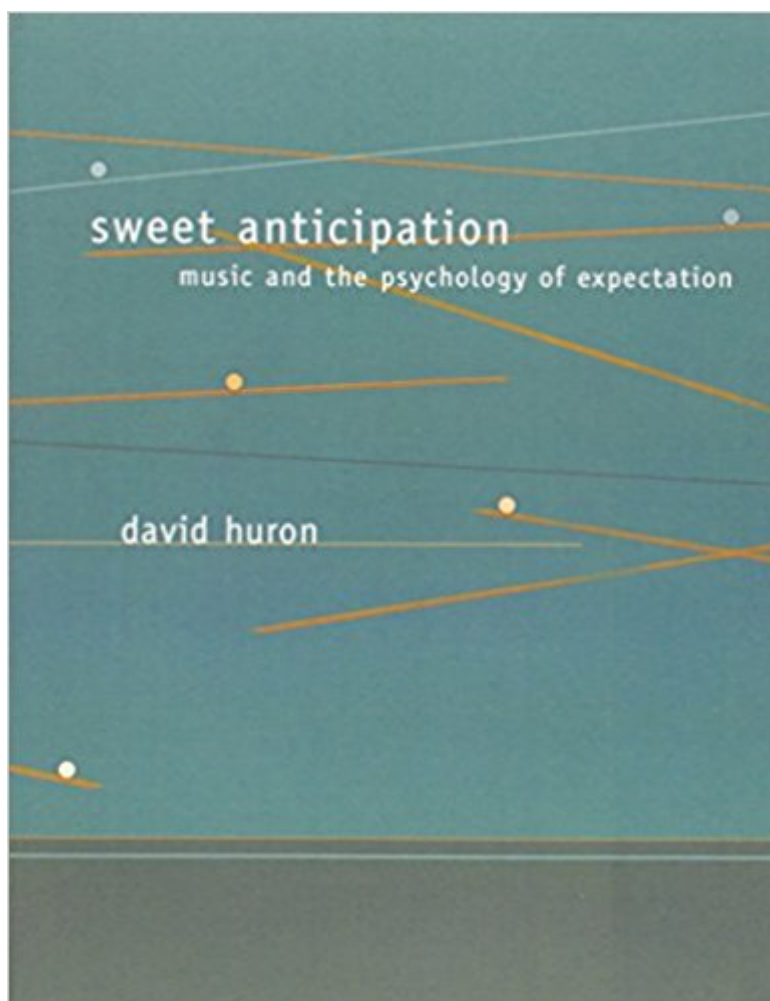


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# Sweet Anticipation: Music And The Psychology Of Expectation (MIT Press)



## Synopsis

The psychological theory of expectation that David Huron proposes in *Sweet Anticipation* grew out of the author's experimental efforts to understand how music evokes emotions. These efforts evolved into a general theory of expectation that will prove informative to readers interested in cognitive science and evolutionary psychology as well as those interested in music. The book describes a set of psychological mechanisms and illustrates how these mechanisms work in the case of music. All examples of notated music can be heard on the Web. Huron proposes that emotions evoked by expectation involve five functionally distinct response systems: reaction responses (which engage defensive reflexes); tension responses (where uncertainty leads to stress); prediction responses (which reward accurate prediction); imagination responses (which facilitate deferred gratification); and appraisal responses (which occur after conscious thought is engaged). For real-world events, these five response systems typically produce a complex mixture of feelings. The book identifies some of the aesthetic possibilities afforded by expectation, and shows how common musical devices (such as syncopation, cadence, meter, tonality, and climax) exploit the psychological opportunities. The theory also provides new insights into the physiological psychology of awe, laughter, and spine-tingling chills. Huron traces the psychology of expectations from the patterns of the physical/cultural world through imperfectly learned heuristics used to predict that world to the phenomenal qualia we experienced as we apprehend the world.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A richly detailed theory of how and why the audience has particular expectations and emotions.... A fascinating journey into the inner workings of music and how it tickles the human mind. (Petr Janata Nature) Sweet Anticipation... in its range, rigour and insights constitutes an astonishing achievement. Although it announces itself as a book about expectation in music, it goes well beyond what that might imply and is more like a broad and encompassing theory of music perception and cognition, with expectation as the central concept. (Prof. Eric Clarke Music Analysis) Having worked on the question of musical expectancy for a number of years myself reading David Huron's recent book has been, for me, a real treat. My interest in this topic does, however, make me a harsh critic of work on this topic. It is within such a context, then, that I praise this book. Quite simply, Sweet Anticipation is excellent. (Prof. Mark Schmuckler Philosophical Psychology) David Huron's superb book Sweet Anticipation: Music and the Psychology of Expectation ... is an exceptional contribution to the field of music cognition and represents a clear advance in our understanding of the role of expectancy in musical experience. As a cognitive psychologist, I find Huron's proposals for expectancy mechanisms and their possible evolutionary origin convincing and novel. Indeed, throughout the book musical issues are connected with human psychology in a way that reflects a deep and nuanced understanding of both disciplines.... On the whole, Huron provides an extraordinarily rich analysis of the phenomenon of musical expectation and provides a persuasive account of its psychological sources. Sweet Anticipation is without question one of the most exciting pieces of scholarship to emerge in the past decade, and should be read by anyone with a serious interest in the psychology of music. (Prof. William Thompson Empirical Musicology Review) Sweet Anticipation is a brilliant work that will continue to inspire for many years to come. (Dr. Adam Ockelford Psychology of Music) Huron's ability to show the link between the biologically driven need to acquire knowledge for survival and the phenomenology of 'hypermetric anticipation', 'tonal syncopation', and other such specific, highly technical musical procedures is one of the book's greatest triumphs. (Prof. Giorgio Biancorosso Music & Letters) This is a remarkable publication that reflects a keen vision. It casts the meaning of music within a broad, scientific scenario. (Dr. Rita Aiello Empirical Musicology Review) One of the strengths of Sweet Anticipation is that it is an ambitious work that offers a Big Theory. Huron draws together insights from disparate fields such as music theory, evolutionary theory, neurobiology, and cognitive science into a theory that is coherent, parsimonious, and powerful. (Drs. Catherine Stevens & Tim Byron Music Perception) By persuasively putting forward a general theory of expectation by way of music, Huron's book will not only draw the attention of specialists in other fields to the work done by music theorists but also

establish a benchmark for the future role of music in psychological research. For his theory implicitly demonstrates the significance of music not merely as a heuristic tool but also as a fundamental and highly symptomatic aspect of mental life. (Prof. Giorgio Biancorosso Music & Letters) This really is a very significant book on our responses to, and understanding of, music -- and one that has a disarming ability to simplify previously tangled debates without becoming simplistic.... Anyone interested in understanding the extraordinary range and dynamic character of listeners' responses to music will find a huge amount here to think about, some very entertaining anecdotes and examples, and inspiring model of how to tackle a complex subject with care, rigour, great scholarship and an awareness of the power of simplicity. (Prof. Eric Clarke Music Analysis) *Sweet Anticipation* should be required reading for all composers and musicologists.... This is certainly the best music theory book that I've read in many, many, years.... Highly recommended! (David Stutz .com) Apart from anything else, David Huron's book provides a wealth of fascinating insights amassed throughout 20 years of research in the field. (Marcus Pearce & Daniel MÃfÂ Ilensiefen *Musicae Scientiae*) Huron writes with humour and humanity. (Dr. Adam Ockelford *Psychology of Music*) I can't put the book down! A must read for anyone who has read Meyer, Narmour, or Lerdahl. An exploration of human expectation as exemplified through a rigorous and systematic understanding of music cognition. (Dr. David Spondee Auditory.org) *Sweet Anticipation* demands careful attention from music scholars who still believe that experimental psychology is too primitive to speak to their concerns. In unpacking the process of expectation, long understood to play a crucial role in our emotional response to music, David Huron makes a powerful case for a musicology that is empirically informed and statistically based. Even those who question whether musical cognition is as strongly determined as he suggests will be challenged by his questioning of basic theoretical assumptions and won over by his continual emphasis on pleasure as a goal, perhaps the goal, of musical experience. (William Benjamin, Professor of Music, University of British Columbia) The quintessence of the French mind -- precision, concision, elegance -- as it should be, Pascal rather than Derrida. Everyone who knows William Thomson knows that he is not only a great economist but also a master expositor, be it in his papers and books or in his talks. In this book, he shares his remarkable know-how with us young and not-so-young economists. (Maurice Salles, Professor of Economics, UniversitÃfÂ© de Caen, and Coordinating Editor, *Social Choice and Welfare*) David Huron draws on evolutionary theory and statistical learning to situate the particular issue of musical expectation within the study of human expectation in general. The result is a widely knowledgeable and engagingly written book that will serve as a landmark in the cognitive science of music. (Fred Lerdahl, Fritz Reiner Professor of Music, Columbia University)

David Huron is Distinguished Professor in the School of Music and in the Center for Cognitive and Brain Sciences at the Ohio State University; he is author of *Sweet Anticipation: Music and the Psychology of Expectation* (MIT Press).

I came to this book because I think Daniel Levitin recommended this book in his own "This Is Your Brain On Music", which was a good read but I felt it skimmed some details that I would've liked to know more about. This book goes very, very deep into musical expectation and its relevance in culture, listening habits, art, and for me it was an effective gateway into the field of psychology, even evolutionary biology. It never gets too preachy, always aware that expectation is just one element of music. It gets very dry at times, and if you've been to music school you can probably skip the number-crunching bits on cadential harmony and meter. Still, good reading.

Finally, a real five-star book about music. For some reason, there are thousands of books about language, but almost no serious ones analyzing the biology and psychology of humanity's other communication systems. Every society has a highly developed musical tradition, every society uses music in countless ways including the most sacred religious ceremonies, and yet hardly anyone has stepped forward to analyze it as a basic communication channel for humans. David Huron's book is on surprise in music. He shows how music creates expectations of pattern, from simple rhythm up to very complex patterns (the concerto, the symphony...) that only sophisticated listeners know. Musicians notoriously love to play with these patterns, to surprise the listeners and thus create new pieces and prevent boredom. Huron distinguishes several types of surprise, on the basis of a highly sophisticated evolutionary and cognitive psychology as well as an astounding knowledge of music. He knows everything from the complexities of Beethoven and Schoenberg to the joik songs of the Saami of arctic Europe, and even knows what happens when you play the latter to rural folk in southern Africa. By contrast, such earlier works as Robert Jourdain's *MUSIC, THE BRAIN AND ECSTASY* were greatly limited by confining their attention to western classical and classical-derived pop forms, thus missing everything from cross-rhythms to alternative scales. Surprise presupposes a whole file of knowledge of patterns and schemas, and a deep cognitive and emotional investment in same. Huron takes these mostly for granted. Obviously, the next step is to figure out why people love complicated musical patterns in the first place. Especially, humans love the theme-and-variation type of play with patterns that dominates music from Elizabethan lute solos to jazz to ragas. These are not exactly surprising, especially when you know the pieces, but they

are always delightful. Why? Huron mentions body rhythms, speech rhythms, and the like. There is obviously more. I think there is much more about pattern--in music and in general--that we need to study.

Great information, and written in an accessible way. David Huron makes well-supported information fun to read! I HIGHLY recommend this book to any musician, regardless of field.

A great book even the introduction!Fast shipping and pleasant transaction. Thank you!

I really like this book, but I don't think I'm qualified to review it. However, I think you can get a sense of whether you might be interested in it by reading the list of chapter titles and some of the subtitles and descriptions of some of the tables (T) and figures (F), so here's that:

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- T1.1 Response systems
- F1.1 Schematic diagram of the time-course of the "ITPRA" theory of expectation.
- 2 Surprise
- F2.1 Schematic diagram of the brain mechanisms involved in the fear response. Contrastive Valence Three Flavors of Surprise
- 3 Measuring Musical Expectation
- F3.1 Average moment-to-moment uncertainty for Balinese and American musicians listen to an unfamiliar traditional Balinese melody.
- 4 Auditory Learning
- F4.1 Average response times for musician listeners to hear an isolate tone as a specified scale degree.
- F4.5 Sample exposure stimuli showing the long-term statistical probabilities of pitch-to-pitch transitions.
- 5 Statistical Properties of Music
- F5.1 Frequency of occurrence of melodic intervals in notated sources for folk and popular melodies from ten cultures.
- F5.2 Proportion of non-unison melodic intervals that ascend in pitch.
- T5.1 Probabilities for step-step- movements in a large sample of Western and non-Western musics.
- F5.3 Watt's (1924) analysis of intervals in Schubert Lieder. Larger intervals are more likely to be followed by a change of melodic direction than small intervals.
- F5.5 Number of instances of various melodic leaps found in a cross-cultural sample of melodies.
- F5.6 Average contour for 6,364 seven-note phrases taken from The Essen Folksong Collection (Schaffrath 1995).
- 6 Heuristic Listening
- F6.1 "Brownian" or "random walk" melody.
- F6.2 "Johnson" or "white noise" melody.
- 7 Mental Representation of Expectation (I)
- F7.2 Information theoretic analysis of "Pop Goes the Weasel" showing changing of information (in bits) as the piece unfolds.
- F7.4 A hypothetical mental network for pitch-related representation.
- F7.5 Four objects illustrating the failure to code spatial interval.
- 8 Prediction Effect Exposure Effect The Role of Consciousness
- 9 Tonality
- T9.1 Scale Degree Qualia
- F9.1 Distribution of scale tones for a large

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