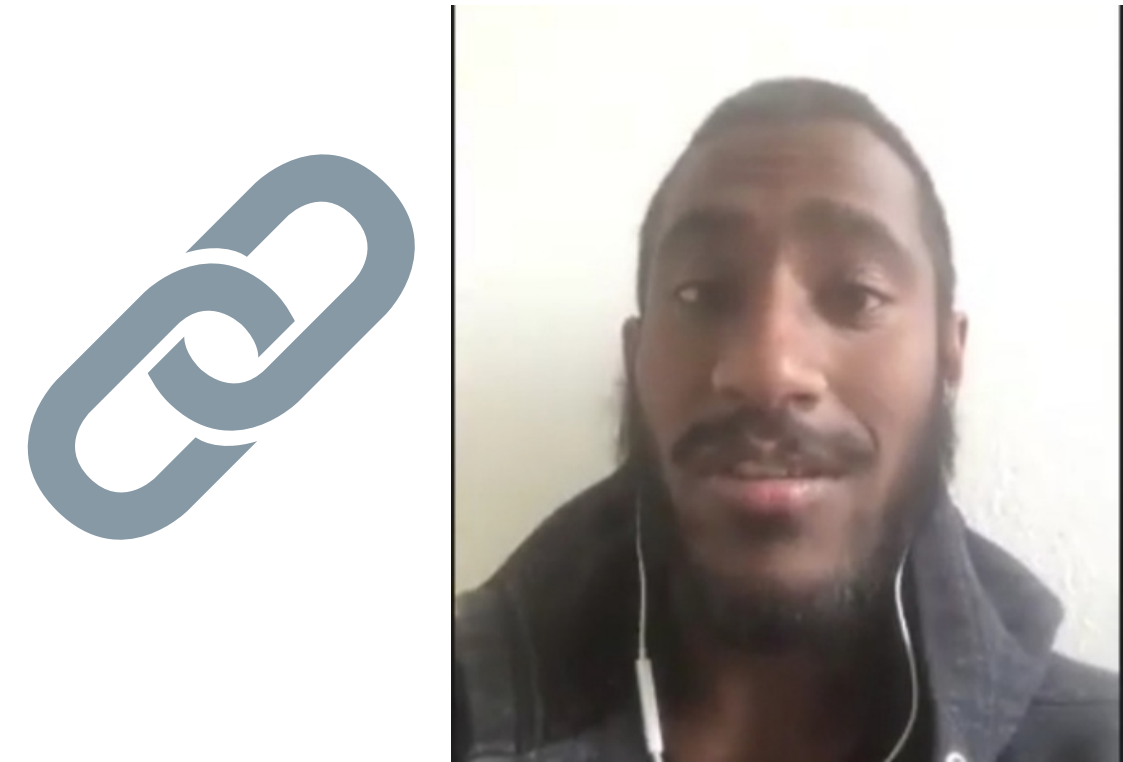
TRAUMA RESPONSES AT GIGS

IN A GIST

"I didn't realise how much trauma history would impact my experience at gigs"

"We are all here to have a good time but we don't actually want to hurt anybody, and we are all agreeing to be community and take care of somebody if something happens"

This is a video story, Sanjay tells Kate about his experiences of being a trauma survivor in a moshpit environment and how venues can be more trauma informed



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When I was going to gigs, the experience was overwhelmingly positive. That can be down to security, the crowd and of course the performances on stage. But I know that experiences differ from person to person. I have seen videos online where the crowd can be bad (over intoxicated fans or people standing on the edge of a mosh pit getting dragged in when they don't want to get dragged in, or security mismanage a situation or a woman in the crowd gets groped (something I'm totally against). Security and venue organisers are responsible for ensuring safety, but the crowd should also look out for one another.

But regarding inclusivity in Metal, strangely enough in a few recent videos I've talked about this subject and I honestly believe it will be an ongoing issue as bigotry is an unfortunate fact of reality that needs to be tackled. The English premier league should be a benchmark for where the metal scene should be looking towards in regards tackling bigotry. One of the things I say in my videos about this is that, as a fan base as a scene we can't stay stuck in the past. We have to move forward, I'm 30+ now, tomorrow isn't promised, where's the next generation of metal fans and bands coming from?

INCLUSIVITY

THE NON-CONFORMIST
METALHEAD

FOLLOW ON [YOUTUBE](#) FOR MORE
PERSPECTIVES OF BEING A BLACK
AND AUTISTIC METALHEAD



SOCIAL CLASS

HMT ROADIE SAM SHARES HER REFELCTIONS ON SOCIAL CLASS AND DISADVANTAGE IN METAL

Metal music is stereotypically known to represent heterosexual, white, working-class masculinity. As a white, working-class woman who identifies first and foremost as a metalhead I have always felt comfortable with the thought that I am surrounded by likeminded people from similar backgrounds in the metal culture. I realise this is a privileged position to be in and that I make many assumptions about the metal community that make me feel comfortable. These are that everyone is from a lower-class background, that it is a safe space for all and that everyone has had similar background/childhood experiences which have led them to metal.

Many punk/rock and metal bands are associated with those who are from lower class backgrounds (although this may not be the case across the board), but what does this mean and why is it important for inclusivity? Heavy metal music incorporates an undercurrent of social inequality and injustice which I personally resonate with. Being working class comes with stereotypes around behaviour and personality traits such as being aggressive/violent, unkempt, disrespectful whereas research has found that metalheads tend to be creative, often introverted and may suffer from mental health struggles such as low self-esteem. Misconceptions around who metalheads are and where they come from may darken the doors for newcomers who struggle with their mental wellbeing.

We are aware of mental health struggles being a huge problem for those in more disadvantaged positions which typically places them in a lower class system e.g. increased loneliness and isolation. Live music provides us with social capital, public engagement and identity which are integral to combat common symptoms of being part of a lower class in society but who does this benefit? Typically, those with enough money to engage in the subculture which is mostly centred around buying music and tickets to gigs and festivals.

Some researchers suggest that heavy metal music helps people to self-socialise and cope with difficult life events which may be one of the reasons why people like me engage in this type of music. 'People' in this context ignores social inequity in those from lower class systems, so there are things we could be doing to change this. I am likely not the best person to comment on other areas of disadvantage, but here are some reflections on how I would have liked support to engage more with the metal subculture when I was younger from a position of financial disadvantage:

- Differing prices for events – consider making some cheaper or free dates within a tour schedule (not all) to offer to identified people from financially disadvantaged backgrounds to engage with live music on a budget. These monies can be made up in other ways e.g. merch or a slight increase to prices elsewhere.
- Virtual gigs – offer the opportunity for people to tune in for free virtually (although there would be obvious implications for those who cannot afford access to technology).
- Free access – Alternatively, if there are leftover tickets offer these out to identified disadvantaged communities. See <https://ticketsforkids.org/about/> for a similar idea, but it would be great to see something like this in the metal community.

SOUNDSPHERE



I think my philosophy has always been to find workarounds for stuff, even if that means being uncomfortable, but that doesn't work for everyone, of course.

I mean, toilets could be more accessible, but there are viewing platforms with ramps at most major festivals now, and there's usually one toilet there. I would of course encourage everyone to get your applications in for accessible tickets early, because I hear a lot of horror stories of people forgetting, and I have done too in the past.

I think as a journalist for Soundsphere magazine, rushing about to do interviews at festivals like Leeds, and Download, I've encountered pretty much horrible terrain that is possible from mud to big crowds pushing into me! I mean, people have bands that they want to see, so I get it!! Still, I do wish people were more mindful when moving/rushing about, sometimes. I've taken the odd knock!

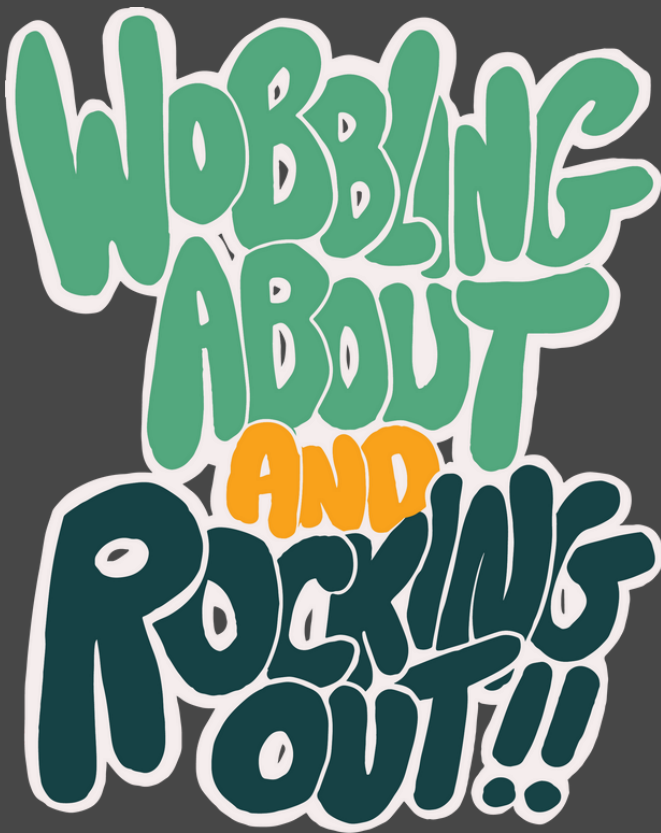
It's helpful that festivals do have a Disabled Access team to offer support. I'd like to see more BSL at gigs, and I think that's becoming more and more possible. Also, any venues on the touring circuit that aren't accessible, or as accessible as they'd like to be, there's still time to make changes!

I do always appreciate the accessible spaces, ramps and platforms at festivals, and the staff that tend to them, and offer support throughout each day - I've met some wonderful people over the years.

Take any knowledge you can from a range of resources (including HMT), or customers and learn. More and more bands and artists with additional needs are going out on tour and coming to venues to enjoy live music, and it can only be a positive if you research who's coming, and how you can adapt, or offer support.

There are companies like Attitude is Everything working really hard to improve accessibility, and awareness. WARO (Wobbling About and Rocking Out) is also spotlighting mental health and diversity in the music industry, gaming and sports.

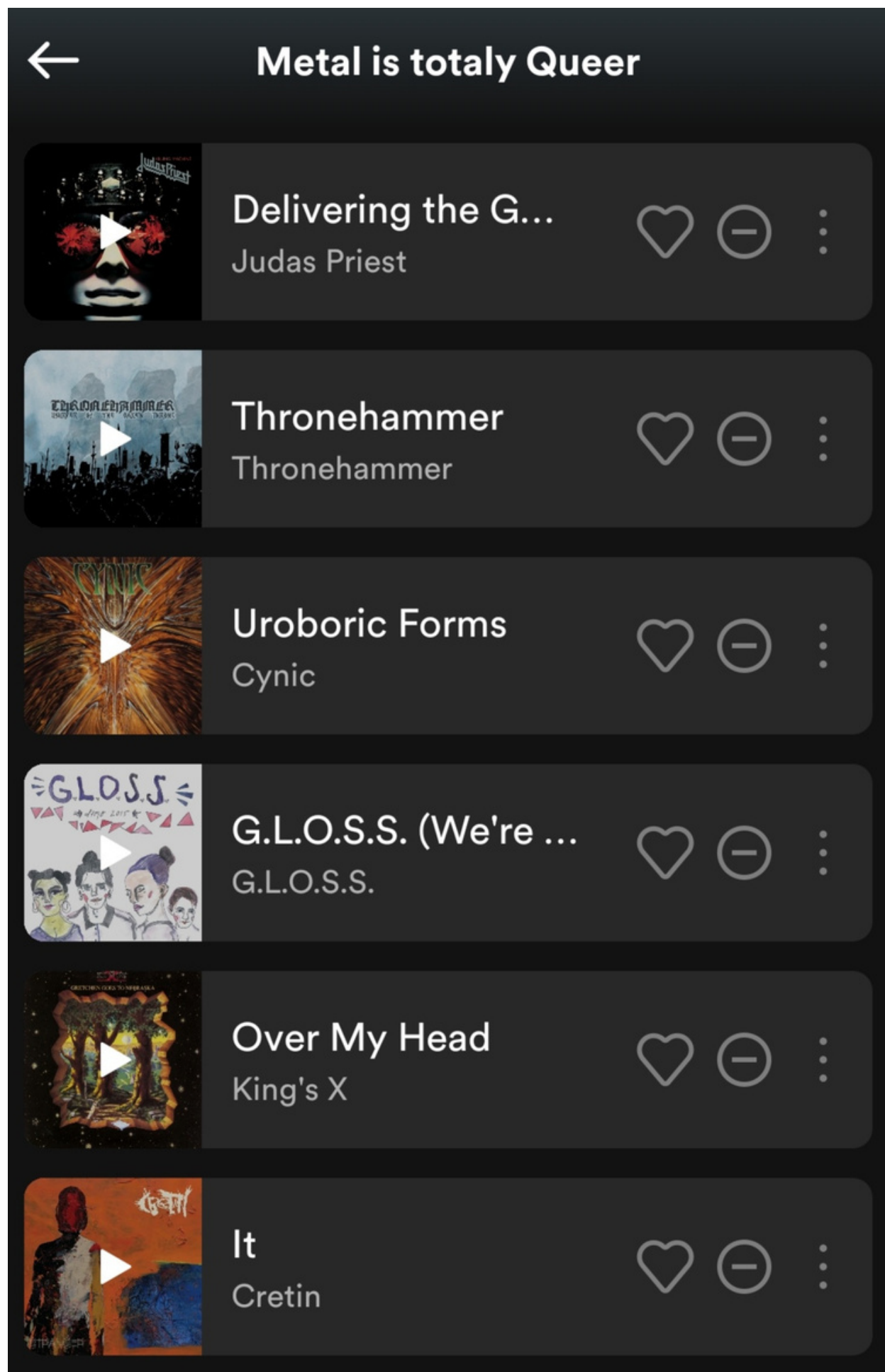
There's also a local resource here in East Yorkshire called Elephant In The Room Disability Inclusion that is doing lots of amazing work in collaborating with events and spaces around the country, to improve accessibility, and more specifically BSL representation at gigs and live events around the country.



LGBTQ+

TOBY

THE QUEER METAL SCENE



As a queer person in the metal scene I’ve had a mixed response when I’ve tried to be who I am in the scene. A lot of the time I’ve just had shrugs and acceptance and it making about as much difference as what job I do. In other extremes I’ve been rejected (along with another member) from a band because of our sexualities. I’ve also experienced the whole spectrum between these two extremes, with people being dismissive, but not caring, to wanting to question and know how it all works.

At it’s best the metal community is welcoming and acts like family, and the same is true for the LGBTQ+ community, if not stronger due to biological families rejecting us. When both coincide there is an even greater sense of community, with queer metalheads rallying together with an even greater sense of unity, sharing cool new bands, who are either queer themselves or vocally supportive. This queer metal family also exists for protection. Despite what a lot of people say and think, the metal family is not always as accepting as it claims to be, the example of it being described as a “metal brotherhood” for one shows it’s emphasis upon masculine stereotypes. The queer metal scene offers a safe space for people to be themselves and share new music, but also to share info on who is safe to be around and which bands to avoid for their homophobia and transphobia. Sadly in my, and others, experience, this scene within a scene is necessary because I’ve often been met with blank stares, shrugs or even hostility when I’ve called out bands for their homophobia, sexism or racism. It is sad that for many people good riffs always trump bad opinions, and so many

IN A GIST

“The queer metal scene offers a safe space for people to be themselves and share new music, but also to share info on who is safe to be around and which bands to avoid”

homo/trans/queerphobic bands continue to gain popularity, sell records and get booked on festivals. Until this changes I think there will continue to be people afraid of coming out in the metal scene, which is a shame because as most metalheads say, metal is family and welcoming and for everyone. My experience is that we’re not quite there yet.

Including the queer outsider in the music genre for outsiders doesn’t need to be difficult. For me the thing that makes me feel most included, be it at gigs, festivals, in publications or by bands is simply people being vocally in support. Not just by saying “everyone is welcome here” but in explicitly saying Gay, Queer, Trans ect people are welcome or in calling out homophobic language or views. That’s what elevates it from just being a simple platitude to actually meaning something. Likewise the opposite is true, nothing turns me off a band or gig or festival than seeing them platform people who have been vocally anti LGBTQ+. For me it’s as simple as that, explicitly say that I am welcome, and don’t book people who actively want to exclude me. Others may need more, such as to see more queer artists given a platform, though there is a danger of tokenism with that. There are plenty of queer artists out there who deserve to be heard because of their music, not just because they are queer. Though there is something to be said about looking at a metal magazine or website or going to a festival and seeing diversity in who is represented, because it shows more of an open mindedness instead of just the usual same old 4 bands that all look and sound the same.

The main thing venues and organisations can do to be better allies is to stop booking homophobic/transphobic bands. People complain about cancel culture and de-platforming, but until we as a scene say there is no place for hateful views and stop supporting those who hold them, the metal scene will never be a safe welcoming place for everyone. Often this requires a bit of research into a band and its members, as many hide these views from mainstream coverage, but use other bands or fronts to spread their views. In a more practical simpler vein, venues and organisations can offer things like gender neutral restrooms, avoid using gendered language when referring to everyone and be vocal in their support of the LGBTQ+ community. Visible messages of support go a long way when queer people are deciding whether or not they feel safe to go to a venue or not. If you’re going to a gig be respectful of others. Don’t assume people’s genders or pronouns. If you need to know pronouns then either ask, or use they/them until you’re corrected, if you don’t need to know then don’t worry about it, go and enjoy the bands! Shouldn’t need saying, but don’t use slurs to talk about bands, music or anything. We have a rich colourful language to talk about how much a we think a band may suck without having to resort to childish misuse of labels.

If you’re a queer person and you’re going to a gig but are unsure about it, take a buddy! If you don’t have a buddy into the specific niche extreme metal subgenre you want to go see, put posts on social media and see if there are others going you could tag along with and make new gig friends with. There’s always safety in numbers. Dress how you want that makes you feel safe. Occasionally we may feel pressure to be visibly queer in the scene to show that we exist and flag to others, but we don’t have to do that if it puts us in danger.

LGBTQ+

TOBY

CONT...

IN A GIST

Metal won't be family until everyone who loves metal is welcomed



For both queer and straight gig goers another way to build LGBTQ+ support at gigs is to go and speak to the bands, especially if they are queer or say something in support of the LGBTQ+ community and tell them how cool it was, likewise call out any bad behaviour. The more of us that speak up and make our voices heard the easier it will be for others to stand up and be counted.

Remember especially that we are not alone, there are so many queer people into metal and the vast majority of metalheads are not against our inclusion, they just need help in making the space safer. The best resource I've found on the LGBTQ+ community in metal is the Hell Bent For Metal Podcast, which has been going for nearly two years now. They talk about all things queer and metal dealing with the positives and the negatives as well as sharing really cool new music. They also have a discord server with other queer metalheads to meet as well! There are also loads of social media pages you can go to to find lists of awesome queer music and bands to listen to. (I have MANY recommendations if you need any)

Like most metalheads it felt like finding a second family when I first discovered there were other people who liked this silly music genre and having long hair and always wearing black even in the summer. This great feeling of us against the world, and they don't understand this special thing we have and it's for us outsiders. Sadly I started to get disillusioned with the metal scene years later when it felt like the scene was so far behind when it came to it came to social issues. Metal seemed to have lost its bite when it came to speaking out against injustice and this frustrated me. This coupled with me beginning to expand my musical horizons with punk and Hip Hop made me begin to resent the elitism of metal.

I stopped engaging with new metal bands and the scene for a few years before volunteering with the welfare tent at Bloodstock and falling madly in love with metal all over again. I've returned to it with a critical eye and get frustrated when (almost exclusively) men talk about the metal family or brotherhood and how everyone is welcome, but fail to see that the majority of people are still white, able bodied cisgendered men. I've always faced pushback whenever I've pointed out to those same men that metal isn't as inclusive as they think it is and that many people don't feel welcome. It's not just queer people that are often left out of the metal family gatherings, women and POC are also frequently absent. This is a reflection of society as whole of course, and needs to be addressed and challenged. I truly believe that metal should be for everyone and can be, but not until we've faced up to our prejudices and made a space for everyone. I also believe that those who talk about the metal brotherhood have got the best intentions and do want to welcome everyone. The best way for us to do this is to do what we do best, and get excited about new bands and albums with queer members, and share them with everyone. Buy their merch and wear them until they fall apart and sew patches and messages of support onto our battlejackets. People demanding more space in the mosh pit is not a new outsider influence, its just people trying to do what metalheads have always done, demanding to be heard and given a space and supported by those who share our taste in stupid aggressive music.

Metal wont be family until everyone who loves metal is welcomed.

-Check out Toby's LGBTQ+ celebratory metal playlist [here](#)





IN A GIST

“I also wear a battle jacket to every gig as this makes me feel safe and I can hide my hands in the deep pockets with fidgets and nobody can tell”

I have been attending gigs since 2010 when I was just 15, predominantly metal and punk. Being an Autistic Female who is also LGBTQ+ and attending most on my own has provided ethereal experiences. Quite often, there have been cases of young men approaching me and trying to drag me into the mosh pit and due to not being able to understand these social signals (later learning that this is a method used to flirt), it has caused me to become dazed and confused in that moment, precariously retreating to the smoking area for a moment to calm down, then I begin asking myself: “Do I really belong here?” The answer is yes! And so do you, never let one person ruin your night, enjoy the music and the reason you attended in the first place, asking that question is a case of Imposter Syndrome and I’m fairly sure they can be battered in the mosh pit!!

It is unfortunate that often you are forced to shout when ordering at the bar as anxiety and inability to talk before a show can create a stressful situation and I feel that those who are neurodivergent are not considered in venues, it is strongly affected through the ways of a neurotypical social structure with ability to vocalise effectively and have the confidence too. I have had panic attacks at gigs, not very often but the underlying cause is invariably the same. Obscured shouting and chattering, each voice dichotomising another.

LGBTQ+ AND AUTISM

FRANKIE

ART OF ALIENS

When there are many conversations happening at once, plus security shouting for the next pat down (also horrible, but necessary) and people at the merch stand shouting for their goods it can get to a point where you struggle to bring your mind out of an overload. I have dealt with this by having someone with me, I always wear my earbuds to gigs and will not remove them until the bands begin. I also wear a battle jacket to every gig as this makes me feel safe and I can hide my hands in the deep pockets with fidgets and nobody can tell.

Resources I have found helpful to deal with dark thoughts, my differences and anxiety are:

- Heavy Mental podcast – A self help podcast focussed on keeping you mindful with personal experiences from the hosts themselves who relate often to metal music.
- Hardcore Humanism podcast – This podcast discusses mental health with various rockers and musicians, psychologically and neurologically adept, I love this one.
- Heavy Metal Therapy of course!

All this has never stricken reluctance towards gigs however as the predominant atmosphere is overwhelming with compassion and acceptance. When you enter a small venue and see the merch stand and everybody gathered for one unifying event it is truly admirable and contagious to feel included, I specifically recall seeing Alestorm and Gloryhammer with my best friend who is also on the spectrum (undiagnosed) at Brixton O2 Academy and we felt safe there. I was extremely precautionary due to new places and big crowds, but the fans are so welcoming and you can wear your battle jacket with pride as you storm to the front of the crowd to chant with hundreds of others, all demographics, race, age. I truly love the reciprocity of kinship in a metal crowd!!

Check out Frankie's artwork here:





NEURODIVERSITY

MELISSA SHARES HER EXPERIENCE OF GOING TO GIGS WITH HER AUTISTIC SON AIDAN

Most of the time has been very positive, we find the more gigs we go to, we tend to find our people and cross paths with friends. We look out for each other – I tend to be the mom of the group and keep an eye on if anyone is too spirited! I even met my husband at a show, Aidan picked him out of the crowd! We were friends for a few years and met up at the shows.

I try to call ahead, and if I can go and case the joint on my own. If I can't go I might look on google street map and do an internet based tour. The one time things have gone wrong is when I didn't call ahead (we got thrown out due to a misunderstanding, they tried to make it right but couldn't really due to the pandemic). I ask a lot of questions about accessibility, even stuff that we might not need – bathroom and parking, because it shows how committed the venue is to it. I tend to use the female disabled bathroom and explain why we are there, no problems so far (I have found women tend to be more understanding) but I would be in support of gender neutral bathrooms, not just for our situation but accessibility for everyone.

The noise cancelling headphones have been a must. When we get there Aidan kind of finds his safe area and escape routes himself, it usually goes smoothly once he has these in place.

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AN ANONYMOUS STORY ABOUT NEURODIVERSITY

Hello everyone, I'm an autistic person and I'm also questioning my gender identity. I love going to gigs and shows, even if it can be stressful sometimes.

For me it's really helpful to know in advance what kind of security checks they're going to do. I get anxious when they have to scan me or my bag, even if I know that I don't have anything to worry about (no forbidden objects, no liquids/spray...). I also would like to find gender neutral toilets at the venues.

I like to bond with people at shows, the metal community is really inclusive and I never felt the need to tell everyone my diagnosis because it's ok to be a little weird. Let me elaborate it: none of my metalhead friends has never judged me for my shyness or my dark twisted sense of humour.

WEIRDO

WEIRDO is a UK-based zine and platform documenting and celebrating the experiences, perspectives and contributions of South Asian people in the alternative scene. Members of their collective share some of their thoughts on how venues and promoters can all help make gigs more inclusive.

- Venues should have a safer space policy that is visible throughout the venue and can be accessed online. Bands should also be made aware of this prior to being booked and all staff members should receive training and be responsible for upholding the safer space policy
- Bands from a diverse range of backgrounds should be booked for each lineup. This helps to create a more welcoming environment and draw in more diverse audience.
- Venues should host more daytime shows! Most gigs happen in the evening, but not everyone is able to go out in the evening (e.g., due to living in a conservative household) and see their favourite bands.
- Promoters should consider mixing it up and putting some of the bigger bands in earlier slots. People have to leave early for all sorts of reasons and end up missing out. This can also help pull more people to come earlier and give smaller supporting bands the chance to play to a bigger audience than normal!
- Venues should try to have seating available for gig-goers with mobility issues and disabilities as well as spaces for wheelchair users. It's important to remember that not all disabled people are wheelchair users.
- If you state that your venue is "accessible", this should include disabled facilities/toilets - some venues will state they are accessible but neglect to mention facilities are not always accessible.
- Venues should state whether strobe/fast lighting will be used during a show – this goes for all gigs from tiny venues to stadiums. It is often unclear and even when contacting promoters and venues it is almost impossible to get an answer
- Promoters should consider putting on dry/no alcohol shows. Many people are unable to drink (e.g., for medical or religious reasons) or worry about being around people who drink and/or are drunk. Putting on dry/no alcohol shows means more people can enjoy their favourite band or discover new bands in an environment they feel safe in.
- Promoters should try to put on more gigs in venues that aren't pubs or bars. It is still taboo for many cultures to go to places like pubs – it's awkward having people turn to stare at the one brown person or person wearing a hijab (headscarf) crossing the pub to get to the music area at the back.
- Venues should employ staff from diverse backgrounds where possible - this includes venue staff, security and sound engineers.
- Regular diversity training for gig promoters and venue staff can help with creating a safer and more welcoming environment for all, as well as knowing how to act if any problems arise at a show.
- Promoters and venues should regularly share content on social media about diversity, inclusivity and safety at shows. This content should be created in collaboration with people from groups frequently made to feel unwelcome in these spaces.

www.weirdozine.com

[Instagram: @weirdo.zine](https://www.instagram.com/weirdo.zine)

[Twitter: @weirdozine](https://twitter.com/weirdozine)

Promoting Inclusivity - Bands and Venues



TOVA are a band trying to make their gigs as accessible as possible and have put a few measures in place to help with that. They have a discord that helps people to buddy up if they need or want to, and this also serves as a way of people being able to alert others to any inappropriate behaviour they experience at shows. They promote this on social media as well as a range of other excellent wellness videos, especially on tiktok

The Black Heart prides itself on being a safe space for all members of the community, particularly the underground heavy music scene. We are host to events of all kinds ranging from heavy music, to burlesque to comedy and even independent artist markets. We are fully LGBTQ+ inclusive and do whatever we can to cater to physical disabilities (carrying you up the stairs to the venue, providing seats if needed) to just lending an ear if you find yourself sat at the bar needing to vent over a pint.

We’re really excited to work with Heavy Metal Therapy and hope people feel comfortable enough to join us on this journey.





SATAN

NOT HATIN'

THE GLOBAL ORDER OF SATAN

Satan is a motif and concept used frequently in alternative music, and as the Global Order of Satan, we're here to say that Satan won't stand for Hatin'!

Satan Not Hatin' is a campaign by the Global Order of Satan to combat the rise of bigotry and hatred in the music and social scenes we hold dear. By displaying our pitchfork logo, venues can demonstrate that patrons are safe to enjoy the music and social scenes they love in a space that is inclusive to all.

Sadly, recent years have seen increased incidents of misogyny, homophobia and attacks on trans people. Our campaign has therefore expanded in scope from its original focus on metal bands with far-right affiliations and fascist ideology, to cover all forms of bigotry and hatred within alternative scenes. Satan is a motif and concept used frequently in alternative music, and as the Global Order of Satan, we're here to say that Satan won't stand for Hatin'!

Fans, bands and venues can all support our campaign by displaying our pitchfork logo as a signal that hatred and bigotry is not tolerated. We want the pitchfork logo, designed with explicit connections to antifascist logos, to indicate an understanding that prejudice and extremism have no place within alternative music scenes.

The Global Order of Satan is an international Satanic organisation with chapters across Europe and beyond. As a group, we proudly stand against those who would use religion and privilege to oppress others, including women and the LGBTQ+ community. We promote a progressive form of Satanism that stands for social justice and we believe strongly in the worship and care of the self as opposed to slavish adherence to diktats issued by an arbitrary authority. With many members who have been affected by prejudice and intolerance (whether religious, misogynistic or transphobic) we are powerfully motivated to work towards minimising the harms caused by bigotry and extremism.

Further information about the campaign, including a design pack containing logos and posters, can be found on our website (click the banner for the link) where qualifying venues can also apply for a free sticker pack.

You can also add your name to our list of supporters by filling out a simple form. We want this to be an ongoing campaign that builds momentum with time, and will be asking supporters to share their own experiences and provide ideas for future initiatives. We will also be producing t-shirts and merchandise so you can show your support for the campaign.

Hail Satan!

#S8NnotH8N

#ProtectedByThePitchfork

HOW TO MAKE THE MOSHPIT BETTER FOR EVERYONE

DR ROSEMARY HILL *SENIOR LECTURER IN MEDIA AND POPULAR CULTURE AT UNIVERSITY OF HUDDERSFIELD*

IN A GIST

But we can do something to improve everyone's live music experience. When some people's actions cause harm to others, it's down to all of us to step up.

The moshpit is idealised in heavy-metal culture as a place where anyone can go and if you fall down someone will pick you up again. It's a lovely utopian vision of community.

Unfortunately going to a metal concert isn't quite that wonderful for everyone. Our research shows that gigs and concerts are sites in which groping, sexual harassment, and assault take place, even within really strong communities and scenes.

Such incidents of sexual violence are not inconsequential or one off occasions. Our interviewees told us of numerous occasions on which they had been groped. These incidents had immediate effect. People who had been targeted would move to the back of the auditorium, or they would leave the gig altogether. The effects lasted for many years. One of our interviewees said that she had stopped going to gigs after being repeatedly groped. Others remained angry and upset when they remembered what had happened even if it had been many years previously.

This does not speak of communities in which everyone is accepted and supported. Rather, it indicates that some people are treated as very much second-class music fans, and that their enjoyment of the music is not taken seriously. Those most likely to perpetrate sexual violence are men, and those are more likely to be targeted are women and LGBTQ people.

But we can do something to improve everyone's live music experience. Because this is not just a problem of individual horrible men (although they need to address their own behaviour), it is a problem for the whole community. When some people's actions cause harm to others, it's down to all of us to step up.

So what can we do? As music lovers we can become active bystanders. If we see something that looks 'off', we can approach the targeted person for a chat, even if we don't know them. Or we might, if we think it is safe, begin a conversation with the harasser. This should be a distraction, not a confrontation. And if they still don't get the message, we can use nonconfrontational non-aggressive body language to tell the person to stop.

And if it's one of our friends whose behaviour is out of line? Then it's even more important to be a good bystander. And later, when we're all sober, talk about the behaviour.

For those of us who run a venue or put on events, getting training for all staff is a really powerful way to take action to make music more fun for everyone. Good Night Out Campaign run excellent bespoke training for venues.

And fundamentally, we need to respect everyone's right to enjoy music in peace, without having to fend off unwelcome intrusions. Because everyone has the right to freedom, and to fun, and to love metal without fear of violence.

Further resources

[Good Night Out](#) is a community interest company that offer anti-violence training for venues including DIY spaces.

[Making Spaces Safer](#) by Shawna Potter provides a guide for DIY venues to improving the safety of your space. Potter also provides training.

[Safe Gigs For Women](#) work with venues, audiences and bands to create safer environments at gigs

[Girls Against Gig Groping](#) work on educating audiences around safety from violence

[Our Five Step Guide To Writing A Safer Spaces Policy](#) for venues



STAMP OUT PREDJUDICE

LAUREN

STAMP OUT: DISABILITY
PREJUDICE IN THE METAL
COMMUNITY FOUNDING
MEMBER



Live music,
festivals, and
concerts have
helped me
broaden my
horizons.

Live music, festivals, and concerts have helped me broaden my horizons.

I started to attend concerts at the age of 12, my first being Slipknot at London Arena and from then onwards I was hooked. I have met with some groups through the years, who have been less than savory, with acts of discrimination toward me, which made me feel uneasy and unwanted at concerts and festivals. It was then that I was introduced to the primordial radio family.

I’ve made so many friends in the last year thanks to several members of the primordial radio fam and I’m proud to be considered a part of that fam.

I’m now 32 and my oldest son who is 9 years old has recently started going to concerts and festivals. I hope that he finds the same comradery I have with fewer of the obstacles I have faced.

The advice I would give to others like me is, to let the music flow through you and treat others as you would like to be treated.

Lauren – STAMP OUT: Disability prejudice in the metal community founding member

STAMP OUT

DISABILITY PREJUDICE IN THE METAL COMMUNITY



Every where across the UK, There are disabled metalheads looking to feel accepted and feel like they belong. In some cases, they are lucky and have a supportive friend base. In others, they aren't so lucky and meet prejudice or being made to feel like they don't belong. Five metal heads with disabilities have come together to help STAMP OUT disabled prejudice in the metal community!






Follow the QR Code for the group or search Stamp Out Disability Prejudice in the metal community!

Big Themes of Somewhere I Belong

- Protected spaces including quiet areas
- Planning/calling ahead
- Buddying up (online or in person)
- Allies are important - stand up for people
- Be careful on the drink and drugs
- Venues/festivals having clear inclusivity policies
- Look out for each other

The good folks at Good Night Out have given us access to their bystander guide, click the pic to see it



Good Night Out Campaign is on a mission for safer nightlife. We believe nights out should be about fun and freedom, not fear.

Some Small Print Stuff

All of the contributors have agreed for their words and associated pictures to be shared here. Thanks to them. Additional picture credits to: James Clarke (emotional support metalhead) & hell bent for metal

About the Health Audiences Research Project

The Healthy Music Audiences project investigated sexual harassment at gigs and analysed safer spaces policies. We examined the implementation of measures to prevent and respond to sexual violence at gigs in West Yorkshire, including the use of safer spaces policies. The project followed up on our earlier research, which found that sexual harassment, groping and assault is a widespread problem at gigs, and that it has damaging impacts on mental health and musical participation, particularly for women who are more likely to be targets

About Dr Rosemary Lucy Hill

Rosemary Lucy Hill is a Senior Lecturer in Media and Popular Culture at University of Huddersfield, where she is the Director of the Popular Music Studies Research Group. She is the author of *Gender, Metal and the Media: Women Fans and the Gendered Experience of Music* (Palgrave) and has published widely on issues around gender, popular music and digital spaces. She co-created the Five Step Guide to Writing a Safer Spaces Policy (www.saferspaces.org.uk) for music venues to improve safety at live music events. She is also the co-editor of Intellect's *Advances in Metal Music Studies* book series. She is currently investigating sexual violence in the music industry.