

Radiohead should not cave in to vicious pro-Gaza bullies

From the [Telegraph](#)

We all know what bullies in our public life look like. In the trans world they are the people who sent death threats to JK Rowling, set fire to her books and sent their screaming banshees onto anyone who had anything to do with her work.



The moment a music act announces an appearance in Israel, the threats begin Credit: Roberto Ricciuti/WireImage

The trans gang learned some of their tactics from [the anti-Israel bullies of the BDS](#) (Boycott, Divest, Sanction) movement, which has been going for much longer. Every time a music act announces they are due to appear in Israel, the denunciations by the likes of Pink Floyd's Roger Waters start in the form of public letters and petitions.

And then the threats – often by highly motivated online activists – start. Paul McCartney was once warned that if he

“values his life” he would refuse to play in Israel.

The very real threat is there: earlier this month, Robbie Williams’ gig in Turkey was called off due to security threats – it was alleged this was because he had played in Israel.

BDS claims to be an anti-violent movement, but the threat of violence has been enough to see British band [Oi Va Voi cancelled from venues](#) in Bristol and Brighton for the seeming crime of having an Israeli singer. *I missed that! I bought Oi Va Voi’s first album and loved it but I haven’t kept up with their recent career, which is my loss.*

For a long time, [British indie band Radiohead](#) was the JK Rowling of the anti-BDS movement. Too big to cancel – their latest tour sold out in hours despite the threats to boycott them – they stood firm despite the hatred, the threats and the denouncement. But now frontman Thom Yorke has said they will not play Israel, at least while Netanyahu is in charge.

This is caving into the bullies who will notch it up as one of their greatest victories, not least because earlier this year they forced the closure of [lead guitarist Jonny Greenwood’s tour of the UK](#) with Israeli musician Dudu Tassa. *Another good album.* What a shame, not only for music fans but also all of us who believe that you cannot appease intimidation and threats.

Greenwood – who is married to Israeli artist Sharona Katan and insists he will continue to work with Tassa and other artists from the Middle East – admits to feeling shame that he had dragged his bandmates into the laser beams of the BDS movement. Yorke admits that the demands that the band turn their back on Israel and cry “Free Palestine” from the stage “wakes me up at night”.

It takes bravery to stand up to the intimidators. They are dangerous and they don’t mind baring their fangs to show us just how much they want to hurt us. But if we – any of us –

have any chance to defeat the tyrannical bullies behind the likes of the BDS movement, we have to stand firm.