

**The Chorale in North American Music Theory:  
 A Model of Musical Structure?**

Presentation at the 2019 Meeting of the South-Central Society for Music Theory

**Figure 1:** Textbooks in corpus (ranked by popularity)

<b>Textbook</b>	<b>Resp.</b>	<b>%</b>
Clendinning and Marvin, <i>The Musician's Guide to Theory and Analysis</i> , 3rd Ed. (2016)	29	22.7%
Burstein and Straus, <i>Concise Introduction to Tonal Harmony</i> , 1st Ed. (2016)	25	19.5%
Kostka, Payne, and Almén, <i>Tonal Harmony, with an Introduction to Twentieth-Century Music</i> , 7th Ed. (2013)	22	17.2%
Laitz, <i>The Complete Musician: An Integrated Approach to Theory, Analysis, and Listening</i> , 4th Ed. (2016)	20	15.6%
Aldwell, Schachter, and Cadwallader, <i>Harmony and Voice Leading</i> , 4th Ed. (2011)	19	14.8%
Roig-Francolí, <i>Harmony in Context</i> , 2nd Ed. (2011)	3	2.3%
Shaffer, Hughes, and Moseley, <i>Open Music Theory</i> (2014)	3	2.3%
Turek and McCarthy, <i>Theory for Today's Musician</i> , 2nd Ed. (2014)	3	2.3%
Benjamin, Horvit, Koozin, and Nelson, <i>Techniques and Materials of Music: From the Common Practice Period Through the Twentieth Century</i> , 7th Ed. (2015)	2	1.6%
Snodgrass, <i>Contemporary Musicianship: Analysis and the Artist</i> , 1st Ed. (2015)	2	1.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>100%</b>

The questionnaire from which these data derive was issued in spring of 2018 and contained several additional categories, including “no textbook,” “in-house materials,” and “other” with a blank field. Responses to the first two of these categories, which constituted an additional 69, are omitted here, while textbooks written into the “other” category and with two or more responses have been incorporated above.

**Figure 2:** Chorales as musical examples

	Col. A	Col. B	Col. C	Col. D	Col. E	Col. F	Col. G
Textbook	No. exx.	No. chorales	% chorales	Tune only	Fig. Bass chorales	Non-JSB	With texts
Clendinning and Marvin*	401	30	7.5	-	-	-	-
Burstein and Straus	323	46	14.2	1	1	3	-
Kostka et al.*	222	19	8.6	2	-	2	-
Laitz*	341	7	2.1	-	-	-	4
Aldwell et al.	478	71	14.9	-	3	2	-
Roig-Francolí	297	34	11.4	-	-	1	-
Shaffer et al.	95	0	0.0	-	-	-	-
Turek and McCarthy*	296	24	8.1	-	-	1	1
Benjamin et al.*	35	3	8.6	-	-	-	-
Snodgrass	72	0	0.0	-	-	-	-
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2,560</b>	<b>234</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>

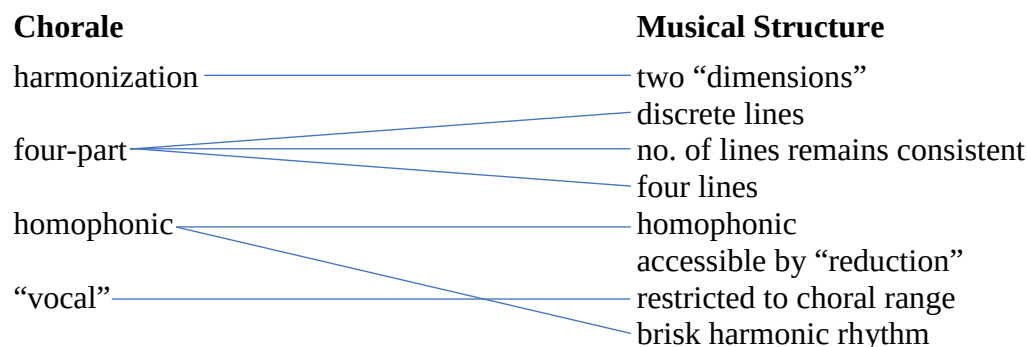
\* = examples from chapters on atonal music omitted

Examples counted under Col. B include examples of actual musical repertoire transmitted without alteration of pitch- or rhythmic content and labelled as “chorale” by the author. All works counted here clearly have Lutheran origins.


**Figure 3:** Statements regarding “musical structure” (emphasis mine)


- “When we listen to music, we hear two dimensions of sound. . . . Horizontally, **music is made up of** melodies or lines; vertically, of chords or harmonies” (Roig-Francolí, *Harmony in Context*, 55)
- “Much instrumental music—though often more elaborate on the surface—**is based on a framework** of four voices” (Aldwell, Schachter, and Cadwallader, *Harmony and Voice Leading*, 93)
- “Another type of short score [SATB on two staves] is created by reducing music to its ‘**essence**,’ omitting pitch doubling and compacting the voices into a single register (approximately three octaves)” (Laitz, *Complete Musician*, 174)

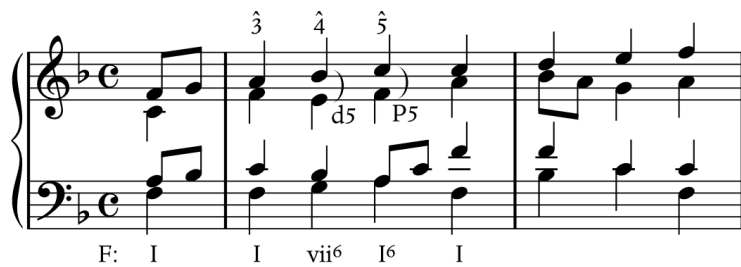
**Figure 4:** Comparison of “chorale” and “musical structure”



**Figure 5:** A typical visual representation of a chorale (from Burstein and Straus, *Concise Introduction*, 142)

13.18 J. S. Bach, Chorale 26 





F: I I vii<sup>6</sup> I<sup>6</sup> I

**Figure 6:** Aspects of visual representation of chorales vs. other repertoire

Textbook	Col. A	Col. B	Col. C	Col. D	Col. E
	Chorales			Other Rep.	
	Staves	Text	Transl	Texts	Transl
Clendinning and Marvin	2	N	N	Y	Y
Burstein and Straus	2	N	N	Y	Y
Kostka, Payne, and Almén	2	N	N	Y	N
Laitz	var.	var.	var.	Y	N(e)
Aldwell, Schachter, and Cadwallader	2	N	N	Y	Y
Roig-Francolí	2	N	N	Y	N
Turek and McCarthy	2	N	N	Y	N
Benjamin et al.	2	N	N	Y	Y

var. = variable

N(e) = typically no, but exceptions exist

**Figure 7:** Aspects of aural representation of chorales vs. other repertoire

Textbook	Chorales	Other rep.
	Instr.	Instr.
Clendinning and Marvin	pno., org.	various
Burstein and Straus	pno.	various
Kostka, Payne, and Almén	org.	faithful
Laitz	var.	various
Aldwell, Schachter, and Cadwallader	-	-
Roig-Francolí	pno.	various
Turek and McCarthy	pno.	faithful
Benjamin et al.	var.	faithful

“var.” = some chorales performed with voices

“faithful” = instrumentation of recording reflects instrumentation of printed example

“various” = instrumentation of recording in some but not all cases reflects instrumentation of printed example

**Figure 8:** Representation of “musical structure” compared with a chorale (Aldwell, Schachter, and Cadwallader, *Harmony and Voice Leading*, 59 [section “Texture and Structure”] and 93)

**4-20** note-against-note texture



**6-1** Bach, Chorale 293, phrase 1




**Figure 9:** Aldwell and Schachter (*Harmony and Voice Leading*) on “underlying structure”

- “The three successive reductions (b, c, and d) **help clarify the meaning** of this passage” (372, emphasis mine)
- “Under the music is a *reduction* (simplification) of its contents, with the left-hand part written in block chords and only **the most essential tones** of the melody shown” (47, bold emphasis mine)
- “The reduction shows that the piece begins with **three real parts**” (99–100, emphasis mine)
- “The reduction in Example 19-3 shows that the Mendelssohn excerpt, too, has **only three real voices**” (333, emphasis mine)


**Figure 10:** Laitz (*Complete Musician*) on “underlying structure”

- “Our analyses will always go deeper than simply labeling surface events, for **it is these deeper relationships that actually control the surface events**” (153, emphasis mine)
- “Mozart’s surface embellishments have now been reduced to **the generating four-voice structure**” (253, emphasis mine)

**Figure 11:** Example of employing four-part homophonic vocal texture to illustrate harmonic and voice-leading principles (Clendinning and Marvin, *Musician’s Guide*, 260)

**EXAMPLE 13.6: Extensions of dominant harmony** 

(a) Adding the seventh: V to V<sup>7</sup>      (b) Transferred resolution



D: V<sup>8</sup> — 7 I  
complete incomplete

d: V<sup>5</sup><sub>b</sub> V<sup>7</sup> i  
incomplete complete

## Bibliography

- Aldwell, Edward, Carl Schachter, and Allen Cadwallader. 2011. *Harmony and Voice Leading*. 4th ed. Boston: Schirmer/Cengage Learning.
- Benjamin, Thomas, Robert Nelson, Michael M. Horvit, and Timothy Koozin. 2015. *Techniques and Materials of Music: From the Common Practice Period Through the Twentieth Century*. 7th ed. Belmont, CA: Cengage Learning, Inc.
- Burstein, L. Poundie and Joseph Nathan Straus. 2016. *Concise Introduction to Tonal Harmony*. 1st ed. New York: W.W. Norton.
- Clendinning, Jane Piper and Elizabeth West Marvin. 2016. *The Musician's Guide to Theory and Analysis*. 3rd ed. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.
- Kostka, Stefan, Dorothy Payne, and Byron Almén. 2013. *Tonal harmony: With an Introduction to Twentieth-Century Music*. 7th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Laitz, Stephen G. 2016. *The Complete Musician: An Integrated Approach to Theory, Analysis, and Listening*. 4th ed. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Marshall, Robert L. and Robin A. Leaver. "Chorale." In *Grove Music Online*. Accessed 18 February 2019. <https://doi-org.proxy.lib.umich.edu/>.
- Roig-Francolí, Miguel A. 2011. *Harmony in Context*. 2nd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Sanchez-Behar, Alexander. 2018. "Looking Forward, Looking Back: Reconsidering the Study of J. S. Bach's Chorales in the Undergraduate Curriculum." *BACH: Journal of the Riemenschneider Bach Institute* 49, no. 2.
- Schachter, Carl. 2018. *Art of Tonal Analysis: Twelve Lessons in Schenkerian Theory*. Edited by Joseph Nathan Straus. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Shaffer, Kris, Bryn Hughes, and Brian Moseley. 2014. *Open Music Theory*. Hybrid Pedagogy Publishing. Accessed 18 February 2019. <http://openmusictheory.com/>.
- Snodgrass, Jennifer Sterling. 2015. *Contemporary Musicianship: Analysis and the Artist*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Turek, Ralph and Daniel McCarthy. *Theory for Today's Musician*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Walter, Johann. 1524. *Geystliche gesangk-Buchleyen*. Wittenberg: n. p.