

Conventional musicological activity is important and needs no justification, but music scholar Joseph Kerman asks whether musicologists do enough.

Why should analysts concentrate solely on the internal structure of the individual work of art as an autonomous entity, and take no account of such considerable matters as history, communication, affect, texts and programmes, the existence of other works of art, and so much else?²

For Kerman, musicology's collection of facts and details masks a reluctance to interpret and thus to engage with the world which gives music significance.³

There have been alternatives to this kind of musical positivism, but musicology has generally been very unsympathetic to them. Donald Tovey, Deryck Cooke, and Leonard Meyer are notable contextualizers whose work has had some extramusical attention and influence. Recently musicologists have tended to concentrate on their perceived inadequacies—respectively, an overdependence on elaborate extramusical metaphors, scrambled semiotics, pandering.⁴ As a result these figures have sometimes been slighted or even ignored, but as Kerman points out, for all they may have lacked, they did something vital. These writers sought to connect to popular audiences, regardless of what elites might think.⁵

Whatever these writers' shortcomings, I will hope to take from them something quite essential. As Kerman points out in reference to Meyer, they deal "with music as perceived by listeners. The theory is oriented towards the receptor rather than the stimulus, to the listener who experiences 'emotion and meaning' rather than the composer who puts them in."⁶

This is the sensibility informing the musical components of my own study. I will consider composers and listeners both, but I will do so primarily as an informed but lay listener, one who is not in a position to add to the valuable literature of musicological detail. I will seek rather to elaborate on the other, underdeveloped side of the equation: context. I will set forth some theoretical and critical strategies for dealing with music in a setting which is not strictly musical. I will demonstrate said strategies through some film/music content analysis, and then venture some