

## Metal Music Studies 1.1 Editorial

Welcome to the first issue of *Metal Music Studies*. We have two full sections of content for you to read and engage with. In the first section, we have seven full papers from academics from around the world, across the full range of metal music studies from production to consumption. In the second section, we have two shorter papers and a number of book reviews. We would like you to contribute to both sections, as an academic or a fan or an insider. This is the journal for anyone who wants to write and read about metal music studies. If you do not have a subscription, buy one. If you are not a member of the International Society for Metal Music Studies, please inquire about membership. You can search on the web or you can email either of us. Or you can attend one of the metal music conferences that are coming up, such as the one in Finland in the summer of 2015. This is the official journal of the Society, and we are open for business! If you have come here looking for papers on the reactivity of metallic compounds, we really can't help you.

*Metal Music Studies* is the product of six years of conversations, phone calls, emails, conference papers and late-night promises made in smoke-filled Salzburg bars. The idea that anyone might want to write about heavy metal is not particularly novel. There have been a number of very influential scholars who have explored heavy metal from a number of disciplinary lenses and subject fields. If we start to make a list of everyone who has contributed to the development of studies about heavy metal, we would need to turn this introduction into a paper of its own (and there are many papers that do this anyway). However, there are a handful of key individuals that need to be noted and honoured. First of all, Deena Weinstein has defended heavy metal culture and heavy metal studies for many years, and is still actively involved with both. Secondly, Keith Kahn-Harris has had an incredible impact on the second-wave of heavy metal scholars excited by the developments in extreme metal and the multifarious genres and sub-genres it has spawned. Both Deena and Keith sit on our Editorial Advisory Board, along with a diverse range of scholars from different subject fields and regions. Thirdly, we need to note the crucial intervention of Rob Fisher at Inter-Disciplinary.Net, an organisation that exists to run counter to the usual practices of academic life. Rob talked to one of us (Niall) about developing a conference on heavy metal, and the result was the first of the important Music, Metal and Politics (MMP) conferences in Salzburg.

It was at the MMP conferences that the very idea of metal music studies first emerged. There were enough of us who had a shared vision to set up a steering group for an international society of scholars interested in heavy metal. Our biggest challenge was what to call our subject field. While some of us liked the idea of metal studies, we did not want to be bombarded with inquiries from chemists and engineers asking us about conductivity. Calling our subject field heavy metal studies retains the same problem of mis-identification. So we went for metal music studies, and the society became the International Society for Metal Music Studies (ISMMS). At first, we only had a steering group, a Chair (Niall) and some ideas about what it was we wanted to do. By the time of the third MMP conference the steering group had grown and had become an executive committee. We now knew we wanted two things: recognition as a learned society, with a membership and website, and our own conferences and prizes and networks; and a scholarly, academic journal that reached out to metal fans, journalists, label-managers, musicians and others in the industry. Setting up ISMMS proved to be simple in theory, but incredibly arduous in practice, as it necessitated getting legal approval to exist from the relevant authorities in the United States. Thanks to ISMMS Treasurer Amber Clifford, the society is now legal, and calls for membership

subscriptions will no doubt emerge. ISMMS is already supporting and endorsing conferences. And this journal is the product of the work of one of us (Karl) who was given the task of finding a publisher. Establishing the journal's aims, markets and scope was simple enough, as was the search for people to be part of the editorial Board and the Editorial Advisory Board. The name proved trickier. Previous discussions on the MetPol mailing list had led to frenzied rows about which name might be the best. In the end, we went for *Metal Music Studies*, because that is what we want to publish, and that is the subject field the journal represents.

We found a perfect home for the journal with Intellect. One of us (Karl) was working on a metal special issue of the *International Journal of Community Music*, an Intellect journal. The editor of the journal, Lee Higgins, explained the way Intellect operated and the ways in which Intellect aimed to reach out to global academics, audiences, practitioners, industries and fans. We were excited by the portfolio that Intellect has, and could see *Metal Music Studies* fitting neatly into it. Emails were exchanged with Masoud Yazdani, the head of Intellect, and he invited us to submit a full proposal. And obviously Intellect is pleased to have us, because here is the first issue of the journal. We are ever thankful to Masoud for his faith in us and in the journal, and we are still saddened by the fact he is no longer here to see the journal in print – in the short time we knew him, he was a real inspiration. Our delight to be part of the Intellect portfolio extends to the excellent staff who have helped us get to this point: in particular Sarah Cunningham, James Campbell, Jess Pennock and Bethan Ball. It has been an absolute pleasure to work with you all and we can't wait for the next issue. We would also like to thank Gabby Riches and Gareth Heritage, our editorial assistants, and everyone who reviewed a paper.

Karl Spracklen and Niall Scott

Editors, *Metal Music Studies*