

## **Call for Papers:**

North American British Music Studies Online Symposium:  
Music and Ideas of the Popular: Reconsidering British Music and Musical Practices  
August 10-12, 2023 on Zoom  
<https://nabmsa.org/>

The topic of the 2023 biennial online symposium is “Ideas of the Popular in British Music.” Despite the messiness involved in “popular” (or, for that matter, “art”) music, we propose a rethinking of “popular” and “popular culture” in British music, broadly construed, in local and global contexts.

We hope to address the following questions: How are notions of the “popular” tied to assumptions about gender, race, national belonging, and social status? What values and ideologies are mobilized by the opposition of popular with elite culture? How has popular music been mediated, and how does its mediation shape the politics of space and place, empire and nation? What are the ways in which cultural producers, media makers, and fans have tried to break down the traditional elite / popular dichotomous models? How are all of these ideas discursively legitimated – and challenged (today and / or in the past)? What role has popular music played in British intellectual history, including but not limited to cultural studies thinkers, such as Richard Hoggart, Stuart Hall, Dick Hebdige, Angela McRobbie, Simon Frith, Paul Gilroy, and Richard Dyer?

With these initial questions in mind, we invite contributions that investigate ideas of the popular not only in contemporary British musical practices, but also in historical, contextual, biographical or theoretical contexts as well. We are interested in papers that tackle any of the following ideas (or add other relevant ones):

- ideas of the “popular” in music on a macro- and micro-scale
- high / low intermingling, contamination, negotiations, dialogue
- gender and/or sexuality in popular music culture from all time periods
- intersections with queerness, race/ethnicity, whiteness, class, age, nationality, and ability
- the politics of the popular, including musical propaganda or state-sponsored policies relating to popular music or art music culture
- battles over agendas, values, representations, meanings
- British music in contemporary popular culture including gaming, film, television, video streaming platforms (Netflix, TikTok, YouTube, etc.), and social media
- historical analyses of youth culture and popular music, including teenagers and music, children’s music and nursery rhymes, fairytales and music
- travel and leisure activities relating to music cultures, including music festivals
- popular music and colonialism and / or orientalism, as well as postcolonial and anticolonial social movements
- Popular music and social activism
- Musical labour, musicians’ livelihoods, and labour organizing
- social and/or economic realities (gender, religion, etc.) of low or elite musics or musicians

- critical examinations of Black British and/or Asian British popular music culture, including questions of representation
- new approaches to studying British pop music, including research, analysis, remapping, technology
- Popular music and institutions (e.g., the BBC, Birmingham School for Contemporary Culture, RCM, etc.)

We invite you to submit an abstract (200–300 words) and a brief biography (100–150 words) for a paper presentation of 20 minutes' duration **by 1 May 2023** to [nabmsa2023@gmail.com](mailto:nabmsa2023@gmail.com). We also encourage the submission of roundtable or panel proposals on any of the themes. All participants will be notified by Conveners about the acceptance of their proposals by 15 May 2023. The recommended deadline for completed papers (to send to your panel chair) is 1 August, 2023.

Information about registration will be given in due course. Should you have any questions, feel free to contact the organizing team at the conference email address: [nabmsa2023@gmail.com](mailto:nabmsa2023@gmail.com).

“In the study of popular culture, we should always start here: with the double-stake in popular culture, the double movement of containment and resistance, which is always inevitably inside it.”

Stuart Hall, “Notes on Deconstructing ‘The Popular’,” in *People’s History and Socialist Theory*, ed. Raphael Samuel (London: Routledge, 1981), 228.

Convenors: Christina Baade, Vanessa L. Rogers, Frances Wilkins, Matthew Williams