Synopsis

A clear and comprehensive volume spanning the entire theory course, the fourth edition of Harmony and Voice Leading begins with coverage of basic concepts of theory and harmony and moves into coverage of advanced dissonance and chromaticism. It emphasizes the linear aspects of music as much as the harmonic, and introduces large-scale progressions--linear and harmonic--at an early stage. The fourth edition now includes a chapter introducing species counterpoint and integrates that material into the rest of the text. A new premium web site for students will provide interactive, guided exercises for new material covered in each unit. The instructor's companion site will include "Guidelines for Instructors," a new instructor's manual written by the authors.

About This Edition

New Features  A new, password-protected premium web site for students includes interactive, guided exercises for material covered in the text and musical examples from the literature in both streaming and downloadable format. Workbooks and CD sets will be available in print or on a password-protected site. A new instructor's companion site will include "Guidelines for Instructors," an instructor's manual written by Allen Cadwallader. The text and musical examples have been thoroughly revised for increased clarity and accessibility. Clearer visual presentation, increased clarity and consistency of terminology and symbols, and more guidance in the exercises increase the text's effectiveness. A new chapter introduces species counterpoint, and the text integrates this material into subsequent units.

Additional Features  "Points for Review" at the end of each unit (before the exercises) offer brief, consecutively numbered summations of the key concepts covered in that unit. Important points are summarized in boxes as needed throughout each unit to help students check the progress of their learning. Exercises included at the end of each unit have students undertake such creative assignments as writing short progressions of various types and harmonizing melodies with unfigured/figured bass lines. Each unit includes 10 to 40 musical examples--brief excerpts that illustrate the specific harmonic and voice-leading techniques discussed at that point. The musical examples are drawn primarily from masterpieces of concert repertoire, but a few abstract pieces composed by the authors are also included. Important points are summarized in boxes as needed throughout each unit to help students check the progress of their learning.


Book Information

Hardcover: 736 pages
This text is extremely deep and challenging. I did find it irritating how the authors chose to abandon some conventions. Most irritating was the use of upper case Roman numerals for all chords regardless of quality. A barrier to learning for me, as the subject matter is difficult enough without having to deal with that quirk. The authors do explain their reasons for this, but it’s a pain in the butt. Additionally there are other labelings of certain types of progressions that I found a bit confusing.

I've used a few theory books in my career, but this one is by far the most in-depth and challenging. If you are required to take theory and this is your text for the course, stand by, you are in for a ride. If you have an excellent professor (I did), it's do-able.

Warning: Please be advised that when you purchase this book on , it *does not* include access to the "premium website" as advertised. In order to have access to the online accompanying materials for this book, you need to purchase a "Course Mate Code" from the manufacturer for an additional $65.

Thais is the most comprehensive text on the subject. If you are a composer, or even a musician, who wants to learn harmony in depth, this book is a must. However, bear in mind that it only deals, though in depth, with Major-Minor tonality. Modal, jazz, or modern (contemporary) harmony are not covered here. Nevertheless, this is not a demerit of the book because dealing with each of these kinds harmony needs a totally separate text. I LOVE IT.
I chose this book because it looks at the music as a whole—not just the harmony. With a broader understanding of the make-up of the music, the performer can learn music faster and give a better performance. I would definitely recommend this book.

The fourth edition of Aldwell and Schachter remains the best available reference for writing harmony. The organization of the chapters makes this book perfect for when you want ideas for how to harmonize a particular note or phrase. I imagine this would also be a great text for students of harmony as well. The explanations are clear, and the examples are all "good music", (mostly from before 1900). I recommend the CD as well, since the examples are performed well on it.

This book is overpriced and is confusing to read. The language is very wordy and takes forever to learn voice leading concepts. It took me an hour to learn a simple modulation concept with this book whereas the Piston Harmony book puts it in a very simple way.

The best book I have found to explain the foundation of music theory. All the others on are worthless compared to this one plus I can trade it in for almost full price because this is the book every good conservatory uses in the USA. Buy and study this book it will help your skill set immeasurably.

Really in depth concepts and examples. Hands down one of the best harmony treats I've come across... Check it out for yourself!

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