

Call for papers Metal Music Studies, ISSMS Conference: **Metal and Politics**

Conference date: 9th June 2016

Deadline for proposals: 1st March 2016

Conference venue: Bournemouth University, UK

Politicians and activist groups (such as PMRC) have often sought to censor heavy metal for 'fear' of the damage it does to young people. Discourses of fear are invoked to justify such actions; as means of controlling populations. This of course therefore raises wider questions about the nature of censorship and state control and so we might ask whether heavy metal has a role to play in challenging these dominant discourses. Green Day's anti-war *American Idiot* sent political messages to fans and state actors alike, and so we might also ask how politics is represented in metal. In addition, what kind of responses are there from fans, consumers, audiences, producers and distributors of metal? And how do other media (whether creative or critical) reflect, challenge, or enable the political aspects of metal music or the dialogue between politics and metal?

This conference CFP also adopts a wider definition of politics, one which goes beyond the behaviour of state actors and institutions. Rather we take the view that politics takes place in, and through, the power relations that structure our societies. In this way, we use politics as a mechanism to ask questions about the ways in which power circulates, operates and is distributed, and we seek to build on the sociological debate in earlier works (e.g. Weinstein, Walser). In adopting this broader definition of politics we are able to ask questions about the nature of identity for example around sexuality, race, gender, class, and religion. How are these identities constructed, and what roles can heavy metal play in this process? Does heavy metal have the capacity to challenge dominant narratives, and mechanisms of social control; can metal provide a site for alternate politics; or is there inevitability to the ways in which power functions, irrespective of the cultural site through which it is expressed?

As such, the wider questions that underpin this CFP, are: Should politics be separate from metal, or is metal inherently political? How far does heavy metal play a political role? Or have something political to say? How far is politics enmeshed in the production and consumption of heavy metal? How and by what means is politics mediated by gatekeepers? We reflect on the capacity of heavy metal bands, performers and fans to reject dominant narratives; does metal provide a conduit through which an alternate politics of everyday life might be possible? Does metal provide the tools by which political power (in a variety of guises) can be held to account? As well as political questions, we are also asking about epistemology: how can we know the nature of politics in heavy metal? (if it exists?)

Papers are invited that address any aspect of the broad conference theme and a selection have the opportunity for consideration for publication a special issue of *Metal Music Studies*

The International Society of Metal Studies (ISMMS) is pleased to support this event at Bournemouth. It is yet another opportunity for scholars to engage with this growing movement. We encourage conference delegates to look out for information on how to join ISMMS and how to access our journal Metal Music Studies, published by Intellect.

Conference organisers:

Dr Heather Savigny; Dr Julia Round; Dr Tasos Theofilou; Ian Marsland

Proposals addressing the broad conference theme should be sent by the 1st March 2016 to:
metalpoliticsbournemouth@gmail.com

The conference is free to register

Proposals must include:

An abstract of 500 words;

A brief author bio of 150 words;

Contact details of author/s