

Music, Creativity and the Cultural Economy Research Group

In this issue

• Researcher updates:

Matt Anniss

Kieron Hatton

Dan Pennie

Jennifer Skellington

Chris Anderton

Paul Stevens

Researcher Profile:

Angela Young

Welcome to the June 2025 newsletter of the Music, Creativity and the Cultural Economy research group.

As we head to the end of the academic year, we take time in this newsletter to celebrate the ongoing work of our research group members, whether in conferences, presentations, publications or creative practice, beginning and ending with updates from two of our PhD candidates.

What is the Music, Creativity and Cultural Economy research group?

- An inclusive and interdisciplinary group with a broad understanding of research (traditional, practice, knowledge exchange, public engagement).
- Open to all, no matter your pre-existing experience of research.
- Celebrates and promotes the work of our members.
- Fosters collaborations, peer support and capacity building.

To join the Research Group, promote your research and knowledge exchange activities or get involved in any other way, please email Dr. Chris Anderton (Research Group lead) at chris.anderton@solent.ac.uk

Researcher updates

Matt Annis (PhD candidate) has made fantastic progress with his primary research into the historic rave culture of East Anglia.

The initial stage of his research was to promote a questionnaire that will be used to inform the scope of his study, and to recruit interviewees for in-depth qualitative interviews. The goal: to investigate the 'hidden histories' of electronic dance music in a rural rather than urban location, and to better understand the motivations, beliefs and understandings of the people involved in running and attending these events. To date he has received over 200 responses to his questionnaire with two thirds of respondees open to engaging in the next stage of his research.



Matt has promoted his project in East Anglian record stores, the Suffolk Archives, the PRIMEYARC Gallery in Great Yarmouth, and The Holloway music venue in Norwich. Features have also appeared in specialist dance music magazines such as *DJ Mag*, *Mixmag*, and *Juno Daily*, and in local/regional news publications across East Anglia. He was also been interviewed for BBC Radio and TV, including the regional news programme *BBC Look East*.

Matt also found the time to attend and present at the Subcultures Network conference at the University of East Anglia, and at the DC25 DanceCult Conference in Berlin.

For the latter presentation, Matt drew on both his current research and the work involved in writing his book *Join the Future: Bleep Techno and the Birth of British Bass Music*. The talk, titled "Two Sides To Every Story: Journalists' views on researching, documenting and archiving dance music histories," examined issues surrounding researching and archiving dance music histories from the perspective of working journalists, historians, and academic researchers with a journalistic background.



Dancecult Conference 2025

Researcher updates

Dr Kieron Hatton (Lecturer, BA (Hons) Social Work)

Kieron has recently co-edited and published a special issue of the journal *Practice: Social Work in Action*, with Dr Jo Redcliffe of University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, US.

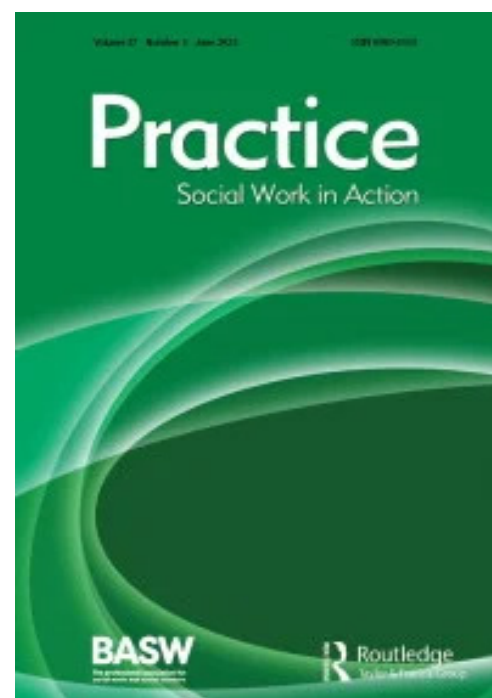
The aim of this special issue was to showcase creative approaches to social work based on the arts.

Creative approaches have been shown to push the boundaries of social work past the limits set by customary approaches when seeking to promote social justice, development and liberation (International Federation of Social Workers, 2014). The arts represent a portal through which connections can be established and communication eased (MacAulay and Levy, 2022).

The definitions of 'arts' and 'creativity' in this sense are broad and encompassing, and follow the example of Papouli (2017) in exploring social justice, identity and empowerment in ways that are not just different from but also complementary to traditional practices that have been criticized as bureaucratic and managerialistic (Carey 2021).

The special edition begins with an editorial from Jo Redcliffe and Kieron Hatton titled "Art and Creativity in Social Work — A Catalyst for Change," and the full issue can be found online at here:

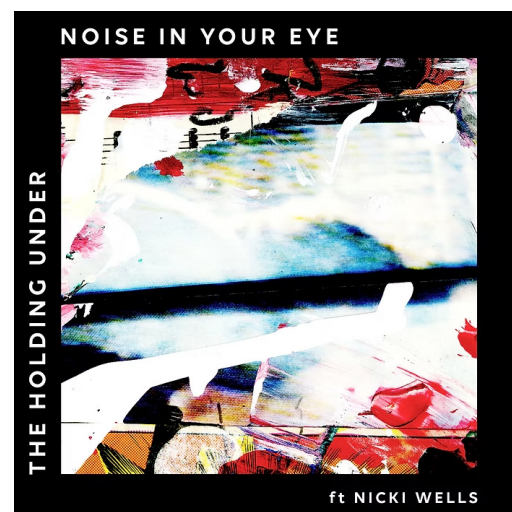
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09503153.2025.2460760>.



Dan Pennie (Senior Lecturer, BA (Hons) Popular Music Performance and BA (Hons) Popular Music Performance and Production)

Dan's musical adventures continue with a recent single release from his band Noise in Your Eye. "This Holding Under" was recorded at the world-renowned Real World Studios with a host of fabulous musicians and friends who have worked with the likes of Pink Floyd, Kasabian, Peter Gabriel, Amy Winehouse, Lee Scratch Perry, Portishead, and Soweto Kinch). Further information can be found on the YouTube video for the song here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-dWlEO_gno0



Researcher updates

Dr. Jennifer Skellington (Lecturer in Music)

Jennifer will be presenting her research at the biennial International Association for the Study of Popular Music (IASPM) conference in Paris in July.

Her presentation focuses on the Squeeze album *Spot the Difference*, which presented re-recordings of songs that had been gathered as a compilation (Sings 45 and Under) some twenty-six years earlier. The research is grounded in the findings of a collaborative research project undertaken with colleagues at Oxford Brookes University, and examines the challenges associated with attempts to establish reliable evidence of copyright histories within the realms of popular music.

As recently highlighted by Taylor Swift, re-recording is one way that recording artists can generate income and claim, or reclaim, ownership of sound recordings (Osborne, 2023). The project demonstrated how the lack of transparency in this domain not only hinders those who wish to explore the field on an academic level but also long-term career musicians themselves who, like Chris Difford of Squeeze, can simply lose track of the different rights to their work against a backdrop of personal and industry developments.

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The case study illustrates how the various rights relating to a given musical work can migrate on two levels; namely active migration when artists sign new deals, and passive migration whereby rights simply change hands in an ever-evolving world of publishers, labels and conglomerates. In the case of *Spot the Difference*, both forms of migration occurred multiple times.

Given also that PRS cannot freely divulge details about commercial song use to third parties and that the popularity of digital music downloads seem here to stay, copyright histories seem destined for further obscurity without music industry reform and the development of expedient scholarly methodologies.



Researcher updates

Dr Chris Anderton (Associate Professor in Cultural Economy)

The last few months have been busy on the research front, with my edited collection (with Prof. Lori Burns of University of Ottawa) *The Routledge Handbook of Progressive Rock, Metal, and the Literary Imagination* being published in February. I co-wrote the introduction with Lori and also added my own chapter "Cross-pollinations: Progressive Rock and Science Fiction, Fantasy and Speculative Fiction" where I draw parallels between progressive music and the literature of SF, and advance ideas about how we might analyse the ways that musicians draw on narrative ideas in the structure of their work.

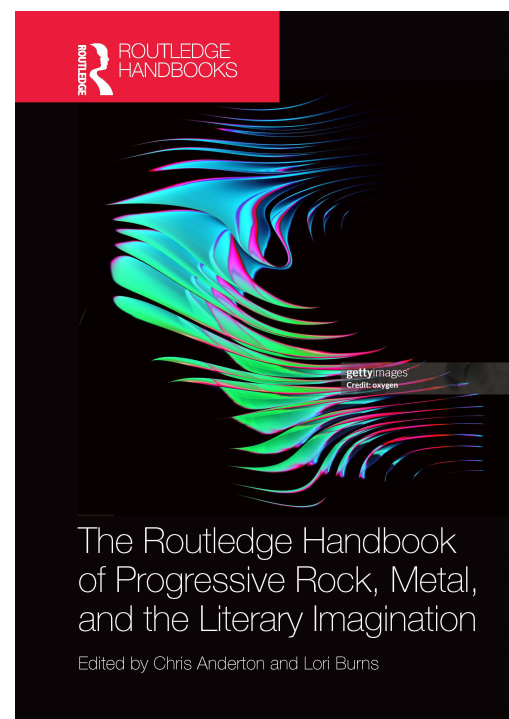
More information about the book can be found [here](#)

I am currently working on the *Intellect Handbook of Global Music Industries* with Martin James, Daniel Nordgard, and Sergio Pisfil, having so far edited nearly 20 chapters and contributed my own - on the geopolitics of copyright, and how multinational music companies use US legislation to 'discipline' (in the Foucauldian sense) the copyright legislation and enforcement of other countries around the world. We aim to submit the full manuscript in the summer, with a publication date in 2026.

I am also working on the soft launch of a new academic journal for Intellect called the *Journal of Live Music Studies*, at the biennial conference of the International Association for the Study of Popular Music (IASPM) in July 2025. The first edition of the journal is slated for publication in Autumn 2026, where it will join Intellect's formidable collection of music titles.

I recently presented some research at the International Music Business Research Days conference at the University of Hertfordshire. It looked at the potential and issues related to the use of blockchain technologies and Non-Fungible Tokens for outdoor music festivals.

My next presentation will be for the biennial IASPM conference at Sorbonne Nouvelle University, Paris, where I am drawing on philosophical theories of identity to ask how a long-lived band can continue to release and tour new music when it no longer contains any of the musicians that were involved in forming or popularising it.



**International
Music
Business
Research
Days**

iaspm

Researcher updates

Paul Stevens (Lecturer in Media Production) on his recent conference presentation

Confession: I used to be a bit of an “anorak”, back in the day. Which is why, although it’s not really my area any more, I decided to respond to a call for papers from renowned radio scholar, Dr Lawrie Hallett. What’s an anorak? And who’s Lawrie Hallett?



Anorak is slang for people who are, shall we say, extremely enthusiastic about radio broadcasting: especially pirate or offshore radio stations. Lawrie is Senior Lecturer in radio at the Uni of Bedfordshire, and he convened the conference "On land-based unlicensed radio broadcasting, in the UK, and Ireland, but also globally." I picked the sub-topic: "the politics and regulation of radio broadcasting."

My presentation was titled "The politics of dancing: barriers to entry for UK music radio broadcasters — the pirate broadcasters’ battle to be heard" — a title I was quite pleased with, beginning as it does with the title of an obscure one-hit-wonder from the 1980s by Re-Flex. Too clever by half, as it turns out, as the anoraks (who made up a significant proportion of the audience) didn't like my conclusion: that they should just pack up their illegal radio stations, give up fighting the government, and start up online radio stations instead.

I thought I’d made a good case. After a deep dive into various UK governments’ paranoia and control freakery over broadcast radio from its very beginnings in the 1920s, I expanded on my thesis that while the pirates continue to be silenced by ever more expansive and draconian legislation, "Big Radio" has been allowed to swallow up commercial locals and BBC radio is less local than ever. The entire UK local radio industry could meet up in a provincial Wetherspoons for a drink these days.

There’s little professional local radio left. Most towns and cities now have either a Heart, a Capital, a Hits Radio or a Greatest Hits Radio, or a regional (at best) BBC local. For example, up the road in Salisbury, where I used to work for Spire FM, the city now has a Hits Radio clone.

This leaves community radio filling the void. And, for the record (no pun intended), it does so very well: if it wasn’t for Hot Radio in Poole, where I presented the breakfast show for several years, I probably wouldn’t be a Solent lecturer at all.

In my conference presentation, I pointed out that online radio is legal and cheap, but I hadn’t taken into account just how attached anoraks are to over-the-air radio.

Researcher profile

Introducing Angela Young (PhD candidate)

Working title: *The Purposes of Participation: British Music Festivals*

I am a part-time researcher who started with Solent under Dr Chris Anderton (and previously Dr Martin James) in January 2020 investigating the professional motivations of organisers and performers of British music festivals in the 21st century.

With a professional background as an independent festival organiser, music manager and consultant I've long been fascinated by why people - myself included - devote their personal and professional lives to these events, often with little financial reward and considerable personal risk.

While much existing research focuses on audience experience, often framed within tourism and consumer studies, my work addresses the pre-event motivations of those who create and curate the live music festival experience, an area currently overlooked by existing literature.

Drawing on qualitative phenomenological methods my aim is to understand how and why music festival organisers choose to participate in what is often a financially precarious, logistically complex and emotionally demanding undertaking, and what the experience for festival performers is like in comparison to other forms of live music production.

My research explores the idea that festivals are not simply sites of economic transaction or audience consumption, but fundamentally creative and meaning-making spaces. I am particularly interested in how aesthetic and hedonic motivations such as joy, purpose, self-expression, and identity formation play a role in shaping the decisions of festival organisers and performers.

Key theoretical frameworks utilised in the research include self-determination theory, Victor Turner's concept of communitas, and evolving understandings of music as both an art form and a form of social connection. By highlighting these underexplored perspectives, I hope to reframe the role of performers and organisers not as service providers or intermediaries, but as co-creators of a shared cultural phenomenon whose motivations and contributions deserve fuller academic recognition.

