

ROUTLEDGE MUSIC AND SCREEN MEDIA SERIES

MUSIC IN

TELEVISION

CHANNELS OF
LISTENING

Edited by James Deaville



Music in Television

Music in Television: Channels of Listening is a collection of essays examining television's production of meaning through music in terms of historical contexts, institutional frameworks, broadcast practices, technologies, and aesthetics. It presents the reader with overviews of major genres and issues, as well as specific case studies of important television programs and events. With contributions from a wide array of scholars, the essays range from historical-analytical surveys of television sound and genre designations to studies of the music in individual programs, including *South Park* and *Doctor Who*. It is the first essay collection to go behind the programs to uncover how particular televisual practices and programming reflect the political, social, and cultural conditions of their production.

Contributors: Adam Berry, Julie Brown, Norma Coates, James Deaville, Claudia Gorbman, Sean Nye, Kip Pegley, Ron Rodman, Colin Roust, Michael Saffle, Robynn J. Stilwell, and Shawn VanCour.

The *Routledge Music and Screen Media Series* offers edited collections of original essays on music, in particular genres of cinema, television, video games, and new media. These edited essay collections are written for an interdisciplinary audience of students and scholars of music and film and media studies.

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Routledge Music and Screen Media Series
Series Editor: Neil Lerner

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Music in Television: Channels of Listening

Edited by James Deaville

Music in the Horror Film: Listening to Fear

Edited by Neil Lerner

Music in Television

Channels of Listening

Edited by James Deaville

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Contents

<i>Series Foreword</i>	vii
<i>Foreword by Claudia Gorbman</i>	ix
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xi

Introduction: The “Problem” of Music in Television	1
JAMES DEAVILLE	

PART I

Practices and Theories of Television Music **5**

1 A Discipline Emerges: Reading Writing about Listening to Television	7
JAMES DEAVILLE	
2 “Coperettas,” “Detecterns,” and Space Operas: Music and Genre Hybridization in American Television	35
RON RODMAN	
3 Television Music and the History of Television Sound	57
SHAWN VANCOUR	
4 Rural Music on American Television, 1948–2010	81
MICHAEL SAFFLE	
5 Music in the Golden Age of Television News Documentaries at NBC	103
COLIN ROUST	

PART II

Case Studies in Television Music 117

- 6 “Bad Wolf”: Leitmotif in *Doctor Who* (2005) 119

ROBYNN J. STILWELL

- 7 From Punk to the Musical: *South Park*, Music, and the
Cartoon Format 143

SEAN NYE

- 8 *It’s What’s Happening, Baby!* Television Music and the
Politics of the War on Poverty 165

NORMA COATES

- 9 Channeling Glenn Gould: Masculinities in Television and
New Hollywood 183

JULIE BROWN

- 10 “The Rock Man’s Burden”: Consuming Canada at Live 8 199

KIP PEGLEY

- Appendix: Generation X, *South Park*, and Television
Music Composition: An Interview with Adam Berry
Conducted by Sean Nye 217

- Notes on Contributors* 227

- Index* 231

Series Foreword

While the scholarly conversations about music in film and visual media have been expanding prodigiously since the last quarter of the twentieth century, a need remains for focused, specialized studies of particular films as they relate more broadly to genres. This series includes scholars from across the disciplines of music and film and media studies, of specialists in both the audible as well as the visual, who share the goal of broadening and deepening these scholarly dialogues about music in particular genres of cinema, television, video games, and new media. Claiming a chronological arc from the birth of cinema in the 1890s to the most recent releases, the *Routledge Music and Screen Media Series* offers collections of original essays written for an interdisciplinary audience of students and scholars of music, film and media studies in general, and interdisciplinary humanists who give strong attention to music. Driving the study of music here is the underlying assumption that music together with screen media (understood broadly to accommodate rapidly developing new technologies) participates in important ways in the creation of meaning and that including music in an analysis opens up the possibility for interpretations that remain invisible when only using the eye. The series was designed with the goal of providing a thematically unified group of supplemental essays in a single volume that can be assigned in a variety of undergraduate and graduate courses (including courses in film studies, in film music, and other interdisciplinary topics). We look forward to adding future volumes addressing emerging technologies and reflecting the growth of the academic study of screen media. Rather than attempting an exhaustive history or unified theory, these studies—persuasive explications supported by textual and contextual evidence—will pose questions of musical style, strategies of rhetoric, and critical cultural analysis as they help us to see, to hear, and ultimately to understand these texts in new ways.

Neil Lerner
Series Editor

Foreword

Claudia Gorbman

In distinguishing cinema and television, Michel Chion calls television illustrated radio.¹ Television is also the nation's jukebox. Music is everywhere on television, endowed with all manner of signaling devices, emotive values, and rhetorical functions. Its ubiquity and variety entice us to reconsider distinctions between performance of music and music whose performers are invisible, to reevaluate notions of genre inherited from the movies, and to think about the fluctuating nature of audience identifications (for example, how does *American Idol* teach me to have certain pop-musical tastes that differ from my "waking" predilections?). Signature tunes for shows, background music for dramas, songs performed and in the background, and all the tunes for commercials that stimulate desire, all feed into this constant churning jukebox: you can sit around with friends trying to screech out the theme for *ER* and recap tunes from Janis Joplin, Bob Seger, the Beatles, Gene Wilder, and Bernard Herrmann that sell products. Music in television directs our reception of images and sounds, even news reporting.² Ubiquitous and copious, it often goes unnoticed and has pretty successfully eluded the ears of the nation's cultural critics.

This book heightens our awareness of what music does on television. This is not to say that fine scholarship has not already established a field of television music criticism—for example, Ron Rodman's excellent 2010 book paved the way for much thinking in the present collection.³ But a thoughtfully planned group of essays by cutting-edge scholars is surely important and even overdue: like film studies twenty years ago, television studies ignores music. How can it be that so few commentators on popular culture recognize the role of television music in reflecting and cultivating popular tastes and understandings of nationhood, race, class, and other socially crucial factors—not just in the USA but worldwide?

Television music shares some traits with film music in that it accompanies, emphasizes, situates, and defines genre and also in the ways it creates identifications and subjectivities. What is different about music on television is that we hear it from week to week as we return to our preferred shows. Television music is like church music—we live with it more intimately, it deepens the

ritual function of television and its creation of community. It is commonplace to note that what commercial television sells is us, the audience, as the market for advertisers; the ritual of music is key in this transaction. Understanding the machinations and the beauties of all this music, we will be the wiser as thinking citizens.

The appearance of *Music in Television: Channels of Listening* heralds an increased critical awareness of the power and possibilities of music on the small screen. The essays James Deaville has gathered here, pieces written by the most insightful observers of television, music, and culture, blaze new trails in the understanding of culture in this dazzling and confusing twenty-first century.

Notes

- 1 Michel Chion, *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen*, trans. Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 157.
- 2 During the Persian Gulf War, which put CNN on the map for its real-time reporting, viewers could witness the evolution of the music for news. Amorphous cues with drumbeats and low-register minor chords gave way ultimately to triumphant trumpets in a major key as the Allied forces swept across Iraq.
- 3 Ron Rodman, *Tuning In: American Narrative Television Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

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Introduction

The “Problem” of Music in Television

James Deaville

It should not come as a surprise if I were to suggest that many, if not most, readers of this book can trace their first experiences of music and screen media back to television (in all likelihood children’s programming) rather than to film or videogames and online entertainment. According to A. C. Nielsen statistics from May, 2009, “the average American watches approximately 153 hours of TV every month at home,” which totals almost five hours per day of not only viewing, but also listening.¹ The amount of music in television is truly staggering: Philip Tagg estimates that one-half of “industrialized-world” television viewing (two hours per day) involves the consumption of music, which—considering the number of television stations globally in operation—must yield an astronomical figure for how much music is broadcast over television at any given time.²

Given the prominence of television music in the habitus of Americans (and other world citizens)—Jon Burlingame calls it “the soundtrack of our lives”—the lack of scholarly engagement with this sub-genre of “music and screen media” should be startling.³ Musicology, however, has the tendency to erect barriers of canon to exclude serious contemplation of musical genres that attract too much or the wrong kind of contemporary popularity, whether (in sequence of canonization) jazz, rock, or film music. As a result of this “principle,” television music—positioned as “low status” entertainment—has yet to enter into serious musicological discourse, despite its importance. The first essay, “A Discipline Emerges: Reading Writing About Listening to Television,” will delve into this issue, and the other chapters of this book will demonstrate how television music can serve as a topic for rigorous academic scrutiny. These authors represent a body, perhaps a generation of music/media scholars who do not reject the practices and aesthetics of television music out of hand—in large part individuals for whom television was/is an integral part of their own lived experiences, these academics feel at home discussing either film or television music, while recognizing the important distinctions between them. I daresay that all of the contributors to *Music and Television: Channels of Listening* fall into this category.

This volume’s subtitle—*Channels of Listening*—captures the fluid nature of our experiences with music in television. It refers back to a classic and

pioneering collection of essays about television from 1987, which bore the title *Channels of Discourse: Television and Contemporary Criticism*, and appeared five years later in a revised edition.⁴ Like that book, *Music in Television: Channels of Listening* represents a first attempt to assemble a broad array of scholars—in this case, musicologists—“to understand our relationships with television [music]” (to paraphrase Robert C. Allen).⁵

Choice of Essays

The present essay collection can raise no claim for comprehensiveness and cannot even provide an overview of television music (which remains a desideratum of the field). As already referenced, the articles only deal with American, Canadian, and British television music, leaving the majority of world television untouched. Moreover, whole genres of television in North America and the UK are not at all discussed, even though they represent important areas of future research in terms of music: daytime drama, advertising, and music television, among others.⁶

Nevertheless, I hope to present here a sampling of the diverse kinds of work that can be undertaken and of the valuable insights—musical, social, political—that can be achieved through the closer consideration of music in its interfaces with television. Above and beyond appreciating the essays for their facts and interpretations thereof, the reader should also approach them from the viewpoint of learning about discursive methodologies in the analysis of television music and about general cultural positions and developments reflected in its musical practices. As the first collaborative book devoted to the general topic of television music in English, *Music in Television: Channels of Listening* can perhaps best fulfil its own historical role by encouraging further such study, whether along the lines explored in this volume or from new perspectives.⁷

Structure

The book falls into two large sections, respectively devoted to overviews of genres of television and television music and to specific case studies. The first section begins with an essay regarding the evolution of television music as a field of scholarly inquiry, from the first serious discussions of music’s role in television from the 1930s and 1940s up through the current emergence of a discipline, independent from film music and marked by specialist scholars such as Philip Tagg and Ron Rodman. Indeed, Rodman’s chapter here turns to the music itself by examining the broad arch of programs that challenge traditional genre assignments through their musical elements and, in doing so, uncovers the complicity of music in the hybridization of television genre. Shawn VanCour significantly opens up the discussion of television sound, an aspect of the televisual experience that has been neglected to date: he looks at it from the viewpoints of television technologies, production practices, textual forms,

and consumption habits, reviewing the literature and suggesting fruitful avenues of further inquiry. With Michael Saffle's essay about the nature and development of "rural music" in television, the book seriously considers a "mega-genre" of television music that heretofore has not received much scholarly attention due to prejudice against the relevant styles.⁸ Closing off the broader studies is Colin Roust's contribution, which looks at the rise and fall of the television documentary at NBC, focusing on the "prestige documentaries" of Lucy Jarvis and the role of music in three of her most important productions for the network.

Our case studies begin with Robynn J. Stilwell's analysis of how the 2005 BBC revival of *Doctor Who* enacts a sophisticated and sensitive employment of leitmotif to support and enhance the program's narrative element. By regarding the music in *South Park* through the lens of its cultural context and specific uses, Sean Nye explains how one of the most popular animated television programs of the present relies upon music to mediate its messages. Norma Coates introduces the problematic intersection of race, music, and politics during the 1960s in her essay about the television special *It's What's Happening, Baby!* (1965), which received harsh disapproval for using rock 'n' roll to reach out to inner-city youth for a federal jobs program. In taking a fresh look at Glenn Gould, Julie Brown explores the circulation of gendered images of the "weakly masculinised" musician between television and film in the late 1960s and 1970s, in connection with moral standards and with the consumption of popular music on television. Finally, Kip Pegley moves the discussion to Canadian televisual space in her critical analysis of identity issues and the problems of musical representation in the Canadian broadcast of the Live 8 benefit concerts.

These authors and their essays significantly advance our understanding of how and why music becomes a powerful cultural, social, and political force in its interface with television. To come to such insights, the contributors to this volume not only study the sounds and sources of television music, but also engage in theoretically and culturally informed interpretative work as necessitated by the discipline. I hope that the new perspectives gained through reading *Music in Television: Channels of Listening* will encourage further research into this fascinating and important aspect of our culture.

Notes

- 1 "Americans Watching More TV Than Ever . . .," *nielsenwire*, May 29, 2009, available online at http://blog.nielsen.com/nielsenwire/online_mobile/americans-watching-more-tv-than-ever (accessed June 27, 2010). The company claims that the figure represents a 1.2 percent increase from 2008, and that the general trajectory of television viewing over the past decade has been upwards, despite the various alternative media available to the American public.
- 2 Philip Tagg and Bob Clarida, *Ten Little Title Tunes: Towards a Musicology of the Mass Media* (New York and Montreal: The Mass Media Music Scholars' Press, 2003), p. 7.

- 3 Jon Burlingame, *TV's Biggest Hits: The Story of Television Themes from Dragnet to Friends* (New York: Schirmer, 1996), p. 1.
- 4 The first edition was edited by Robert C. Allen and published in Chapel Hill, NC, by the University of North Carolina Press. Slightly retitled as *Channels of Discourse, Reassembled: Television and Contemporary Criticism*, the collection was published by the University of North Carolina Press in 1992. In 2005, Routledge released an electronic version of the 1992 edition.
- 5 Robert C. Allen, "Introduction to the Second Edition: More Talk about TV," in *Channels of Discourse, Reassembled: Television and Contemporary Criticism*, p. 2. I make this claim with the recognition that essay collections have appeared about music in specific television programs, such as Paul Attinello, Janet K. Halfyard, and Vanessa Knights (eds.), *Music, Sound, and Silence in Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010).
- 6 Even though the late 1980s and 1990s brought a plethora of studies regarding MTV and similar vehicles for music on television, and subsequent scholarly interest waned with the decline of music television, it remains a fruitful field for investigation in its historical and global aspects.
- 7 For a theoretical/aesthetic approach to television music in Germany, see the German-language essay collection, *Musik im Fernsehen: Sendeformen und Gestaltungsprinzipien*, edited by Peter Moormann (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2010).
- 8 I call his designation "rural music" a mega-genre, because it embraces a variety of musical styles in television, including (but not limited to) country, mountain, Western, and even folk music, styles that have figured in varying admixtures within different televisual genres, including situation comedies, variety shows, and even prime-time drama (e.g., *The Waltons*).

Part I

Practices and Theories of Television Music

A Discipline Emerges

Reading Writing about Listening to Television

James Deaville

Television music has had difficulty establishing itself as a serious area for academic study. The early academic literature about film music fostered the erection of a canonic divide from television music, in order to obtain and maintain its own scholarly respectability.¹ Thus, film-music scholarship had little positive to say with regard to television music: Roy Prendergast, often recognized as one of the first American scholars to write seriously about music for cinema, dismisses music in television for a variety of reasons, including its brevity, commercialization, and production values.² This elitist attitude is shared by a number of specialists in film music, who either write disparagingly about television music, or overlook it in discussions that could benefit from consideration of the small screen. As recently as 2002, professor of film and video Michael Chanan (Roehampton University) could dismiss television music with the observation that “television contributes to . . . aural pollution by reducing every kind of music to the same level of a passing moment in the televisual flow.”³ Ron Rodman argues in contrast that

television is a transmitter of values and cultural beliefs . . . [that] communicates effectively because we, the viewers, are able to “read out” and decode these messages through an understanding of the language of television. Music, as one component of television, communicates both as a language in and of itself and in terms of the multiple roles it plays in TV programs and commercials.⁴

Nevertheless, as long as a hierarchical epistemological divide persists between film studies and television studies in general, scholars of television music will find little support from that quarter.⁵ And the inability or reluctance of television scholars to discuss the musical components of their subject further marginalizes those who cultivate the field.⁶ Even the work of a leading television studies specialist such as Horace Newcomb has tended to minimize the importance of music: in his voluminous *Encyclopedia of Television*, Newcomb and his editorial board opted to publish an article “Music on Television” rather than “Music in Television.”⁷ As a result, the entry’s authors almost exclusively

report on the history of diegetic music (performances on variety shows, MTV, etc.), rather than considering music in its “intradiegetic” (the underscore of television programming) and “extradiegetic” (music used by the network or station) functions that Rodman has identified.⁸

Studying Music in Television: Issues and Opportunities

From the very beginnings of network television in the late 1940s, music has played a significant role in the presentation of the medium and the shaping of its domestic consumption. The plenitude of music on the small screen comprises both an opportunity and a liability, the former because of the quantity and diversity of potential research topics, the latter because of the increased difficulty in sorting out music that has served as a significant or at least notable bearer of cultural, social, and/or political meanings. Moreover, given the “ephemerality” of the medium of television—as opposed to film—it is often impossible to gain access to the programs under consideration, let alone reconstruct the sonorous frame in which the music for those shows was situated.⁹ In comparison with film music, television music adds this complexity of the normative extradiegetic realm—that of music associated with the network or station—to the study of music in screen media, as it does issues arising from the context of television’s “planned flow,” as famously formulated by Raymond Williams.¹⁰ And we cannot ignore the aesthetic concerns expressed by critics of the medium and its music: Frith’s dictum that “music on television is less often heard for its own sake than as a device to get our visual attention” certainly characterizes the televisual experience of music,¹¹ even though he fails to differentiate that from the function of music in film.

Keeping these considerations in the back of our minds, the opportunities and insights afforded by the serious study of music in television should rival in significance and quantity those for film music. The ubiquity argument raised by Tagg (“a lot of people hear a lot of it”) is compelling,¹² as is his “awareness campaign” aimed at exposing the potential dangers from the persuasive televisual mix of narrative text, image, and sound.¹³ Negus and Street articulate one aspect of the value of looking more closely at television music when they observe that “television is a significant mediator of knowledge, understanding and experience of music.”¹⁴ However, inverting their formulation to “music is a significant mediator of the knowledge, understanding, and experience of television” significantly opens the discussion to embrace the cultural, social, and political work accomplished by music on television.

The Background

Television was one of the most anticipated technological developments of modern times—considerations of transmitting visual communication can be

traced back to Samuel Morse's 1844 unveiling of the telegraph—and yet its technical realization had to wait until the mid-1920s and its practical fulfillment until the late 1940s.¹⁵ Nevertheless, speculation about its future uses, opportunities, and limitations abounded, especially during the 1920s, even as inventors and the music industry were putting their minds to the task. Music figured prominently in one of the most celebrated prognostications about television, by columnist Charles H. Sewall in 1900:

The child born to-day in New York City, when in middle age he shall visit China, may see reproduced on a screen, with all its movement and color, light and shade, a procession at that moment passing along his own Broadway. A telephone line will bring to his ear music and the tramp of marching men [. . .] Sight and sound will have unlimited reach through terrestrial space.¹⁶

Here the congruence of moving image, music, and sound, globally broadcast as the event—a military parade?—occurs, is prophetically envisioned. That music played a role in early writings such as Sewall's may not strike us as unusual, since it was to become a regular feature of the cinematic experience. However, authors who speculated about music in television conceived a different role for it than the non-diegetic soundtrack that has become customary in programming: visionary pioneers such as David Sarnoff and Orrin E. Dunlap Jr. believed that television would serve as the medium for the transmission of opera, dance, and other musical genres and artistic forms that required hearing and seeing. Dunlap's *The Outlook for Television* from 1932 quotes Rosa Ponselle as an authority about the new technology: "I believe we are rapidly approaching the day when radio and the opera will be entirely reconciled by the addition of television to sound programs."¹⁷ An anonymous article in *Popular Science Monthly* of 1927 likewise argued for the value of enjoying opera in the home, made possible through the new Baird television process.¹⁸ The slow development of the technology meant that it was not until 1936 that the dream of opera on television was realized, when, on November 13, scenes from Albert Coates's opera *Mr. Pickwick* were broadcast from the BBC studios.¹⁹

The outbreak of World War II halted the further development of television technology temporarily: not only was the number of stations severely limited, but the production of television sets ceased between 1942 and 1945.²⁰ This large-scale termination of activity had some effect upon musicians, although because television was still in an incipient phase, the impact was significantly less than when cinema musicians lost their jobs in the late 1920s and early 1930s. As a result of this torpor, a temporary interregnum in the production of writing about television music set in.

Despite a reawakened interest in the broadcasting of performances as expressed in the literature about music on television during the later 1940s,

President of the American Federation of Musicians James Petrillo's 1945 ban on the participation of federation members in television performances effectively banished music from the small screen for three more years.²¹ The anticipation of television's role in broadcasting musical events was so high not only in literature of the time but also in the incipient industry that within two days of Petrillo's withdrawal of objections, March 18, 1948, two networks vied to present the first televised concert: on March 20, CBS broadcast Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra at 5:00 p.m. for its New York and Philadelphia affiliates, while NBC featured Arturo Toscanini and the NBC Symphony Orchestra at 6:30 p.m. to viewers in New York, Philadelphia, Washington, and Boston. These performances attracted a host of reviews and commentaries, including a column by Harold Taubman in the *New York Times*, which both closely evaluated the performance of the television technology, especially the use of the cameras, and noted future benefits of broadcasting concerts.²²

The expectations for television's potential for the diegetic presentation of music continued to rise into the 1950s, given the advent of television opera in 1951 with the premiere of Gian Carlo Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors* and an International Conference on Opera in Radio, TV and Film in 1956.²³ This phenomenon—presenting classical music on television as a means to educate and enculturate the public—evoked a sizable body of literature that pondered, pontificated, and prognosticated the value and future of televising “good” music, primarily opera. For example, in 1957, Lionel Salter (Head of Music for BBC Television, 1956–1963) contributed to the *Musical Times* a strong, well-supported apology for music on television in the UK, in which he argued for the large size of the potential audience and the benefits of seeing (and not just hearing) opera, while discussing some of the technical problems in producing musical performances for television.²⁴

At the same time, television regularly began to feature “intradiegetic” and “extradiegetic” music (program underscoring and network/station music), both as carry-overs from radio productions of the same programming (e.g., *The Lone Ranger* or *Dragnet*) and as newly composed (libraries of) music to accompany programs or to assist the televisual flow.²⁵ However, the aforementioned writers about television music (Graf, Helm, Salter) and their associates ignored the non-diegetic sounds emanating from the small screen in their living room, as did the trade magazines from the time, including *Billboard* and *Variety*, which instead carried stories about musical specials and the ever-popular musical variety shows. These weekly programs, whether *The Dinah Shore Show* (1951–1956), *The Perry Como Show* (1956–1959), or *The Nat King Cole Show* (1956–1957), did not at all register with the commentators on “serious” music on television, since their onscreen music was popular in character, which was not regarded as contributing to the edification of Americans.

Although the televised broadcasting of concerts and operatic performances never disappeared from the small screen, the genre of television opera essentially did, as did the literature about the medium's value for the

advancement of public taste and for the support of the institutions of musical performance.²⁶ This first generation of writings about music in television seemed to embrace, if not fetishize, the new medium and its technologies for the audiovisual dissemination of music. However, the discourse that emerged privileged televisual manifestations of high musical culture, with the implication that the public was in need of and knew how to process such artistic elevation. Television commentators were creating the conditions for a high–low split in assessing music on the small screen, with predictable results: the inability of broadcast performances of “high art” to usher in the anticipated revolution in North American taste proved the medium’s unsuitability for the task, while other television programming revealed itself as susceptible to pernicious, lowbrow commercial interests. Indeed, by the early 1960s, a serious critique of television had established itself, as reflected in Federal Communications Committee Chair Newton N. Minow’s 1961 appraisal of television programming as a “vast wasteland.”²⁷ This perception would become so widespread and entrenched that serious discussion of music for television would have to wait for over three decades to acquire some degree of respectability within the traditional North American musicological establishment.

New Beginnings

The limited literature about television-music scholarship has recognized Philip Tagg and his 1979 dissertation “*Kojak: 50 Seconds of Television Music—Towards the Analysis of Affect in Popular Music*” as serving a pioneering role in the field.²⁸ This substantial study, over 300 pages in length and an intellectual tour de force of musical semiotics, may well occupy a defining position for work on television music in the English language, but various German scholars were already seriously studying music and the mass media, including television, during the 1970s. Culture critic Theodor W. Adorno had staked out his position on media long before that, and television also received his scrutiny in publications that extended from 1954 to 1968.²⁹ His 1968 interview in *Der Spiegel*, “Musik im Fernsehen ist Brimborium,” dismisses televised musical performances as misdirecting the audience’s attention from the musical to the optical, from the work’s essential features to the unessential aspects of the production.³⁰ Adorno’s critique of television in general found circulation among socialist circles in the late 1960s and 1970s, especially to the extent that it repudiated the medium’s commercial basis. Television was an ongoing topic of academic discussion during those years in Germany (West and East) and not only because of its role in the *Klassenkämpfe* (class conflicts): the discipline of media studies was emerging (on both sides of the Atlantic), the West German federal states had added the contested second television channel ZDF, and the issue of television and education came to the fore, not least through the introduction and adaptation of the American children’s program *Sesamstraße* in 1970.³¹

These factors undoubtedly led to an earnest engagement with television music among German scholars during the 1970s, and not all of it in support of Adorno's opinion. Thus, the journal *Musik und Bildung* of 1975 published four consecutive articles about music in television, which discussed international perspectives, "amateur music," pedagogical roles and potential, and practical issues (by a music editor for television).³² The very existence of these essays, regardless of their positions (which were at times rather hostile towards the medium), argues for the seriousness with which German academics regarded the intersections between television and music, both in its diegetic and its non-diegetic aspects.³³

A milestone publication appeared just one year later, the essay collection *Musik in den Massenmedien Rundfunk und Fernsehen: Perspektiven und Materialien*, edited by Hans-Christian Schmidt.³⁴ Schmidt's "Vorwort" makes clear the music-pedagogical intentions of the volume for the mass media of film, radio, and television, thereby tying in to one of the prevailing themes in German media studies at the time. Five of the fifteen articles directly address music in television, albeit again in part from a negative standpoint: Helga de la Motte-Haber rejects the music for pedagogically oriented children's programming as featuring "dilettantism, poverty of ideas, lack of differentiation, and one-sided orientation to *Unterhaltungsmusik*," for example.³⁵ However, Schmidt himself produced an essay that could be called prescient for future directions in television music studies in general and for the work of Tagg in particular.³⁶ In studying title music for television series (which his subtitle significantly calls "a daily phenomenon"), the editor undertook an experiment with students whereby he played melodies from various musical repertoires and asked them to identify the type of program for which they would be best suited. He then analyzed the data semiotically, which Schmidt used to justify the closer examination of theme music in television as "a special and 'daily' case of functional music."³⁷ A detailed discussion of selected, specific examples—ranging from the *Tageschau* and *Heute* newscast themes to the titles music for *Der Kommissar* and *Columbo*—reveals how seriously Schmidt took the music, to the extent of including notation of the themes for several shows. The analyses served the purpose of illustrating the effectiveness and validity of this music within the ambit of its specific functionality, a conclusion that reflects Schmidt's advanced thought about television music.

It is significant that, above and beyond Schmidt's contribution, Friedrich Spangemacher's article about music in *Sesamstraße* and Bernhard Weil's twenty-page "model analysis" of music from one episode of the television series *Der Fall von nebenan* not only scrutinize specific programs but also incorporate musical notation, a marker of seriousness. Other German-language studies from the mid to late 1970s examine music in current television, including Herrmann Battenberg's work on music for crime shows and *Bonanza*,³⁸ as well as further research conducted by Schmidt and Thiel.³⁹ Much of this scholarship, however, positioned television music within music pedagogy

(thus the publications in *Musik und Bildung*) or as a subfield within media and music studies, rather than as a subject worthy of study in itself, which may have had the effect of marginalizing the research surrounding it. While serious studies continued to appear from the 1980s up to the present, German scholars have persisted in regarding television music as a field for the contestation of aesthetic and social-political values in a broad sense (despite the pioneering close readings of Schmidt and others of his generation) and not as a vehicle for the creation of community and subject identities. Thus, the 2010 volume *Musik im Fernsehen: Sendeformen und Gestaltungsprinzipien* took as its focus “the relationship of image and music with regard to the respective conventions of genre and format, [. . .] principal lines of development of visual and musical shaping within the particular program forms.”⁴⁰

At the same time as the German flow of literature about television music during the 1970s, Tagg was working on his dissertation. This study presents in detail the author’s semiotic approach towards the analysis of “popular music” (the *Kojak* theme music) and, as such, is arguably more about methodology than television music, as the dissertation’s subtitle implies. Still, Tagg’s analysis ultimately yields valuable conclusions for the interpretation of the *Kojak* theme and important results to illustrate how such musicological work can inform readings of televisual texts: “(1) musical more than visual message determines the affective evaluation of *Kojak* as a positive, heroic figure; (2) the *Kojak* theme reinforces a monocentric world view.”⁴¹

In the intervening years, Tagg’s book—now available in a slightly revised edition from 2000—has taken on the status of a pioneering study,⁴² but at the time of its first appearance *Kojak: Fifty Seconds of Television Music* generated little interest in North America, for reasons stated in the “Preface” to this book: the musicological establishment there did not consider the topics of music in television (or other broadcast media) or popular music as suited for serious scholarly discourse. It could be argued that, by using television music as a means to understanding popular music, essentially labelling it a subset of the genre, he consigned it to neglect by historical musicologists and their publications.⁴³ Tagg nevertheless was ahead of his time not only in his areas of study but also in his “anthropological” approach to music research and his identification of music’s potential as “hidden persuader.”⁴⁴

Music Television

If Tagg’s investigations did not immediately spawn similar research into the scoring of television programs during the 1980s, one reason was the preoccupation of scholars with a new televisual musical phenomenon, or an old one in new guise: music television. MTV was launched in 1981, and, although its primary features were diegetic performances of music (music on television), it differed from earlier attempts both with opera and instrumental music and with the variety show in that, as a station, MTV dedicated itself fully to