

AMS POPULAR MUSIC STUDY GROUP MEETING
5 November 2010, Indianapolis, IN

MINUTES

1. Organizer S. Alexander Reed welcomed the group members attending the meeting, noted that the formal proposal to establish the study group had been submitted to the AMS board three weeks ago, and read the group's mission statement aloud.

2. Proposed activities which will increase the group's visibility as well as contributing to the discipline of popular-music studies:
 - Conference papers: since the popular-music scholar David Brackett is on the 2011 Program Committee, providing a sympathetic ear and eye for popular-music topics, all group members were encouraged to submit paper proposals for the 2011 conference in San Francisco. A discussion followed concerning the advantages and disadvantages of proposing popular-music panels versus individual popular-music papers which might be integrated into sessions on other topics. The primary concern was likelihood of acceptance onto the conference program; other issues considered were whether integrating pop-music papers into sessions on other topics constitutes a form of disciplinary mainstreaming or professional outreach, and conversely, whether confining popular-music papers to dedicated sessions constitutes a form of ghettoization.
 - Publications: although submission of articles for publication is not a group activity per se, a similar discussion took place regarding the advantages and disadvantages of publishing in popular-music journals versus "mainstream" journals such as *JAMS*, *JM*, *MQ*, etc. (which do not have a strong track record of publishing popular-music articles in the past, although that is hopefully about to change), ethnographically-oriented journals such as *JSAM* and *Ethnomusicology*, and AMS's new online, open-access *Journal of Music History Pedagogy*. Topics raised were acceptance rates of submissions, the editorial process, the hierarchy of different types of journals ("mainstream" vs. popular-music; print vs. online; subscription vs. open access) in the eyes of promotion and tenure committees, and the need for more informal publication venues.
 - Conference concerts: Richard Mook (Arizona State University) suggested organizing groups to attend local concerts of popular music, and agreed to liaise with the 2011 local arrangements chair.
 - Information repository: the group website should provide bibliographies and other information. The question was raised as to whether the bibliographies should include popular-music scholarship only, or also popular-music journalism, and where to draw the line between these categories, since in many areas of the field there is not yet a significant body of published scholarship, only journalistic criticism (the web archive "Rock's Back Pages" at www.rocksbackpages.com was cited as a valuable resource). It was recommended that the group's page be linked to, if not hosted by, the AMS site, and hosted by an .edu institution if not the AMS. Ideally the structure should allow multiple people to contribute to and update the site without the full open access of a wiki.
 - Helping to maintain a high level of scholarly discourse in the field: public displays of ignorance of popular music should not be accepted as normative and allowed to pass unremarked. Part of the group's mission should be to hold scholars accountable for an adequate

knowledge of the topic. The group should also strive to raise the profile of popular-music scholarship, in hopes of thereby increasing the receptiveness of publicity personnel, record companies and copyright holders, and organizations like EMP and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum to requests from scholars. An IASPM study on approaching record companies was mentioned.

- Activities for business meetings: liaising with other popular-music study groups such as SEM's; inviting a keynote speaker or panel with respondent; arranging a public interview with a popular-music journalist such as Tim Riley, Alex Ross, or Sasha Freire-Jones
- Offering a publication award: this would give the popular-music group a voice at the AMS annual business meeting. However, it is not clear who would judge the award, an internal PMSG committee or an external AMS one appointed by the board.
- Jam session: the idea of connecting performance more directly with scholarship is an appealing one, although the logistics of transporting instruments and sound equipment to the conference, or borrowing them locally, would need to be worked out.

3. Organizational structure of the group

- S. Alexander Reed was elected unanimously as chair.
- Paula Bishop offered to be the group's webmaster, as she has previous experience designing similar websites.
- Jacob Cohen agreed to be the group's secretary. He will take charge of the membership list and the meeting minutes, and contact the planning committee.
- A planning committee to coordinate all of these activities was established, consisting of David Blake, Alexandra Apolloni, Whitney Henderson, and Mandy Smith.

Respectfully submitted,
Nicole Biamonte