



# Voicing the Popular: On the Subjects of Popular Music

*Richard Middleton*

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## **Voicing the Popular: On the Subjects of Popular Music** Richard Middleton

How does popular music produce its subject? How does it produce us as subjects? More specifically, how does it do this through voice--through "giving voice"? And how should we understand this subject--"the people"--that it voices into existence? Is it singular or plural? What is its history and what is its future?

*Voicing the Popular* draws on approaches from musical interpretation, cultural history, social theory and psychoanalysis to explore key topics in the field, including race, gender, authenticity and repetition. Taking most of his examples from across the past hundred years of popular music development--but relating them to the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century "pre-history"--Richard Middleton constructs an argument that relates "the popular" to the unfolding of modernity itself. *Voicing the Popular* renews the case for ambitious theory in musical and cultural studies, and, against the grain of much contemporary thought, insists on the progressive potential of a politics of the Low.

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