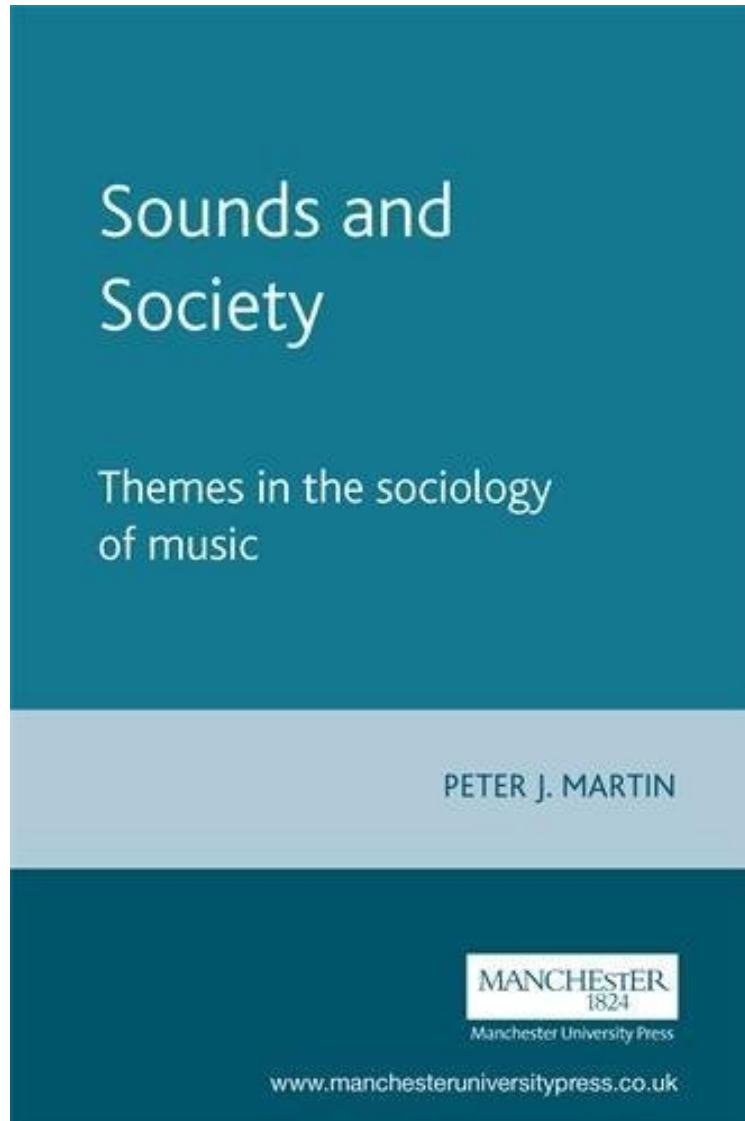


[Download ebook] Sounds and Society: Themes in the sociology of music (Music and Society MUP)

## Sounds and Society: Themes in the sociology of music (Music and Society MUP)

*Peter J. Martin*

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**Peter J. Martin : Sounds and Society: Themes in the sociology of music (Music and Society MUP)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Sounds and Society: Themes in the sociology of music (Music and Society MUP):

20 of 20 people found the following review helpful. How does music acquire meaning? By Autonomieus That is the question this book sets out to answer. It is a serious work of sociology, and not light reading, but recommended to

anyone who has ever pondered the question. Martin is clear and logical in his exposition -- no postmodern gibberish here! -- but this is an academic work, not breezy journalism. Martin argues against three widespread views: 1) that music contains some essential meaning, (for instance that major chords produce a happy feeling physiologically), 2) the Cartesian view that music is produced by rationality, (and so Western Classical music reflects the pinnacle of rationality), and 3) that music is simply a reflection of the society in which it was produced. This third view is a simplistic sociological view, which Martin effectively challenges, along with the two traditional views. What he advances, quite effectively, is a social constructionist view of music. The meaning of music is the result of the interactions of its producers and those who hear it, within a given social context. A reasonable view, to be sure, but one made with systematic care, and a thorough critique of various theorists along the way, including Marx, Durkheim and Weber in the introductory section, Cooke, Shepherd, and Adorno, the sole subject of one long chapter. **SOUNDS AND SOCIETY** is worth reading either for understanding music, or for appreciating the importance of sociology to that understanding, or both. (I am a sociologist by profession, as well as a music lover, so for me it works on both levels!) This is a definitive work -- Martin could have called it "The Sociology of Music," but that title had already been used.

In this introduction to the social analysis of music, the author argues that musical meaning must be understood as socially constructed, rather than inherent, and that the notion of a correspondance between social and musical structures is highly problematic. An alternative approach, based on the "social action" perspective is outlined, and the book concludes with a discussion of the social situation of music in advanced capitalist society. The text draws on studies spanning the whole spectrum of Western music - rock bands to symphony orchestras, medieval plainchant to avant-garde jazz.

From the Back Cover Despite the importance of music in contemporary culture, and the explosion of interest in cultural studies, the social analysis of music has remained relatively undeveloped. In this pioneering new book, Dr. Martin develops a genuinely sociological perspective on music. About the Author Peter J. Martin is Senior Lecturer and Head of the Department of Sociology, University of Manchester.