

If music in everyday life is overwhelmingly invisible for the majority of those who hear and use it, it's not unreasonable to ask why music studies, including popular music studies, have been so dominated by visible music, mostly in terms of vocal or instrumental performance (occasionally also as sound engineering), but much less, and much less visibly, as composition or arrangement. That anomaly can be partly explained through deconstruction of the absolute music aesthetic and through a critical examination of music education's lopsided concern for poiesis at the expense of aesthesis. But the anomaly is also caused by the simple fact, obvious to the point of tautology, that, in a scopocentric culture...visible music draws much more attention to itself.

—Tagg, pp. 17-18

- **What do you think of Tagg's division of 'visible' and 'invisible' music?**
- **Is any of the music you research yourself invisible?**

I have always been concerned with...the way particular songs are situated within a single style and across various styles, and not so much with the kind of social or political statement that the music may have been making. In many years of playing in a wide variety of bands and performing situations, I found that most of the musicians with whom I worked shared this basic attitude. This is not to deny that others may have found that the same music makes social or political statements, or that there were social forces at work in my experience in unconscious ways; my claim is simply that this is not the principal manner in which its practitioners have tended to understand most popular music. I find that many of the claims made in popular-music scholarship, interesting and revealing though they sometimes are, never really capture the popular-music experience as I understand it. In short, I distrust the popular-music scholars' claims that this music is meaningful in ways that are principally socially constructed.

—Covach, p.466

- **Why do you think Covach's experiences suggest that musicians tend not to be socially-focused in their approach to music?**
- **Do you agree?**