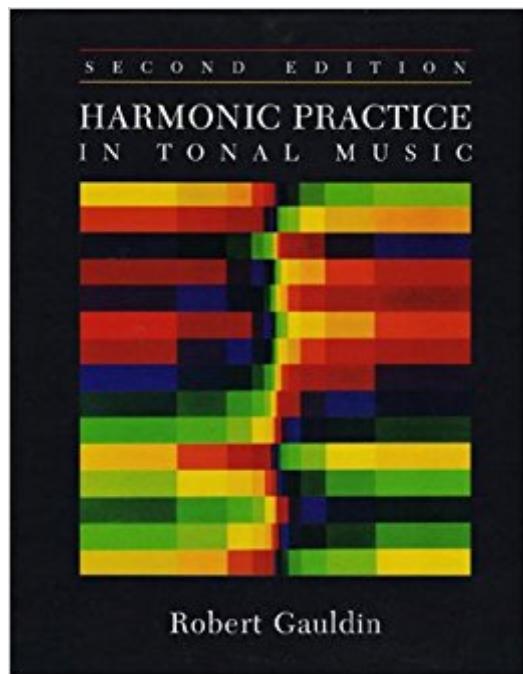


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# Harmonic Practice In Tonal Music (Second Edition)



## **Synopsis**

Conceptually sophisticated and exceptionally musical, *Harmonic Practice in Tonal Music* provides a thorough treatment of harmony and voice-leading principles in tonal music. Taking a linear functional approach, Professor Gauldin uses clear explanations and outstanding musical examples to show students how individual chords function in the overall structure of a piece, explaining how both harmonic and melodic forces contribute to the development of musical ideas. For the Second Edition, Professor Gauldin has undertaken a comprehensive revision that responds directly to the suggestions of instructors. The new text emphasizes fundamental concepts, using a more effective organization and simpler, more accessible language to bring the most important ideas and information to the foreground. The music literature examples included in the text are now available on this single CD-ROM with performances by students and faculty from the Eastman School of Music.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

I quite enjoy professor Gauldin's harmony text. It was comprehensive and yes, as the publisher's review states concise. Personally, I studied theory/harmony out of several different texts (Benjamin, et.al.; Siegmeister; Kostka; Piston) as an undergraduate and on my own time and I find Gauldin's to be one of the best I have come across. While in theory pedagogy class I was able to study and dissect over two dozen texts from various regions and time periods. "Harmonic Practice..." is a modern text which is great today for the modern student. The use of basic Schenker reductions is

an excellent idea and one that helps the students realize linear aspects of the music that many past harmony texts either ignore or too briefly discuss. Gauldin gives a nice balance of both the vertical and linear aspects of music throughout this text (it reminds somewhat, although much better, of Elie Siegmeister's "Harmony & Melody"). The overall appearance of the book is very similar to many of the current high school texts that students use today. This is a comfortable approach for students coming into theory for the first time or with little background in the area. Many of the reviews I have read seem to be critical in areas they know little of. Yes, Gauldin presents the basics (scales, chords, etc.), but many, many undergraduate level texts do so in order for review. Also, many critics have discussed professor Gauldin's scale building on 5ths. While this is in the text it is not the primary focus on scale construction, merely a footnote (p. 27). Overall this is a very good theory text for undergraduates which could and eventually will use some improvements (the misprint in the bass of the second mm. in Ex. 10 p. 107). This book gives much insight into many aspects of beginning theory, basic Schenker principles, voice-leading, form (the excursions are a great idea), and analysis that many other books in this field often neglect. Like most popular theory texts, "Harmonic Practice" is excellent for an undergrad program, so long as the students have a teacher with a strong foundation in theory. I highly recommend this text.

Robert Gauldin's textbook aims at instilling in the student an awareness of the linear forces that create music. In his preface, Gauldin states that traditional theory and functional harmonic analysis "tends to neglect the melodic aspects of the music and the way those linear forces shape the harmony." This point of view is heartily endorsed by this reviewer. The text is organized into four main sections: basic elements of music, diatonic harmony (including binary/ternary form), chromatic harmony (including sonata form and contrapuntal forms), and advanced chromatic techniques. Five appendices include acoustics, modes and scales, species counterpoint, Jazz and commercial music, and conducting patterns. The text purposes to introduce students to linear-reductive (i.e., Schenkerian) analysis on lower structural levels (reductions tend to be foreground and early middleground). As it is not a text in Schenkerian analysis per se, and as the more remote structural levels are progressively more difficult to perceive Gauldin does not burden the students with Schenker's more esoteric terminology for larger formal constructs. Gauldin also provides the student with an introduction to the implication-realization models of Leonard B. Meyer. The explanations of concepts are lucid and conversational; the analyses are insightful and reveal to the student the fundamental voice leading underlying a given passage. The text is very attractively produced, and joins the texts of Mitchell (Elementary Harmony), Aldwell & Schachter (Harmony & Voice Leading),

and Forte (Tonal Harmony in Concept & Practice) in the task of attempting to enlighten and sensitize students to the melodic dimension of music, of which harmony is a by-product. An important by-product, to be sure, and one that in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries assumes the structural role held by melody in the previous centuries. Yet it is important to teach music theory from an historical perspective, and Gauldin's text does just this. He achieves a perfect balance between the vertical and the horizontal dimensions of music

This book is quite good despite some of the reviews presented here. The MAIN reason I adopted this book for my Harmony Class was due to the fact that my students reviewed it and they found it to be superior to the textbook we had been using. (5th Edition DeVoto/Piston-Ouch!) What I like about the book is that it teaches structure/color & structure/motion from the beginnning. Even though it doesn't use full blown Schenkerian analysis, my class and I have found the graphs to be extremely helpful in understanding the underlying structure of a work. It is one of the few texts that demonstrate that there is more to analyzing music than the, impressive but sadly inefficient, Roman Numerals. I have yet to find a perfect Harmony textbook, but this one is close. I recommend it highly.

This is the theory book my university uses for it's theory courses. We use it for Theory 1 through Theory 4 (2 years). I've loved this book with what I've studied this far. I do agree with those who have said you have to be ambitious to take on this book on your own. Our professors do well with their explanations and play the excerpts on piano (they use the pre-recorded examples when it's above their abilities). In combination with a good teachers, this book is awesome. I could personally sit in a theory class all day with this book, but then again, I'm a major music dork.

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