

The relevance of such tension to this study is that resistance can also inhibit relationships between specialists in different fields. Initiates can be impatient with a newcomer's scholarly baby steps, and the outwardly banal insights that they lead to. But baby steps are essential to the beginner; as one enters into a new discipline, undue attention to that discipline's specialized cutting edges may obscure its more fundamental, if unexceptionable, roots. Clearly, without roots, connections that spring up are in danger of withering quickly away.

It is not only the newcomer that needs to step back from elite or specialized sensibilities. Specialization's inward look also can mask the salutary effects of others' elementary investigations. Even received wisdom can be groundbreaking, when innovation occurs in new combinations of the received. A film scholar's study of classical music holds this possibility, especially in the ways that music interacts with the motion picture medium. More than in music, specialized research in media and literary studies has focused on popular perception and reception. Transposed to a musical setting, such research would remind us that listeners not only hear the music in the midst of their own social and historical circumstance, but a vast majority of us do so at a musico-logical level very much below the thin-aired engagement of the experts. Yet that hearing is also essential to an understanding of music's meaning, as well as its emotional and cultural affects. This study will attend primarily to film-music interactions, both theoretical and actual. However, interpretive strategies and specific interpretations discussed in later chapters imply, through my own response, how important setting and reception are not only to the understanding of classical music in film, but to the understanding of music itself.

In academic practice, musicology has attended fairly exclusively to musical content. Context—the extramusical conditions under which music is composed and heard—is mostly left to other commentators.

Musicology is perceived as dealing essentially with the factual, the documentary, the verifiable, the analyzable, the positivistic. Musicologists are respected for the facts they know about music. They are not admired for their insight into music as aesthetic experience.¹