

Summary, Conclusions, and Implications

TO END THIS STUDY I will briefly summarize some of its main points, as well as suggest some of their broader, extracinematic significance.

JUSTIFICATION FOR FILM MUSIC, AND FOR FILM-MUSICAL QUOTATION

Roy Prendergast says that the “problem” with 1940s Hollywood films dealing with concert artists was that they used “what was essentially concert music. In order to bring some of the famous concert works in line with the dramatic needs of the story, great works of musical art had to be severely cut.”¹ We have seen how certain music critics had deep reasons for resisting film’s free use of the concert repertory. For them cutting and quoting were emblematic of and even contributors to a very serious, quite general social malaise. There was justification in this view, and the ubiquity of the culture industry is now, if anything, more marked than it was then. Yet, as we have also seen, when taken to extremes this alarmist attitude can lead to excessive compartmentalization and mutual exclusivity. What applies to quotation, to concert music used in film, can also apply to any intertextual exchange; adaptation from one context to another may cause discomfort, and yet it may be this very discomfort that generates new light and insight.

Adaptation is not only related to a specific work; it can also involve a more general phenomenon, or the conditions that gave rise to it. Changes in circumstance, the passage of time, new knowledge, and broader perspectives can all call for an adaptation of previously resistant attitudes.