

**Some Reharmonization Techniques for  
Popular Music:  
Melodic Skeletons, the Melodic-Harmonic  
Divorce, and Meta-Schemas**

Trevor de Clercq

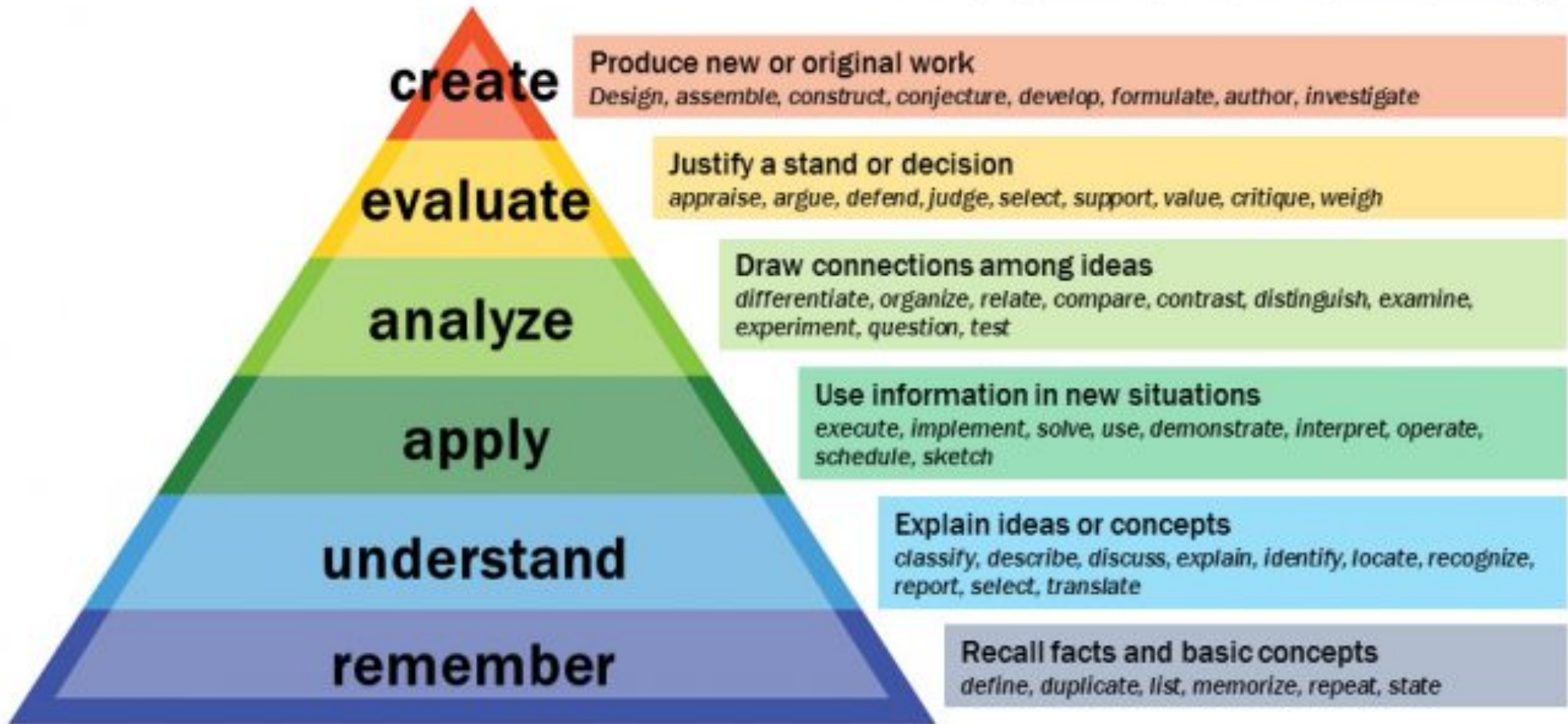


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Association for Popular Music Education Conference  
Middle Tennessee State University

# “Create”: the Peak of Educational Objectives

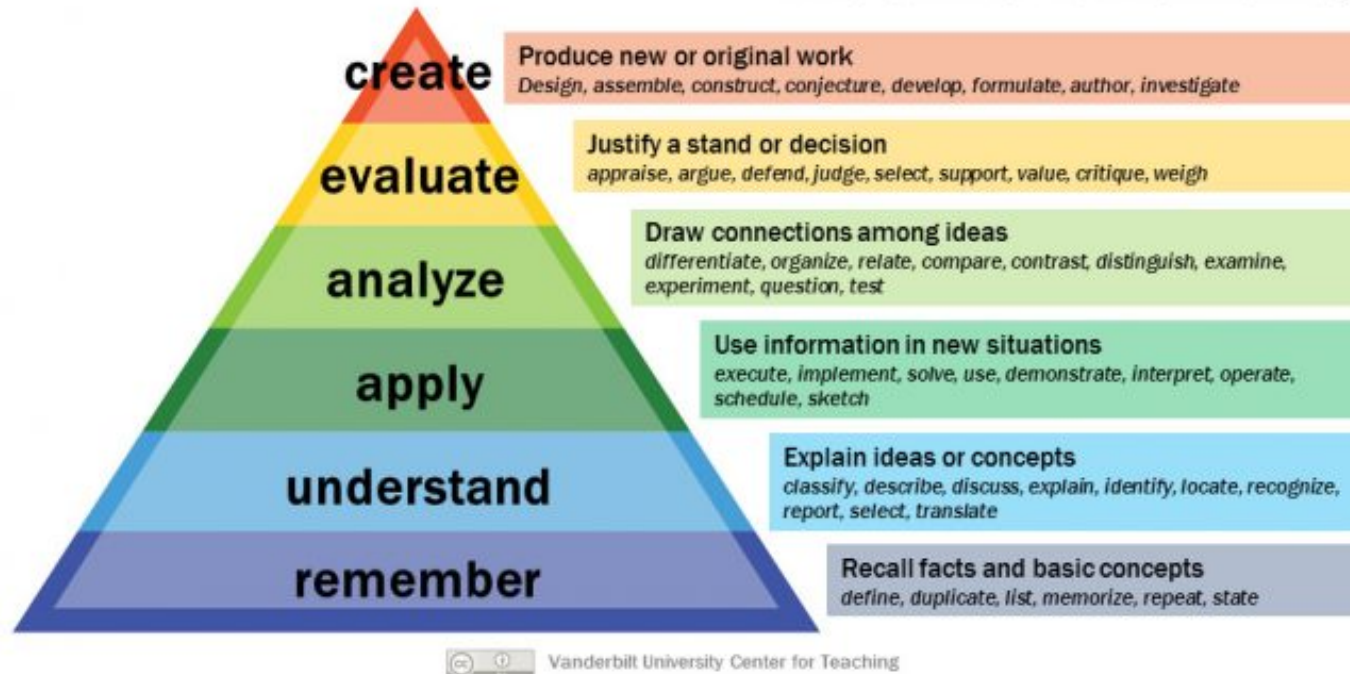
## Bloom's Taxonomy



Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching

# Teaching Harmony

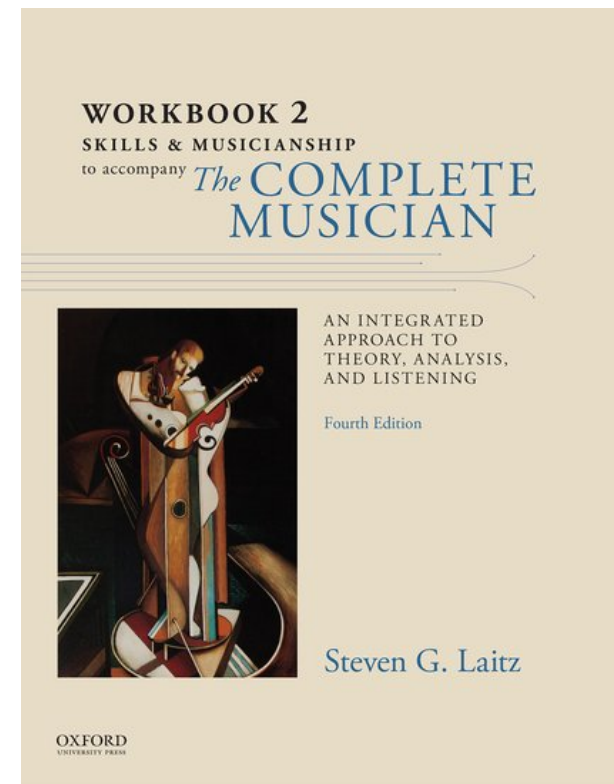
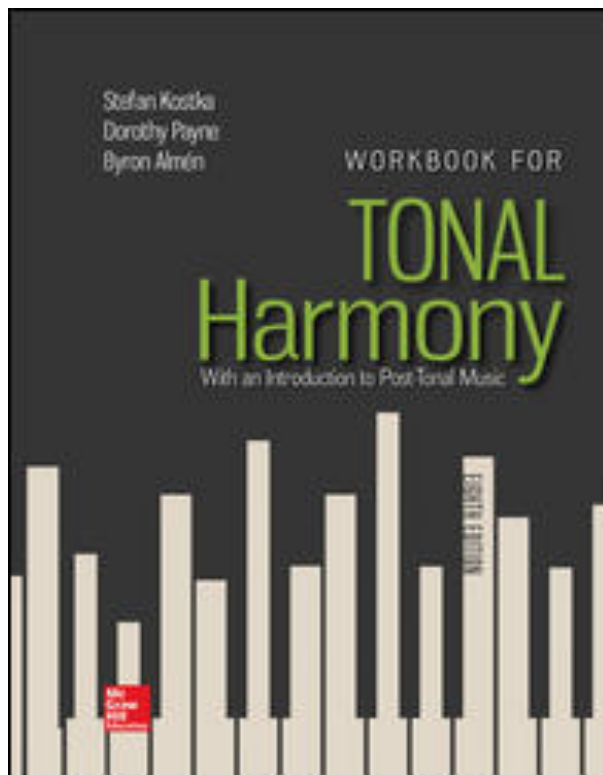
## Bloom's Taxonomy



- Students should “create” harmony

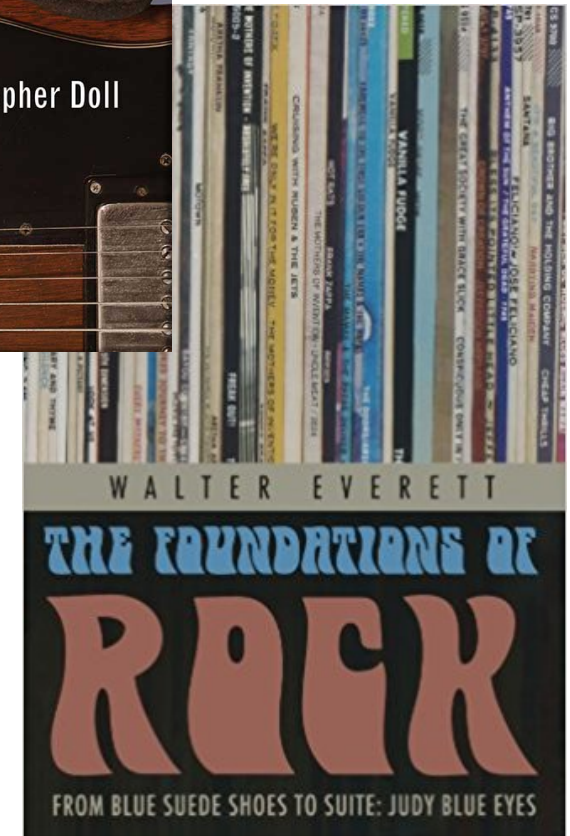
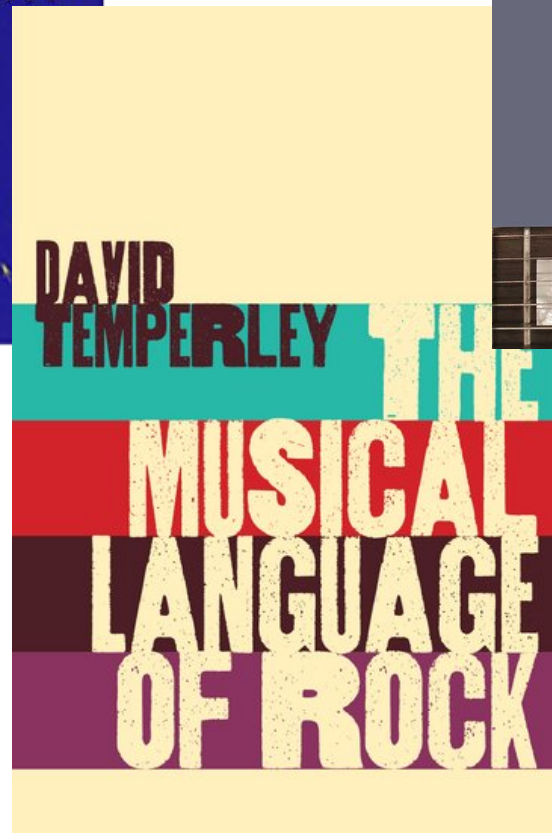
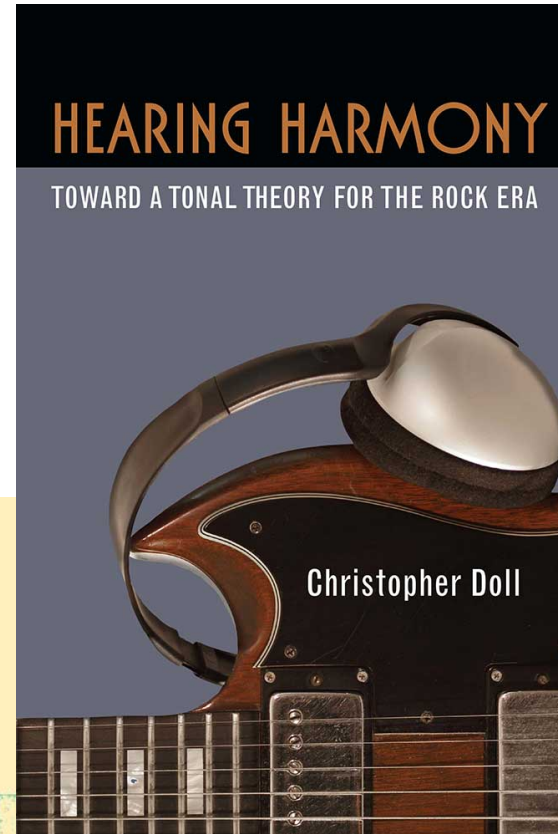
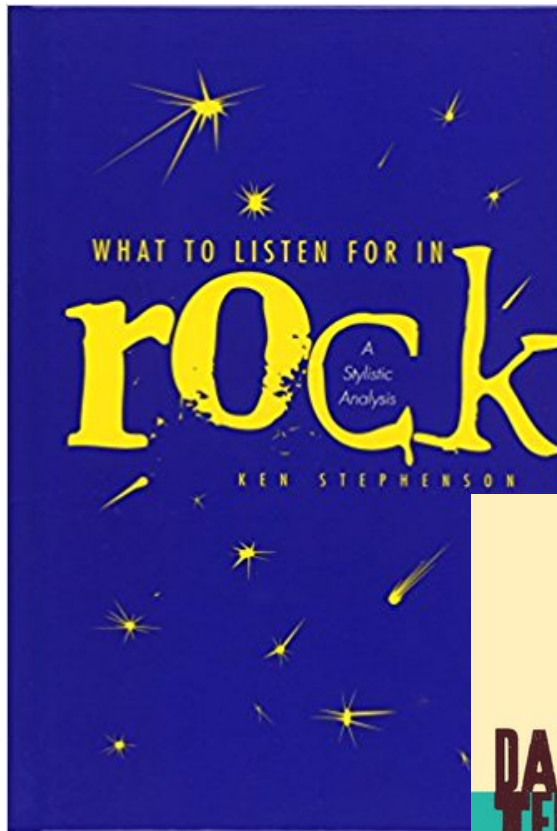
# Melody Harmonization in “Classical” Workbooks

- Typically chorale-style or figured-bass
- One chord per melodic note
- One chord per beat
- Emphasizes traditional harmonic syntax

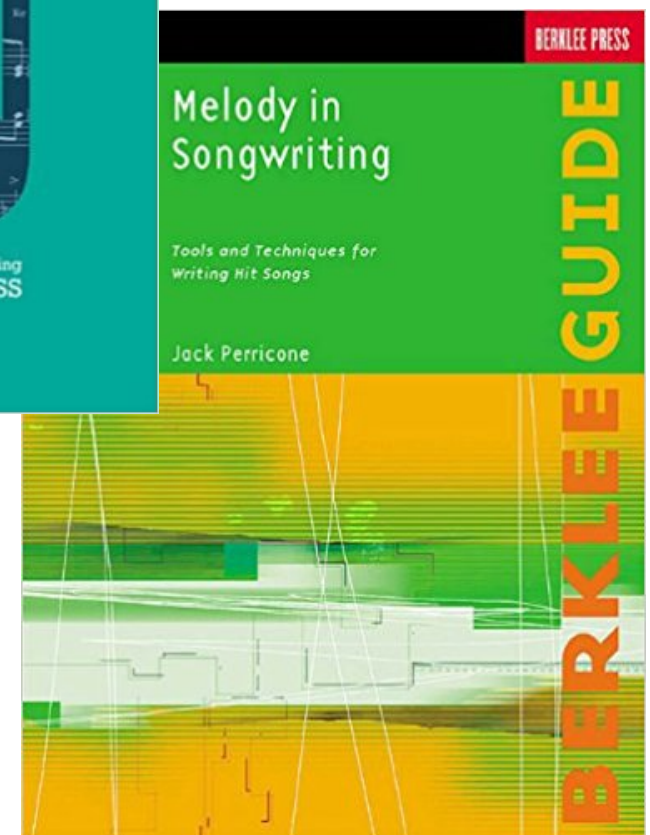
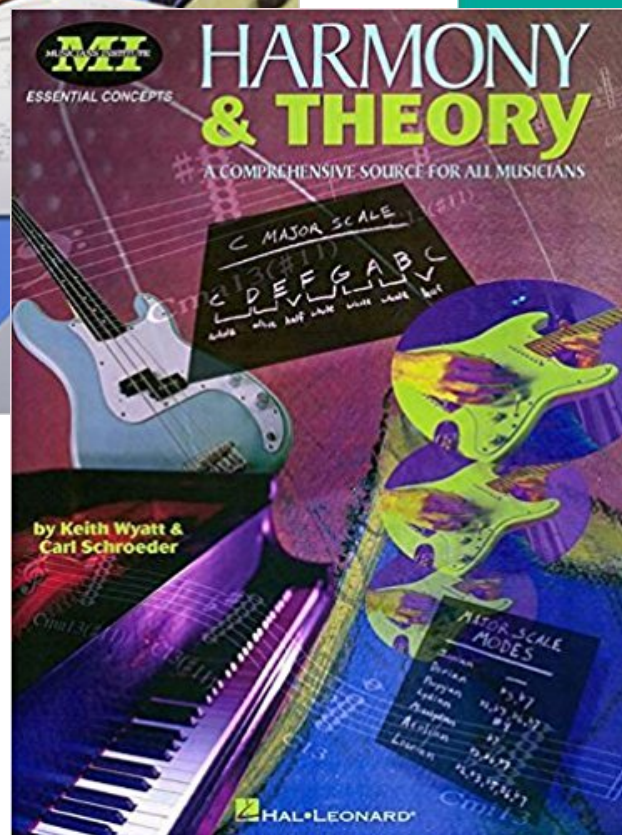
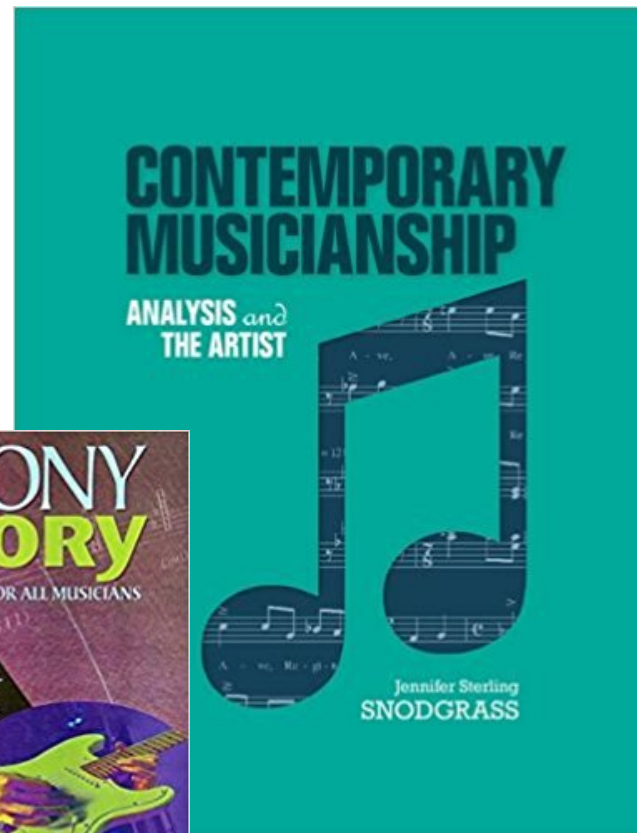
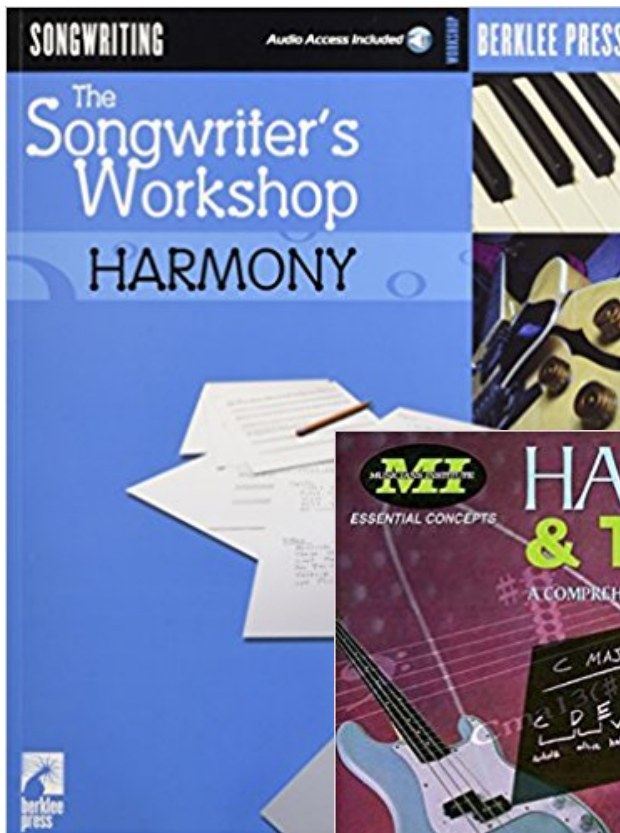


## *I. Introduction*

# Scholarly Books on Popular Music (“Rock”)



# Textbooks on Harmony/Melody in Popular Music



## I. Introduction

# **Melody Harmonization in Popular Music: Three Techniques**

- 1) Melodic Skeletons
- 2) The Melodic-Harmonic Divorce
- 3) Meta-Schemas

# Melody **Re**-Harmonization in Popular Music: Three Techniques

- 1) Melodic Skeletons
- 2) The Melodic-Harmonic Divorce
- 3) Meta-Schemas



# **“Hey Jude” (The Beatles, 1968)**

# “Hey Jude” (The Beatles, 1968)

<b>Mel:</b>	3	2	4 1	3	6	5	5	1
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# “Hey Jude” (The Beatles, 1968)

<b>Mel:</b>	3	2	4 1	3	6	5	5	1
<b>Orig:</b>	I	V	V $\frac{7}{4}$	I	IV	I	V	I

# “Hey Jude” (The Beatles, 1968)

<b>Mel:</b>	3	2	4 1	3	6	5	5	1
<b>Orig:</b>	I	V	V <sub>4</sub> <sup>7</sup>	I	IV	I	V	I
<b>Rehar:</b>	I	bVII	ii IV	I	vi	iii	V V <sub>4</sub> <sup>7</sup>	I

### *III. Melodic-Harmonic Divorce*

# “Someone like You” (Adele, 2011)

Original chords:	I	iii <sub>4</sub> <sup>6</sup>	vi	IV
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# “Someone like You” (Adele, 2011)

Original chords:	I	iii <sub>4</sub> <sup>6</sup>	vi	IV
→ Reharmonization 1:	I	V	bVII	ii ←

# “Someone like You” (Adele, 2011)



Original chords:	I	iii <sub>4</sub> <sup>6</sup>	vi	IV
Reharmonization 1:	I	V	bVII	ii
→ Reharmonization 2:	I	bVII	IV	iii ←



# “Someone like You” (Adele, 2011)

Original chords:	I	iii <sub>4</sub> <sup>6</sup>	vi	IV
Reharmonization 1:	I	V	bVII	ii
Reharmonization 2:	I	bVII	IV	iii
→ Reharmonization 3:	I	vi	ii	bVII ←



# “Someone like You” (Adele, 2011)

Original chords:	I	iii <sup>6</sup> <sub>4</sub>	vi	IV
Reharmonization 1:	I	V	bVII	ii
Reharmonization 2:	I	bVII	IV	iii
Reharmonization 3:	I	vi	ii	bVII
 Reharmonization 4:	I	ii	iii	IV 

# “Someone like You” (Adele, 2011)

Original chords:	I	iii <sub>4</sub> <sup>6</sup>	vi	IV
Reharmonization 1:	I	V	bVII	ii
Reharmonization 2:	I	bVII	IV	iii
Reharmonization 3:	I	vi	ii	bVII
Reharmonization 4:	I	ii	iii	IV
→ Reharmonization 5:	IV	I	V	vi ←

# “Someone like You” (Adele, 2011)

Original chords:	I	iii <sub>4</sub> <sup>6</sup>	vi	IV
Reharmonization 1:	I	V	bVII	ii
Reharmonization 2:	I	bVII	IV	iii
Reharmonization 3:	I	vi	ii	bVII
Reharmonization 4:	I	ii	iii	IV
Reharmonization 5:	IV	I	V	vi
 Reharmonization 6:	vi	IV	I	V 

# “Someone like You” (Adele, 2011)

Original chords:	I	iii <sup>6</sup> <sub>4</sub>	vi	IV
Reharmonization 1:	I	V	bVII	ii
Reharmonization 2:	I	bVII	IV	iii
Reharmonization 3:	I	vi	ii	bVII
Reharmonization 4:	I	ii	iii	IV
Reharmonization 5:	IV	I	V	vi
Reharmonization 6:	vi	IV	I	V
→ Reharmonization 7:	V	vi	IV	I ←

## *IV. Meta-Schemas*

# “Let it Be” (The Beatles, 1970)



<b>Mel:</b>	5	5	3 2	1	3	2	1	.
<b>Orig:</b>	I	V	vi	IV	I	V	IV	I

# “Let it Be” (The Beatles, 1970)

<b>Mel:</b>	5	5	3 2	1	3	2	1	.
<b>Orig:</b>	I	V	vi	IV	I	V	IV	I
<b>Rel:</b>	I	bVII	IV <sup>6</sup>	bVI	I <sub>4</sub> <sup>6</sup>	V <sub>5</sub> <sup>6</sup> /V	IV iv	I



# “Let it Be” (The Beatles, 1970)

<b>Mel:</b>	5	5	3 2	1	3	2	1	.
<b>Orig:</b>	I	V	vi	IV	I	V	IV	I
<b>Re1:</b>	I	bVII	IV <sup>6</sup>	bVI	I <sub>4</sub> <sup>6</sup>	V <sub>3</sub> <sup>6</sup> /V	IV iv	I
 <b>Re2:</b>	I	iii <sup>7</sup>	IV	V <sub>3</sub> <sup>6</sup> /V	I <sub>4</sub> <sup>6</sup>	V <sub>3</sub> <sup>6</sup> /vi	vi V <sup>6</sup>	 I

## *V. Conclusion*

# “Photograph” (Ed Sheeran, 2014), original

<b>Vr:</b> <b>(x2)</b>	3	.	3 1	.	7 1	3 1	.	.
	I	.	vi	.	V	.	IV	.
<b>Pch:</b>	1	3	1	3 2	5	5	5	7
	vi	IV	I	V	vi	IV	I	V
<b>Ch:</b>	3	3 4	3 2	3 4	3 2	3 4	1	1
	I	.	V	.	vi	.	IV	.

# “Photograph” (Ed Sheeran, 2014), reharmonized

<b>Vr:</b> <b>(x2)</b>	3	.	3 1	.	7 1	3 1	.	.
	I	.	I $\frac{4}{2}$	.	vi <sup>7</sup>	.	V	.
<b>Pch:</b>	1	3	1	3 2	5	5	5	7
	IV	I <sup>6</sup>	i <sup>6</sup>	I <sup>6</sup>	IV	V $\frac{6}{5}$ /V	I $\frac{6}{4}$	V $\frac{6}{5}$ /vi
<b>Ch:</b>	3	3 4	3 2	3 4	3 2	3 4	1	1
	vi	.	V $\frac{6}{5}$ /vi	.	I $\frac{6}{4}$	.	#IV <sup>h7</sup>	.

IV
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# THANK YOU!

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