

When Hip-Hop Accents Collide (They Create Syncopation)

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This file includes the abstract, keyword list, bibliography, and related material for the video essay, “When Hip-Hop Accents Collide (They Create Syncopation)” by Ben Duinker. This video-essay may be found at <https://vimeo.com/societymusictheory/smtv086Duinker>

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**Abstract for
When Hip-Hop Accents Collide (They Create Syncopation)**

by **Ben Duinker**, *SMT-V8.6*

This video characterizes syncopation in hip-hop music as resulting from the interaction between accent patterns on three textural layers: the lyrics, the rapped delivery of these lyrics (flow), and the instrumental accompaniment (the beat). I unpack different accent types operating on these layers (word accents, performed accents, and metric accents), using examples from Travis Scott, Queen Latifah, Outkast, and others to illustrate their presence and the temporal relationships between them. I propose that hip-hop syncopation is neither a denial, displacement, nor contradiction of metric structure, but rather a product of it, wherein multiple rhythmic layers simultaneously act upon one another.

Short Keyword List

Accent, Rap Music, Music Theory, Flow

Extensive Keyword List

Rap Music, Hip-Hop, Music Theory, Rhythm, Meter, Accent, Flow, Beat, Clipse, Andre 3000, Queen Latifah, Travis Scott, Kyle Adams, Marley Marl, Performance

About the Author

Ben Duinker holds a SSHRC Postdoctoral Fellowship for research in music analysis and performance at the University of Toronto. His doctoral dissertation (2020) focuses on metric and rhythmic aspects of hip-hop flow and was awarded an SMT-40 dissertation fellowship by the Society for Music Theory. He has articles published and forthcoming in *Current Musicology*, *Empirical Musicology Review*, *Music Theory Online*, *Popular Music*, *Music Theory Spectrum*, and the *Journal for Popular Music Studies*. Duinker received a PhD in Music Theory and Master of Music Performance (percussion) from McGill University.

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