

# Dual Leading-Tone Loops in Recent Television Dramas

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This file includes the abstract, keyword list, bibliography, and related material for the video essay, “Dual Leading-Tone Loops in Recent Television Dramas” by Brad Osborn. This video-essay may be found at <https://vimeo.com/societymusictheory/smtv102osborn>

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**Abstract for  
Dual Leading-Tone Loops in Recent Television Dramas**

**by Brad Osborn, *SMT-V10.2***

In this video I highlight a trend in recent television dramas in which characters' conflicting emotions are scored using short chord loops that contain leading tones for major and relative minor keys simultaneously. These harmonic structures, which I dub dual leading-tone loops, present an eight-pitch-class palette (e.g. ABCDEFGG#) over a looping progression, and thus exert a strong tonal pull toward both a major key and its relative minor in short succession. Dual leading-tone loops are a particular subset of what scholars have identified as a "double tonic complex," but in this case the two paired keys shuttle back and forth over a matter of seconds.

**Short Keyword List**

film music, popular music, tonality, chord loops

**Extensive Keyword List**

Film music, popular music, tonality, chord loops, major key, minor key, relative major, relative minor, relative keys, Euphoria, A Handmaid's Tale, The Leftovers, Hamilton, double tonic complex, dual leading-tone loops, Crowded House, Bosson, 21 Pilots, Ariana Grande

## About the Author

Brad Osborn is a scholar whose work lies at the intersections of music theory, popular music studies, and multimedia analysis. He is the author of the monograph *Everything in its Right Place: Analyzing Radiohead* (Oxford, 2017). Brad's other research on post-millennial popular music and musical multimedia is published in *Music Theory Spectrum*, *Perspectives of New Music*, *Music Analysis*, *Music Theory Online*, *Current Musicology*, and *Intégral*, and in numerous edited collections. He is also the author of three textbooks: *Interpreting Music Video: Popular Music in the Post-MTV Era* (Routledge, 2021); *American Popular Music*, co-authored with Larry Starr and Christopher Waterman (Oxford, 2021, 6th ed.); and the forthcoming undergraduate theory textbook *Music Theory Matters*, co-authored with Christine Boone (Oxford, 2024). Brad writes and records shoegazey and sometimes screamy rock music as the artist D'Archipelago.

## Discography and Filmography

- 21 Pilots, “Stressed Out.” Track 2 on *Blurryface*. Fueled by Ramen Records, 2015, compact disc.
- Ariana Grande, “Thank U, Next.” Track 11 on *Thank U, Next*. Republic Records, 2019, compact disc.
- Bosson, “One in a Million.” Track 1 on *One in a Million* (single). Capitol Records, 2000, compact disc.
- Crowded House, “Don’t Dream it’s Over.” Track 4 on *Crowded House*. Capitol Records, 1986, compact disc.
- Euphoria*. Season 1, Episode 4, “Shook Ones Pt. II.” Aired July 7, 2019 on HBO
- A Handmaid’s Tale*. Season 3, Episode 5, “Unknown Caller.” Aired June 19, 2019 on Hulu.
- . Season 4, Episode 3, “The Crossing.” Aired April 28, 2021 on Hulu.
- The Leftovers*. Season 1, Episode 9, “The Garveys at Their Best.” Aired August 24, 2014 on HBO.
- Miranda, Lin-Manuel, composer and Thomas Kail, director. *Hamilton*. Original cast. Performed June 2016. Aired July 3, 2020 on Disney+, 160 min.

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