A TYPOLOGY OF SAMPLING IN HIP-HOP

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A TYPOLOGY OF SAMPLING IN HIP-HOP

Hip-hop producers rely on several specific formulas to create sample-based hip-hop. Developed with a combination of analysis and ethnography, this typology of sampling is a systematic terminological and conceptual approach to this repertoire. There are three main types of samples: structural samples, surface samples, and lyric samples. Each of these types has a distinct function in a sample-based track: structural samples create the rhythmic foundation, surface samples overlay or decorate the foundation, and lyric samples provide words or phrases of text.

The typology offers a consistent approach to identifying the sounds in sample-based music, allowing recognition of historical trends and generalization about musical style. For example, hip-hop producers have sampled lyrics from Public Enemy’s 1987 “Bring the Noise” over 100 times, and those samples show striking similarities both in the material sampled (Flavor Flav’s “yeah, boy” and Chuck D’s “bass” are favorites) and how the sampled sounds are treated in new tracks. The typology is a way to differentiate producers’ treatments of sampled sounds. Additionally, the typology is a tool for distinguishing the musical styles of artists. Released within a year of each other, Public Enemy’s Fear of a Black Planet and the Beastie Boys’ Paul’s Boutique each contain over 100 samples. The typology offers a way to describe the groups’ sampling styles. Further, while hip-hop artists and scholars agree that sampling changed after the 1991 lawsuit involving Biz Markie’s “Alone Again,” until now, there has been no way to quantify these changes. The typology is a concrete way to demonstrate how hip-hop groups such as The Beastie Boys, De La Soul, Public Enemy, Salt ’n’ Pepa, and A Tribe Called Quest modified their approaches to sampling when samples became difficult to license. Ultimately, a typology is a systematic analytical approach to the genre of sample-based hip-hop.
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INTRODUCTION

WHAT A TYPOLOGY CAN TELL US ABOUT SAMPLE-BASED HIP-HOP

Sampling is the process of extracting recorded sound and reusing those sounds in a new recorded sound product. The use of digital recording technology to manipulate existing recorded sounds has roots in Pierre Schaeffer’s musique concrète of the 1950s as well as audio collages such as Dickie Goodman’s and Bill Buchanan’s “The Flying Saucer” (1956) and the Beatles’ “Revolution 9” (1968).¹ In the 1970s, street DJs in the Bronx began mixing (superimposing the sounds of two different records by matching their speeds), looping (isolating the breakbeat of a funk record and repeating it over and over), backspinning (with two copies of the same record on two turntables, playing one record while rotating the other counterclockwise), quick-mixing (rapidly juxtaposing fragments of sound from a variety of records), and scratching (moving the record back and forth with the record player’s needle is still on the disc). Inspired by jive-talking black radio disk jockeys and the Jamaican traditions of boasting, toasting, and talkovers, MCs began rapping (delivering rhymed verses) over the DJs’ sounds.²

DJing and rapping are the two musical components of hip-hop. Scholars and practitioners agree that “hip-hop” comprises four components: rapping, DJing, break-dancing, and graffiti. Throughout this dissertation, I call the music “hip-hop” rather than “rap.” The term “rap music” focuses exclusively on the lyrics while ignoring the other sounds present. Because I emphasize sampling—the sounds other than the rapper’s lyrics—it would be particularly inappropriate to refer to the music as “rap” since that term excludes the very aspect of the music I consider. Of course, I have no intention of avoiding discussions of rapped lyrics in this study; as we will see,

¹ For an overview of sound reproduction in these and other pieces, see Joanna Demers, Steal this Music: How Intellectual Property Law Affects Musical Creativity (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2006), 71-80.
the processes of sampling and rapping are closely intertwined because producers add samples before, after, and while the rapper delivers the text.

The hip-hop producer is the descendant of the 1970s DJ. During the 1980s, hip-hop DJs took many different paths when they transformed recorded sounds, as Mark Katz notes:

The hip-hop pioneers were mobile DJs—they toted their own equipment to every party, whether in apartment buildings or community centers, on playgrounds or in school gyms. Later, some of them became club DJs, taking residencies in dance clubs, using the equipment provided for them. Some DJs worked at radio stations, employing their voices as much as their hands. Others teamed up with rappers, essentially becoming the rhythm section of a hip-hop group, and still others brought their craft to recording studios where they composed beats for rappers, and came to be known as producers.3

These latter two types of hip-hop musicians Katz describes—the musicians who function as “rhythm section of a hip-hop group” and those who “composed beats for rappers”—are the musicians under consideration in this dissertation, because they produce sample-based hip-hop and are thus called producers.

No systematic or consistent terminology exists for talking about and analyzing sample-based hip-hop. Most scholars seem to grasp for appropriate language to describe hip-hop’s sampled sounds. For example, when discussing the music of Public Enemy, Kembrew McLeod uses terms such as “fragmentary samples,” “small sonic chunks,” and “individually sampled and sliced beats” to describe the samples in the music. He also acknowledges a difference between “[looping] the hook of an earlier song” and “[fusing] dozens of fragments to create a single song.”4 Clearly, McLeod hears a difference between “loops” and “fragments,” but he does not try to define or explain these particular terms.

Similarly, David Metzer suggests that samples come in two basic types: first, “isolated performance sounds” that are “edited and combined together”; second, “a longer, more involved

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section” which is more readily identifiable to the listener. These “isolated elements” are akin to McLeod’s “fragments,” and the “longer, more involved section” is akin to McLeod’s “loop,” but the same problems remain regarding length, transformation, and source material. In contrast, the late David Sanjek suggested classifying samples in one of three ways: first, records that sample familiar material which allows the listener to recognize the quotation; second, records that sample both familiar and arcane sources; and third, the process called “quilt-pop,” where multiple samples are stitched together to create a new recording. Sanjek’s system relies on recognition rather than length as its means of classification, but recognition is also difficult to quantify. Regardless of their length and recognizability, producers use samples in a variety of ways when transplanting them into a new context. None of these existing analytical systems is inclusive enough to account for this diversity.

Joseph Schloss’s outstanding work on sample-based hip-hop production also does not address the types of samples or the specific transformations of sound. As Schloss acknowledges, “I wish to convey the analytical perspective of those who create sample-based hip-hop music as well as those who make up its primary intended audience: hip-hop producers.” As his work is primarily ethnographic rather than musicological, he is concerned with how the practitioners understand and hear the music. While Schloss’s consultants use such terms as “off the wall,” “upbeat and danceable,” and “funky as hell” when discussing the sounds of their music, these descriptors are difficult to quantify and are perhaps not universally understood.

The foundation of this dissertation is a typology of sample-based hip-hop, which is a systematic terminological and conceptual approach to this repertory. I developed the typology

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while studying the relationships between source tracks and samples in hundreds of sample-based hip-hop tracks released between approximately 1985 and 2011. After identifying the sampled sources, I discerned which instruments, lyrics, or other sounds of the source track were sampled, and then I analyzed how and where those sampled elements were placed in the new track. Producers rely on several specific formulas when creating sample-based hip-hop, and I categorized and named those formulas to create the typology. I identified the various types by observing patterns in sample-based hip-hop production, and then I verified these types and approaches in conversations with hip-hop producers. Therefore, the typology names extant musical practices rather than creating artificial categories or imposing theoretical distinctions when there are no sonic differences. The typology offers a consistent approach to identifying the sounds in these sample-based tracks, enabling me to identify historical trends, make generalizations about style, and treat a variety of hip-hop tracks with a consistent vocabulary and conceptual approach.

Previous scholars have acknowledged that not all samples are the same, but the typology offers a way to quantify and describe those differences. With the typology, we can separate and identify samples in new and precise ways that help us hear the music in ways we might otherwise not have been able to hear. As Theodore Graecyk, writing about the ontological distinction between the terms “rock ’n’ roll” and “rock,” notes:

As with most other concepts through which we organize experience, classification of a specific case depends upon the range of contrasting concepts available. Consider the task of classifying the color of a patch of paint. If I have only the most basic color terms in my vocabulary (e.g., “red,” “blue”), I may have no problem in saying that the paint is red. But offer me more categories, such as light red versus red versus dark red, and I may well reclassify the same [patch of paint]. Offer me a color wheel of the sort used by professionals for mixing paint, and I may well tell you that the color falls between “holly red” and “antique ruby.”

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The typology, like Gracyk’s color wheel, helps us differentiate between sampling’s “holly reds” and “antique rubies” rather than just its reds and blues. Now, we can speak of surface sample types, aggregate component sample types, and recurring lyric sample types, to name a few. Before, we could only describe samples as “fragments” or “loops.”

Why a Typology?

Musicological studies of genre and type have a many different goals. Some scholarship, such as J. Peter Burkholder’s analyses of Ives’s musical borrowing or Elaine Sisman’s work on Haydn’s variations, highlight how the composer heard and understood his music.9 Other approaches, such as James Webster’s study of late eighteenth-century comic opera and Leonard Ratner’s topics, are templates for how a contemporary listener would have heard the music.10 Rick Altman frames his work on film genres by recreating how the film industry understood and designated a new genre as it emerged.11 Rather than emphasizing an historical point of view, as these scholars have done, I focus on the perception and understanding of the music from the perspective of the listener. The typology is therefore akin to Adam Krims’s terminology for styles of flow (lyric delivery) in rap music.12 Like Krims, I present a way for listeners to hear sample-based hip-hop and offer a perspective for listeners to draw meaningful connections and interpretations from what they hear. I have created a model of competent listening, and I borrow my definition of “competency” from Robert Hatten: “In terms of music, the internalized (possibly tacit) cognitive ability of a listener to understand and apply stylistic principles, constraints, types, correlations, and strategies of interpretation for the understanding of musical works in that

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11 Rick Altman, *Film/Genre* (London: British Film Institute, 1999).
style.” I cannot and do not claim that this typology is the only effective means of hearing sample-based hip-hop, but it certainly is an unprecedented model of types and principles typical of “musical works in that style.”

Yet, who is this listener for whom the typology offers a mode of competent listening? To whom are these categories useful? Essentially, there are three groups of people for whom we can create categories: listeners, producers/composers, and analysts. An ideal system benefits all three. In function harmony, for example, a listener can hear the circle of fifths, a composer understands the relationship within the circle of fifths and writes according to that relationship, and an analyst can study how the composer treats the circle of fifths. However, in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, composers may have written music using the circle of fifths but did not consider that practice according to that specific name. But now, composers learn the rules of functional harmony and have those concepts at hand when writing music, regardless of whether they consciously think, “I am following the circle of fifths progression in this passage.” In the case of tonal harmony, there was a shift from an unnamed practice into a theory that named that practice, and now composers simultaneously learn the practice and the name for that practice. This practice is audible to educated listeners, and analysts can use their knowledge to see derivations from and adherences to the norm.

The problem comes when we retroactively name an extant practice. In the case of Jean-Philippe Rameau and functional harmony, “It is not enough to feel the effects of a science or an art. One must also conceptualize these effects in order to render them intelligible.” Yet Rameau knew that by naming extant practices and then teaching his readers those extant practices, he was saving them from having to learn them from scratch. As he notes, “No rules have yet been devised to teach composition in all its present perfection. Every skillful man in this field sincerely

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confesses that he owes all his knowledge to experience alone.”

Rameau offered a place for all musicians to begin. He took the extant works of composers, distilled from them a set of principles, and offered a way for future generations of composers to learn those principles. Rameau was an historian, an analyst who could then turn around and place the theoretical principles he had distilled into practice. His system is the ideal combination of categories relevant to composer, listeners, and analyst.

Musicologists such as James Hepokoski, Warren Darcy, J. Peter Burkholder, and James Webster have the advantage of approaching their repertoires with decades, sometimes centuries, of space. Rather than writing handbooks, as Rameau did, they analyze copious amounts of literature, look for commonalities, and offer specific types that allow us to see and hear how specific elements of the music lend themselves to the structure and then the meaning of the work at hand.

For example, recognizing the various aria types in the late eighteenth century helps us see that (a) conventions existed, (b) Mozart adhered to those conventions (as did his contemporaries such as Antonio Salieri and Vicente Martín y Soler), and (c) those conventions had meaning for an audience. The musical gestures of a basso buffo aria were immediately apparent to an audience, and Mozart and others could play on those conventions. But Webster’s study (and Hepokoski’s and Darcy’s, and Burkholder’s) is not a manual like Rameau’s. Instead, it is a way to frame a specific repertoire in a particular moment in time, recognizing common musical gestures and what the gestures might have meant to the composer and the audience. Many of those meanings may have been lost to a twenty-first century audience, but studies such as Webster’s inform listeners about those practices. It may not have the same immediacy that it

15 Ibid., xxxvi.
would have held for its contemporary audience, but studying these norms can help us appreciate what Mozart’s and others’ music would have sounded like to an eighteenth-century audience.

Hepokoski’s and Darcy’s formulation of sonata form is intended to be “genre-based,” compatible with all existing methodologies for studying sonata form, and a way to analyze the sonata in such a way that can create “productive hermeneutic endeavors—interpretations of meaning.” They attempt to navigate the space between rigid “textbook definitions” of sonata form and laissez-faire inclusivity of any and all practices for the form. They thus identified the Sonata Theory as “regulative guides for interpretation,” because they identified a seemingly common set of guiding principles that both the composers and listeners recognized, and these guiding principles can be applied to any sonata form movement from the late Classic period. As the authors note, composers probably did not ponder the array of options available to them as they began constructing a sonata form movement; in all likelihood, their decisions came from a combination of intuition, internalization of norms, and a familiarity with the extant practices. Transgressions and surprises within these norms are welcome.

Both Webster’s and Hepokoski’s and Darcy’s studies yoke the experiences of listeners, analysts, and composers, revealing how composers played with established conventions and how listeners could recognize those conventions and any deviations from them. These scholars offer us sets of principles for analyzing other examples of this music and surmising what it meant for a listener when a composer followed or deviated from a norm. These are tools for historically-informed listening. They also do not require specialized sets of listening, other than standard knowledge of music theory and musical principles.

In his study of Charles Ives’s borrowing techniques, Burkholder notes, “Dividing Ives’s uses of existing music into types allows us to see more clearly his process of adaptation in individual works and to group together pieces that use similar procedures. Each type represents a

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18 Ibid., 8.
distinctive relationship between the source and the new composition, a different way to use an 
existing work." Burkholder does not say explicitly, however, that the identification of every 
type and borrowing technique is contingent on knowing what the source material is. As with any 
study of musical borrowing, studies of the listeners’ experiences require hearing and recognizing 
the musical borrowing taking place. I can recognize a sonata-form movement by hearing, and I 
can recognize that the first and second thematic areas are inverted in the recapitulation. But I 
might not know that the thematic materials are borrowed, and knowing the sources of those 
borrowed melodies enriches my listening experience and my understanding of the piece.

Thus, typological studies of musical borrowing practices are problematic because the 
experiences of the listener, composer / producer, and analyst will differ depending on their 
knowledge of the material borrowed. Recognition is paramount. Both Burkholder’s and my types 
were created on the basis of the musical borrowing techniques the composer or producer used, so 
failing to recognize the borrowed material or that borrowing is even taking place blocks the music 
from classification. One must know what is being borrowed in order to classify the borrowing 
within a specific type.

For whom, then, are our types created? In the case of Charles Ives, who but Ives would 
know all of the borrowings? It is indeed possible that a listener in the early twentieth century 
might have recognized all of Ives’s borrowings, but that listener would probably need to have 
come from a similar town band-hearing, hymn-singing, Ivy League school-attending background 
as did Ives. Multiple sources for identifying Ives’s borrowings exist, including those by John 
Kirkpatrick and Clayton Henderson, and even a scholar as knowledgeable of Ives’s music as

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19 Burkholder, All Made of Tunes, 4.
Burkholder needed to rely on others’ identifications of the tunes in order to create the musical borrowing types.20

I encountered the same issues when writing about sample-based hip-hop. I initially relied heavily upon others’ identifications, using resources such as whosampled.com and the-breaks.com to see which tracks borrowed what material. Yet when I developed my types, I looked at how producers treated the borrowed material. In this case, even as an analyst, I needed an assist from others’ identification before I could continue my own analysis of the music. My sample types, like Burkholder’s sample types, require identification of the source material in order to be effective.

This, of course, creates unique sets of problems, because who knows all of the borrowings? I suspect even Ives couldn’t name all of his source tunes but instead had internalized them over decades. Hip-hop producers intentionally hide and obscure their source materials, flipping them beyond recognition to demonstrate their skills as a producer. Yet my types are recognizable to hip-hop producers, even if they do not produce tracks with the types in mind that I have identified. I provided an overview of the typology to each producer I interviewed, and they all agreed that it made sense, even if it was not necessarily the way they conceived of their own music. Nor, I suspect, did Ives write music in terms of “pastiche” or “cumulative form” or “cantus firmus,” but were he to read these analyses, he would probably understand them even if they were not the frameworks he consciously considered while composing.

Much in the way that Rameau codified a language for existing compositional practices, Burkholder codified a language for Ives’s musical borrowing techniques, Hepokoski and Darcy codified a language for sonata forms, and Webster codified a language for aria types. I hope that I have also codified a language for sample-based hip-hop production. None of our systems were

the language used by the composers or producers, but I would venture to guess that all of our systems would be recognizable to the composers. Similarly, these systems can guide how listeners hear the pieces, but they must first understand the tenets of the types before they can hear how pieces adhere to or deviates from the types. In the cases of musical borrowing, listeners also must be informed about what music is being borrowed in order to hear how a piece adheres to or deviates from a type.

Does this mean that the types are arbitrary? Have we, as analysts, created fictional lines and boxes into which we can place items? Are our lines and boxes recognizable to no one but ourselves? And, by requiring listeners to understand our types before they can have a meaningful listening experience, does that mean we are making the listening experience too difficult? Are we drawing lines where none are required?

Obviously not, if I have chosen to move ahead with this project. I certainly do not believe that a typology is the only effective way to understand sample-based hip-hop. It is entirely possible to read a sample-based track effectively without categorizing the samples. This typology prevents scholars of hip-hop from having the reinvent the wheel for every discussion of sampling. It allows us to start from a common language. It is a language that I have invented, not the producers of the music, but it is a language recognizable to hip-hop producers and informed by their practices. In other words, I invented the terminology, not the practice itself.

Overview of Existing Scholarship

Hip-hop scholarship traverses a variety of disciplines, such as cultural studies, English, ethnomusicology, African American and African diaspora studies, and musicology. Scholars from all of these disciplines have addressed issues of gender, race, class, and politics in hip-hop and the culture surrounding hip-hop, making valuable contributions toward our understanding
hip-hop as a cultural phenomenon.\textsuperscript{21} Even musicologists have seen the appeal of these other disciplines: in her dissertation, Joanna Demers borrows critical approaches from philosophy, cultural studies, and literary criticism, framing her discussions of sample-based music with postmodern theory, pastiche, Henry Louis Gates Jr.’s literary theory of Signifyin(g), and Umberto Eco’s notion of kitsch, but her chosen modes of analysis reveal little about the sound of the music.\textsuperscript{22} Rather than simply adopting critical approaches from other disciplines, a musicological perspective needs to provide analytical dimensions that other disciplines lack the perspective or training to engage. As Adam Krims observed, scholarship that disregards musical organization in fact misses some of the music’s culture.\textsuperscript{23} Musicology is in a unique position to provide in-depth analysis of the music as sound object.

While musicology offers a way to approach music as a sound object, I by no means intend to focus exclusively on the sound object without historical perspective or context. Schloss noted this particular problem in scholarship by Adam Krims, Robert Walser, and Kyra Gaunt: “They focus on the results of sampling rather than the process; they are, essentially, analyzing a text.”\textsuperscript{24} Formalist analyses tend to avoid music’s expression, role, and meaning, but scholarship focusing exclusively on the culture surrounding the music is also incomplete. My typological approach can fill this gap because I analyze the music’s form while linking that form to the music’s cultural and historical place.

\textsuperscript{21} The downside to these numerous studies by scholars in a variety of different disciplines is, as Schloss notes, “the dispersal of the literature on hip-hop’s precursors among a variety of academic disciplines, a situation that has unintentionally created an inappropriately fragmented portrait of hip-hop’s origins.” See \textit{Making Beats}, 17.
\textsuperscript{22} Joanna Demers, “Sampling as Lineage in Hip-Hop” (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 2002).
\textsuperscript{23} Krims, \textit{Rap Music and the Poetics of Identity}, 3.
I do not mean to suggest that I am about to provide the exclusive analytical and critical approach to sample-based hip-hop, nor that it is inappropriate for musicologists to borrow analytical methods from other disciplines when discussing sampling. In fact, throughout this dissertation, I engage theoretical perspectives from scholars in a variety of disciplines. Thus far, however, very little scholarship effectively deals with the sounds of sample-based hip-hop or regards sample-based hip-hop as music rather than as cultural artifact. Scholarship in ethnomusicology, anthropology, cultural studies, and law tends to treat the music as a frame rather than an object of study itself.

Two recent musicological dissertations treat sampling as music and as, but neither scholar critically differentiates sampled and re-performed music.\footnote{A handful of hip-hop artists and producers do not employ samples. For example, Dr. Dre typically brings in studio musicians to re-perform selected passages of extant tracks; “Let Me Ride” may sound at first like a sample of Parliament’s “Mothership Connection (Star Child),” but rather than sampling the actual Parliament recording, Dr. Dre and his production team recreated the sound of “Mothership Connection” on live instruments.} For example, Justin Williams refers to Serge Lacasse’s notions of “autosonic quotation” and “allosonic quotation” when distinguishing digital samples from re-performed material, but he otherwise does not distinguish the two as separate artistic processes.\footnote{Justin Williams, “Musical Borrowing in Hip-Hop Music: Theoretical Frameworks and Case Studies” (Ph.D. diss., University of Nottingham, 2009), 9.} Demers also does not demarcate sample-based and re-performed sounds; in fact, she refers to re-performed sounds as “samples.”\footnote{Joanna Demers, “Sampling as Lineage in Hip-Hop,” 77.} Sampling and instrumental musicianship both require musical knowledge and sensibility, but the mechanism of performance in sampling is completely different. I will detail these processes and technologies of musical sampling in later chapters. Further, sampling is different from other kinds of musical borrowing because it borrows actual recorded sound rather than quoting a melody, gesture, or texture. Sampling, as Mark Katz has noted, is a performative quotation because it “recreates all the details of timbre and timing that evoke and identify a unique sound event.”\footnote{Mark Katz, Capturing Sound: How Technology has Changed Music, 2nd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 140-41.}
I have tried to create a music- and sound-centered scholarly approach accessible both to musicologists and to those outside the field. In particular, I analyze music in a way that the musicians themselves would recognize and understand. In my conversations with hip-hop producers, I asked them about their production techniques and sources, and I also invited them to explain some of the sonic and cultural phenomena I observed through my own listening and studying. Throughout this dissertation, I link my own analyses with the producers’ comments and observations. The typology is an analytical tool that offers a consistent approach to identifying the sounds in these sample-based tracks, but it is only a starting point for a larger and more in-depth discussion of numerous aspects of sample-based hip-hop’s musical styles. By integrating the typology with the producers’ perspectives, I have created an analytical and ethnographic picture of sample-based hip-hop.

On Race, Perspective, and Legitimacy

Hip-hop’s origins were shaped by a variety of musics from the African diaspora, including funk, disco, soul, dancehall, disc jockeying, and Jamaican traditions such as toasting, boasting, and DJing. Following Schloss and others, I operate under the basic assumption that hip-hop is an African American music. Schloss explains, “African-derived aesthetics, social norms, standards, and sensibilities are deeply embedded in the form, even when it is being performed by individuals who are not themselves of African descent.” African American musical aesthetics inform sample-based hip-hop’s production, regardless of how consciously producers of any race engage with the music’s (or their own) blackness. In short, hip-hop is an African American music, and, as in any study of African American music, this one must address certain issues of race and its relationship to scholarship and criticism.

29 See Keyes, Rap Music and Street Consciousness, 40-45 and 50-55.
30 Schloss, Making Beats, 3.
Hip-hop is a lens for academic and cultural perceptions of blackness; to Anthony Kwame Harrison, “The association between hip hop and blackness makes it a potentially powerful vehicle for both reinforcing and refuting existing racial stereotypes and assumptions.”

Hip-hop scholarship is a lens for studying this particular musical manifestation of African American cultural perspectives. Yet, by Guthrie P. Ramsey, Jr.’s estimation, scholarship on black music is not only about black music, but it is also about black music scholarship in the sense of a meta-discourse:

It is important to recognize the body of academic work under discussion as a powerful social discourse in itself. The scholarship can be analyzed with respect to the cultural work it is performing for its creators and its audience, thus rendering it not unlike the black musical discourses, musicians, and sensibilities it explores.

In other words, a scholar’s work on black music can tell us about the scholar just as it can tell us about the music.

Ramsey also notes that, while both white and black scholars often offer up their autobiographies as part of their scholarship, the information presented is not always relevant to the project at hand. However, Ramsey argues that “work that seems pressed to deconstruct and decode African American identity and its politics, white and, no doubt, black scholars’ claims of access to such sensibilities need to be theorized more often and rigorously.” So, here I offer the parts of my biography relevant to my critical perspective. I am white. Ever since 2002, when I decided to become a musicologist, I have been interested in musical borrowing: I wrote an undergraduate honors thesis on Charles Ives, and my master’s thesis is a study of parody in György Ligeti’s opera *Le grand macabre*. Thus, my research projects are motivated by compositional techniques related to borrowing rather than repertories or composers. I approach sample-based hip-hop with my own set of experiences and perspectives, many of which are

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33 Ibid., 34.
shaped by my training and experience as a musicologist and student of the Western art music tradition.

Scholarly discourse has the power to shape our perspectives of a repertory or group of people, but (if I may borrow from Stan Lee) that power comes with great responsibility. As Michael Eric Dyson explains:

I’m not saying that non-black folk can’t understand and interpret black culture. But there is something to be said for the dynamics of power, where nonblacks have been afforded the privilege to interpret and—given the racial politics of the nation—to legitimate or decertify black vernacular music and classical culture in ways that have been denied to black folk. So it’s not simply a question of the mastery of a set of ideas associated with the interpretation or appraisal of black life and art. It’s also about the power to shape a lens through which this culture is interpreted, and is seen as legitimate, or viable, or desirable, or real, by the dominant culture.

Dyson acknowledges that non-black scholars of black music and culture, by nature of political privilege, have the power to shape non-black perspectives of the music, for better or worse.

Over the last few years, many well-meaning people asked me, in one way or another, if I am “allowed” to study hip-hop because I am white. My answer, honed over the last few years, is, “Does a Haydn scholar have to be Austrian to study his music?” I realize this answer skates over issues of colonialism, race, and other issues unique to American music, but I think my point is clear: most scholars approaching any kind of music are most likely not members of either the culture or time period in which the music was conceived.

As scholars, we are responsible for contextualizing our studies chronologically and culturally, regardless of where we stand in relation to that time or culture. In Ramsey’s words, “We can all fashion a cultural poetics specific to our own scholarly and personal productive biases.” While being a white person studying hip-hop may be more politically charged than being a black person studying Nicolas Gombert or a

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35 Even if the person is a member of the culture and time period, they still confront a different set of research questions marked by issues of objectivity. For example, see Mellonee Burnim’s account of her ethnographic experience as a black person researching in a black church in “Culture Bearer and Tradition Bearer: An Ethnomusicologist’s Research on Gospel Music,” *Ethnomusicology* 29 (Autumn 1985): 432-47.
Japanese-American person studying Giacomo Puccini, all of these situations require the same approach: the researcher is responsible for understanding the music and its context to the best of his or her ability.

I have spent several years immersing myself in sample-based hip-hop, listening to thousands of recordings and studying the relationships between the older, sampled track and the newer, sampling track. But my own analysis of the music is just one facet of this dissertation, because I weave my analyses with commentary from hip-hop producers, gleaned from interviews I and others conducted. I offer a mode of hearing sample-based hip-hop informed by the music’s history, culture, and participants as well as musicological analysis of form, structure, and content. I am offering the critical perspective of a musicologist whose analyses and conclusions were shaped by conversations with the music’s creators.

Because I am a musicologist, I do draw conceptual connections across multiple centuries of music and varying genres of music. Certain techniques or approaches to musical borrowing traverse multiple centuries, genres, and styles. At no point will I claim that hip-hop producers either studied or were directly influenced by musical borrowing techniques of the composers of isorhythmic motets, nineteenth-century program symphonies, or Ivesian quodlibets. Nor do I draw these connections in an attempt to “legitimate” hip-hop producers or argue that they are just like composers of the Western art music tradition. Instead, these connections between and among musics tell us as much about humans’ understandings of music and musical borrowing as they do about a specific piece or composer.

Methodology

My own listening and analysis form the basis of the typology and the differentiation of sample types. I used online resources such as whosampled.com, the-breaks.com, cratekings.com, and Wikipedia, as well as CD liner notes and artists’ websites, to identify the source tracks of the samples. All other aspects of the analyses, including the sample type classification and the
specific location of the sampled material in the sample-based track, are entirely my own, and I
take full responsibility for any misidentifications. When I could not locate an existing
identification for a sample, I did not include it in my tallies or analyses. As we will see in chapter
5, copyright-infringement lawsuits lurk around every corner, and I have no intention of drawing
attention to any sampled material that might result in a lawsuit. Attentive listeners will realize that
I have not been able to identify every sample, but I took advantage of all available resources to
identify as many samples as possible.

Further, I only identified samples I could confirm through listening. In some cases, online
resources might list a source that is supposedly sampled in a track, but if I could not hear that
sample myself, I did not include it. In most cases, the online resources probably misidentified the
sample. In other cases, though, the producer or the DJ transformed the sampled material to the
extent that I was unable to recognize it. As DJ Jazzy Joyce (Joyce Spencer) explains, “Some of
the greatest hits, when you find out what the components are, when you find out the original
source of how they came up with it, you’re like, what the hell!”37 Even hip-hop producers
themselves sometimes cannot recognize the sampled source materials, which is both a credit to
the sampling producer’s skill and an impediment to my analysis. However, the hundreds of
samples that I have been able to identify and recognize offer a sufficiently large body of data to
make this study possible.

Schloss’s study is the model for my ethnographic approach, and it is worth quoting him at
length about why ethnography is an invaluable approach for the study of sample-based hip-hop:

[Ethnography] can ground general theoretical claims in the specific experience of
individuals, lead the scholar to interesting questions that may not have arisen through
observation alone, and call attention to aspects of the researcher’s relationship to the
phenomenon being studied that may not be immediately apparent. This can deeply affect
the work that is produced. And, perhaps most importantly, it can help the researcher to
develop analyses that are relevant to the community being studied.38

37 DJ Jazzy Joyce, telephone interview with the author, 20 August 2012.
38 Schloss, Making Beats, 6.
To avoid creating an analysis in a formalist vacuum, I interviewed artists and asked how they understand their music.

I asked the producers about specific examples as well as more general tendencies in the creation of sample-based hip-hop. While I did not discuss every musical example in this dissertation with a producer, speaking with them gave me a sense of many trends in hip-hop production. I am comfortable making generalizations because my conversations with these producers were overwhelmingly consistent both with each other and also with the conversations Schloss had with producers in *Making Beats*. I frame my analyses with a more generalized sense of sampling aesthetics drawn from these conversations. These producers confirmed my hypotheses, deepened my understanding of a particular gesture or track, or brought to my attention an approach or technique that I had not noticed. I am deeply indebted to all of them for their time, experience, willingness to share their knowledge.

I interviewed producers who range from local artists in Bloomington, Indiana, to nationally-recognized, Grammy award-winning artists. I spoke with producers of both sexes and diverse races and ethnicities who were born anywhere from the 1960s to the 1990s. When necessary for clarity or context, I include my end of the conversation. Following Schloss’s lead, I do not identify the consultants by race when I quote them because the producers did not identify themselves by race in our conversations. Nor did they attribute any element of their music to their race or racial identity. As Schloss notes, “There are no consistent stylistic differences between the practices of producers from different ethnic backgrounds. . . . All producers—regardless of race—make African American hip-hop.”

In the transcriptions of my conversations with producers, I take my cues from Ingrid Monson and her study of the jazz rhythm section. As Monson has noted:

Transcribing speech . . . is just as fraught with representational dilemmas as transcribing music. In general, transcribed speech looks nothing like written prose. Grammatical

irregularities, incomplete sentences and words, repetitive interjections (“you know,” “um-huh”), turn-taking overlaps, and unexplained referents pervade the aural speech of even the most highly educated.40 I thus eliminate most instances of “like,” “um,” “you know,” “I mean,” and “you know what I’m saying?” from my transcriptions unless they are particularly relevant to the speaker’s point. This practice is consistent with Monson’s, Schloss’s, Katz’s, and that of most periodicals.41 I also include my end of the conversation when it is relevant.

Like Monson, I also avoid orthographical reflections of the sonic inflections of African American speech (such as “he was on a independent label,” “use a kick that comes out the drum machine,” or “gonna”) in my transcriptions. As Monson notes, representing these sonic inflections can convey cultural identity to some readers but imply social and educational inferiority to others.42 As Schloss points out, “If one is not familiar with it, a written approximation of African American English—nonstandard by definition—may make a speaker appear to lack full linguistic competence.”43 I did retain the emphasis and word order in my transcriptions, but I mostly avoid nonstandard spellings that would influence the reader’s perception of the speaker’s race or linguistic competence, perceived or actual. Nonstandard


41 As Monson notes, “Since the conventional representations of interviews in periodicals edit out these ambiguities [“you know” and the like], many people expect their speech to look like edited text, and individuals reading their transcribed speech are often very disturbed by the experience. What we should instead realize is that the ‘verbatim transcript’ suitable for publication is actually a construction—a highly edited document.” See Saying Something, 21.


43 Schloss, Making Beats, 11.
spellings would draw unnecessary attention to and potentially misshape the reader’s perception of the speaker’s grasp of language and grammar.

Nearly all DJs, MCs, and producers perform under different names than those that appear on their birth certificates. In fact, most of the producers I have interviewed identified themselves by their chosen name rather than their legal name. When I answered the phone to conduct our interview, 9th Wonder said, “It’s 9th,” not, “It’s Patrick.” Even Jazzy Joyce called herself “Jazzy” rather than “Joyce.” Journalism, publicity, and even Twitter feeds refer to musicians by their adopted monikers almost without exception, so it would be disrespectful and ignorant of me to do otherwise. I have provided the individual’s legal name in parentheses after I mention them for the first time, but otherwise, I refer to them by their chosen name.

Study Parameters

This study does not include any sampling tracks from the genre of electronic dance music (EDM). The aesthetics and form of EDM are so different from that of hip-hop that it is impossible to assess the use of samples by applying the typology. The typology is designed for song-oriented forms with verses and choruses, and, as Mark Butler has noted, EDM primarily avoids song-oriented forms, relying instead on an open, continuous musical structure, and it typically does not contain a lyric or verbal component.44 Further, the EDM musicians who do sample are considered amateurs by their own community. Most EDM producers create their own sounds, either digitally or through performance, rather than sampling other recordings. According to EDM producer DJ Rap (Charissa Saverio):

The school I was brought up in, which doesn’t necessarily mean it’s the same for everybody, but the broad taste in drum and bass especially, people didn’t use samples. And in house, there’s no need to because everybody creates everything themselves. I don’t know anybody who, apart maybe from bits and bops here, sampled. For example, you might have a collection of kicks and snares, but generally, everybody I know has collected their own stuff that they’ve created. Certainly the general view is that that’s

looked on for beginners, people who don’t have their own sound, who don’t build sounds from scratch.\textsuperscript{45} While sampling is an historic and respected practice in hip-hop, sampling in EDM, particularly in the sub-genres of house and drum and bass, is typically considered beneath the skill level of most producers.

I draw my musical examples both from tracks produced for MCs to rap over and from solo DJ performances, which its practitioners call “turntablism.” Hip-hop production and turntablism are closely connected in many ways, but they are different processes. As Katz notes, “DJs perform live, manipulating records in front of audiences, while producers compose, often slowly and painstakingly, using digital samplers, drum machines, synthesizers, or computers. But there is a strong link between the two, and in the minds of many beat makers, the DJ begat the producer, simple as that.”\textsuperscript{46} Most of my consultants are both DJs and producers, and the majority of them began as DJs and then learned how to produce. According to Vinroc (Vincent Punsalan), “It was a natural progression to get into production, to come from DJing. There was already a certain mindset there about collecting certain kinds of records that transition well to hip-hop producing.”\textsuperscript{47} Because producing and DJing are so closely linked both historically and aesthetically, I have included in this study music by hip-hop producers and by turntablists, such as those found in \textit{Return of the DJ} series or released by artists such as Invisibl Skratch Piklz.

Chapter Overview

Chapter 1 lays the theoretical and terminological groundwork for the musical analyses in the rest of the dissertation. The chapter begins with an overview of the typology itself, explaining how each sample type works and including several musical examples of each type. I have identified three main types of samples: structural, surface, and lyric. Each of the three types

\textsuperscript{45} DJ Rap, telephone interview with the author, 14 August 2012.
\textsuperscript{46} Katz, \textit{Groove Music}, 121.
\textsuperscript{47} Vinroc, telephone interview with the author, 10 August 2012.
functions differently within a sample-based track: structural samples form the harmonic and rhythmic basis of a track, surface samples decorate and punctuate the structural samples, and lyric samples relate to the structural samples and the overall form of the track in a variety of ways. Producers use structural and surface sample types to construct and ornament a track’s groove, that is, its sense of rhythmic continuity and propulsion. Lyric samples play a different role in a sample-based track than structural and surface samples do because they contain comprehensible words or phrases of text. In addition, each of the three types contains several subtypes. After defining each type, I address the ways producers combine different sample types when creating a sample-based track.

Chapter 2 explores the various hermeneutic possibilities of a single sample type, the lyric sample. Most producers treat lyric samples as an entirely separate entity from the other two sample types because they are not part of the track’s groove. They see a lyric sample as a decoration or a special gesture, and many producers know which lyrics they want to sample even before they construct a track’s groove or before the MC delivers the new rapped lyrics. A producer samples the voice and lyrics of another artist to pay homage, create a character or a dialogue, or evoke a different time, place, or genre. Further, lyric samples provide producers the opportunity to show off their skills because they will often flip, chop, or otherwise alter the sampled text to make it say something new or different. A DJ will often scratch or cut the sampled lyrics on a turntable, which adds both an element of live performance as well as an aural connection with DJing, the earliest form of hip-hop production. A lyric sample is an icon that can represent many different meanings, all of which are contingent on the listener’s knowledge and perspective. The lyric sample as a type carries a specific value both for a producer and for a listener.

Chapter 3 explores the web of samples surrounding one specific track, Public Enemy’s “Bring the Noise” (1987). Over 80 different tracks released between 1987 and 2011 sample some part of “Bring the Noise,” and by using the typology, I categorize how these new tracks employ
the existing material. Producers exhibit clear preferences when sampling “Bring the Noise,” because they sample a few select phrases from the source track over and over again, and they treat those sampled phrases very similarly when placing them into new tracks. Over time, these samples from “Bring the Noise” take on a meaning independent of the track itself, symbolizing Public Enemy, the history of hip-hop, and the history of sampling. While the sheer number of samples of this track plummeted after the mid-1990s, the specific ways in which producer incorporated samples into new tracks did not change. The particular appeal of this track for sampling artists has remained consistent over time, establishing a specific tradition of sampling both in material and in technique. Ultimately, the samples from “Bring the Noise” have come to symbolize particular meanings for hip-hop producers.

Chapter 4 considers two sample-based albums, the Beastie Boys’ *Paul’s Boutique* (1989) and Public Enemy’s *Fear of a Black Planet* (1990). Although each album contains over a hundred samples, the albums are dissimilar in musical style. By applying the typology to the albums’ samples, I differentiate how each group samples, which then allows me to make generalizations about each group’s musical style. I also examine how each group selected the specific material they chose to sample, because not only do they sample differently, but they also choose very distinct genres of music to sample. I argue that these two albums opened the door for hip-hop producers to diversify their musical approaches both in the construction of a sample-based track and in their choice of materials to sample. These two albums showed hip-hop producers that they could be successful as long as they mastered the canon of funk and soul music, knew their source materials inside and out, and expressed a unique point of view in their production styles.

Chapter 5 applies the typology to twenty albums released by the groups the Beastie Boys, De La Soul, Public Enemy, Salt ’n’ Pepa, and A Tribe Called Quest. Several scholars have noted that sampling changed after 1991, a result of the court case Grand Upright Music Ltd. v. Warner Brothers Records, Inc., in which the rapper Biz Markie was chastised for sampling Gilbert O’Sullivan’s “Alone Again (Naturally).” Each of the groups studied in this chapter released at
least two albums before or during 1991 and at least two albums after 1991, and using the typology, I quantify how they changed their approaches to sampling. Ultimately, the groups included fewer samples, but they tried to replicate their earlier sample-based sounds simply with fewer samples. I close the chapter with a brief historiographical argument about Public Enemy’s reception after 1991. While scholars in the twenty-first century blame the restricted sampling for Public Enemy’s drop in popularity, a closer look at contemporary reviews reveals that Public Enemy’s failure to adapt their lyrics were actually what negatively affected them, not their changing approach to sampling.

The typology is the first step toward meaningful analyses of sample-based hip-hop music. Combining my own analysis with perspectives from the artists themselves makes it possible to offer an informed analytical perspective of this vast and varied repertory. With this model for listening, we can do so much more than just put sounds in boxes. The typology is a mode of hearing, because with the typology in mind, we hear this music differently. Further, we can use the typology to communicate to ourselves and to others what we are hearing—not just the samples themselves, but also the diverse musical practices present in sample-based hip-hop. How do we define musical style in sample-based hip-hop? How do we distinguish one producer’s music from another’s? How has sampling changed since its heyday in the late 1980s and early 1990s? While I attempt to answer all of these questions and more in this dissertation, I sincerely hope that my work is just the tip of the iceberg. With the typology at our disposal, we now have a uniform vocabulary for communicating about sample-based hip-hop—whatever we may then decide to say about it.
CHAPTER 1
A TYPOLOGY OF SAMPLING IN HIP-HOP

There are three main types of samples: structural samples, surface samples, and lyric samples. Each of these three sample types has a distinct function within a sample-based track: structural samples create the rhythmic foundation and groove of the track, surface samples overlay the groove without necessarily participating in it, and lyric samples provide words, phrases, or even entire verses of text. The three main sample types contain subtypes or categories, and each of those subtypes also has a unique role in the creation of a sample-based track. Differentiating the various sample types is the first step for a meaningful discussion of the musical language of sample-based hip-hop.

Structural Samples

Structural samples form the rhythmic and harmonic foundation of a sample-based track and create a track’s groove. In sample-based hip-hop, producers create the track’s groove by looping one or more samples into recognizable, sustainable patterns. Rappers then deliver lyrics atop these looped samples. Producers take the overwhelming majority of their structural samples from 1970s funk and soul recordings, and although I will discuss specific source materials throughout the dissertation, it is important to note that these music genres provided both the earliest and most popular source materials for hip-hop producers. In fact, as chapter 4 will argue, funk and soul records form a canon from which hip-hop producers draw their samples. These layers of looped samples that combine to form the groove are structural samples.

1 For more on looping as an aesthetic in sample-based music, see Schloss, Making Beats, 136-44.
Notes on groove

Most scholars of African American music genres such as funk, soul, and jazz agree that “groove” is the rhythmic and rhythm section foundation upon which the melodic and harmonic instruments will build. They typically define “groove” according to one or more of three parameters: (1) instrumentation; (2) the foundational role of those instruments and how that foundation interacts with other instruments; and (3) the composite rhythms that result from the interacting instruments. For example, in her chapter on funk in the textbook African American Music, Portia Maultsby defines groove as both “a repetitive, syncopated, and polyrhythmic pattern onto which other independent rhythms are layered” and “a polyrhythmic foundation built on a syncopated bass line that locks with the bass drum pattern and is accompanied by a heavy backbeat.”2 In Maultsby’s two definitions, she implies and then states outright that a groove is a foundation, the instruments she names specifically—drums and bass—are found in the rhythm section, and she identifies groove as a “polyrhythmic pattern,” which suggests the interaction of rhythms from multiple sources. In his recent study of African American popular music of the late 1960s, Robert Fink notes simply that groove is “the patterning of rhythm,” a concept he then later formulates as the interaction of two separate drummers and drum patterns in the Temptations’ “Cloud Nine.”3 Similarly, Ingrid Monson notes that in a small jazz combo, “the notion of the groove supplies underlying solidity and cohesiveness to freely interacting, improvising


3 Fink’s initial definition of groove occurs as a sidebar in a longer discussion about the scholarly shortcomings in the analysis of African American popular music: “But if we try to imagine how the secondary parameters of a soul music track—in particular, the patterning of rhythm its practitioners call the ‘groove’”—might actually be mustered to communicate a sense of goal direction to the listener, we stumble into a deep and interesting aporia in the contemporary critical study of Afro-diasporic music” (183, my emphasis). His later analysis describes how producer Norman Whitfield split the role of the percussion between two drummers, Spider Webb and Pistol Allen. See “Goal-Directed Soul? Analyzing Rhythmic Teleology in African American Popular Music,” Journal of the American Musicological Society 61 (Spring 2011): 202.
musicians.”¹⁴ This rhythmic foundation is the basis of what Rob Bowman has termed a “riff-groove framework,” or, the stable foundation of the groove over which more variable instrumental and vocal riffs may be added.⁵ Perhaps the most straightforward definition comes from the work of Rolf Bader and Brigitte Markuse: “Groove . . . means the underlying rhythm played by the rhythm section of a band” and consists of any combination of drums, bass, keyboard, and guitars.⁶

In addition to definitions of groove that are rhythm- or rhythm-section-oriented, most scholars have relied on the groove theories of both Charles Keil and Steven Feld in their formulations of the concept. Feld’s definition of groove includes repetition, a sense of patterning, and the perception of a cycle. As he notes, terms such as “groove” are linguistic shorthand for “an unspecifiable but ordered sense of something that is sustained in a distinctive, regular, and attractive way, working to draw a listener in.”⁷ This sense of pattern and regularity is then complemented by Charles Keil’s notion of “participatory discrepancy,” the minute human-created differences within and among the regular patterns: “It is the little discrepancies between hands and feet within a jazz drummer’s beat, between bass and drums, between rhythm section and

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¹ Monson, Saying Something, 67.
⁴ Anne Danielsen’s work on the funk grooves of James Brown and Parliament appears to be a rare exception to this “rhythm-section-only” rule. Danielsen suggests that grooves contain specific “gestures,” and these gestures can be any musical utterance: “It might be a riff or a vocal phrase, or a part of either, or a group of beats, or just one beat, as long as it is perceived as forming an entity, a sounding gestalt.” See Presence and Pleasure: The Funk Grooves of James Brown and Parliament (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2006), 47. Additionally, her transcriptions of specific grooves usually contain all the sounding instruments, not just the rhythm section instruments. See her transcriptions on 76, 77, 100-2, and 119.
soloist, that create the groove and invite us to participate.”

Taken together, Keil’s and Feld’s theories suggest that grooves are variable patterns, recognizable as repetitions but also containing the tiniest differences within either a single statement of the pattern or across multiple repetitions of a pattern.

While the majority of definitions of “groove” in African American musics appear to be in sync, most of these extant definitions are problematic for the study of sample-based hip-hop. Definitions of groove from funk, soul, and jazz are not readily transferrable to sample-based hip-hop since they do not account for the crucial fact that sample-based hip-hop is not live. It is tempting to equate the two, particularly because so many sampled hip-hop grooves originate in funk and soul recordings. Even though both funk grooves and sample-based hip-hop grooves include repetition and rhythmic interaction, it is inaccurate to equate the two because the stasis of a hip-hop groove results from looping either a sample of a funk record’s groove or a sample of the break beat in a funk record, the place in the funk or soul track where the established groove breaks down and only one or two rhythm section instrumentalists—usually the drummer—are featured. As Tricia Rose has observed, “In rap, the ‘break beat’ itself is looped—repositioned as repetition, as equilibrium inside the rupture. Rap music highlights points of rupture as it equalizes them.”

When the hip-hop groove contains a looped sample of a funk break beat, the hip-hop producer did not sample the source track’s groove but instead sampled the place where the funk groove was temporarily suspended and replaced with a break beat.

Hip-hop grooves built on samples of funk grooves are also not equivalent to funk grooves because a looped sample of a funk groove lacks Keil’s participatory discrepancies, the often microscopic differences and deviations in each individual repetition of the pattern in a live

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groove. In these cases, a sample-based hip-hop producer captures one or two measures of a funk groove, essentially freezing and repeating those measures and thus eliminating any participatory discrepancies that would have occurred in a live performance among multiple repetitions of the funk groove. Of course, the participatory discrepancies within that single measure remain intact, such as a microscopic delay between the downbeat hits on the bass and snare drums, but those identical discrepancies are then played out ad infinitum throughout the groove. This elimination of the participatory discrepancies among multiple repetitions of the groove’s patterns mirrors the fact that, as Schloss has noted, a single person produces a hip-hop groove, whereas a funk or jazz groove is created collectively by multiple musicians.¹⁰ This is not to say that a hip-hop groove is static or without any variation among its repetitions, a point I will elaborate later after introducing the various sample types. The conception of “groove” in funk, jazz, and other live African American musics is not equivalent to “groove” in sample-based hip-hop because hip-hop is created in a recording studio instead of played live.

Extant definitions of “groove” in scholarship on sample-based hip-hop are vague, although the term is frequently applied.¹¹ As just mentioned, Schloss defines “groove” as “the work of one individual—the producer—who juxtaposes recordings of other musicians from various genres and is not working in real time.”¹² Throughout his study, when Schloss refers to groove, he treats it as a creative process rather than a musical entity or characteristic. Other scholars’ assessments of groove in hip-hop are limited to the drums and do not take into account the roles of any other sounding instruments. For example, Jeff Greenwald equates the terms “groove” and “drums,” noting that the sounds created by a drummer’s four limbs “establish the

¹⁰ Schloss, Making Beats, 139-40.
¹¹ Although the title of Mark Katz’s 2012 monograph is Groove Music: The Art and Culture of the Hip-Hop DJ, the “grooves” to which Katz refers are the physical grooves in a record. “Groove music” is the place in a funk record where the drum break occurs. As Katz notes, “An experienced DJ will even be able to look at an unfamiliar record and find the break; it’s a darker band within the track, a sliver of groove music.” See Groove Music, 16.
¹² Schloss, Making Beats, 140.
groove” of a given track. To other scholars, the “groove” is any sonic component other than the lyrics. In his groundbreaking article on Public Enemy’s “Fight the Power,” for instance, Robert Walser defines “groove” as any non-lyric sonic element in a hip-hop track: “the rhythm track or groove . . . underpins the delivery of the lyrics.” Walser transcribed what he termed the track’s “groove,” which he argued consisted of eleven different lines and provided “a stable platform for rapping” and “a solid but richly conflicted polyrhythmic environment in which the rappers operate.” Walser thus divides a hip-hop track into two sounding parts, lyrics and not-lyrics, and the not-lyrics are the groove.

Walser’s two-fold division is problematic because elides the multiple layers and textural subtleties present in a sample-based groove. It does not account for the various ways a hip-hop groove can be assembled, and it oversimplifies the rhythmic and harmonic interactions that occur within a sample-based groove. Greenwald’s exclusive focus on drums leaves out the roles other sampled instruments play in a hip-hop groove. While Schloss does note that hip-hop recordings typically feature multiple sampled parts that are intended to be heard as a collective, his ethical obligation to the producers’ privacy prevents him from revealing much specific information about various layers or specific samples. Moreover, he presents this observation in his discussion of the ethical implications of transcription and notation, not when defining groove. Any definition of a

13 Jeff Greenwald, “Hip-Hop Drumming: The Rhyme May Define, but the Groove Makes You Move,” Black Music Research Journal 22 (Autumn 2002): 5. His subsequent analyses of Goodie Mob’s “The Dip” and Outkast’s “Humble Mumble” also limit “groove” to the role of the drums. This article is problematic for several reasons, perhaps the most obvious being that Greenwald compares multiple different drum examples to Clyde Stubblefield’s famous “Funky Drummer” break. For example, he claims that the “Funky Drummer” break appears many times in A Tribe Called Quest’s album The Low End Theory, but I have not identified a single instance of this sample in that album.
15 Ibid., 201 and 203.
16 Because it is ethnographic rather than musicological, Schloss’s study does not contain transcriptions. As he argues, “Transcribing a beat also has ethical implications. In the community of sample-based hip-hop producers, the discourse of aesthetic quality is primarily based on the relationship between the original context of a given sample and its use in a hip-hop song; that discourse consists of assessments of how creatively a producer has altered the original sample. For various reasons that I will discuss, however, the community’s ethics forbid publicly revealing the sources of particular samples. Thus, while various techniques may be discussed, it is ethically problematic to discuss their realization in any
hip-hop groove must account for instrumentation in addition to drums, source materials, rhythmic character, and how various layers interact.

A hip-hop groove must contain percussion, but the instrumentation is not limited to drums or even to the rhythm section. While hip-hop grooves often do contain samples of rhythm section instruments such as bass, keyboards, or guitar, it is not uncommon to find a hip-hop groove that includes samples of melodic instruments such as saxophones, trombones, or trumpets. This is an important distinction between the roles of melodic instruments in funk grooves and hip-hop grooves. In funk, melodic instruments add riffs on top of the established groove, while in hip-hop, the repeating a sampled riff transforms it into an equal participant in the groove. For example, the groove of Public Enemy’s “Rebel Without a Pause” contains a high-register saxophone riff sampled from the J.B’s funk track “The Grunt.” In “The Grunt,” the saxophone riff ascends while the groove holds steady, and then that particular riff is abandoned in favor of a new riff in the brass and saxophones. According to DJ Bobcat (Bobby Ervin), who is not a member of Public Enemy but who was present in the studio during the production of “Rebel Without a Pause,” the saxophone riff was the very first part of the groove that the producers selected:

I went in there when they were doing that record [“Rebel Without a Pause”], and everybody was quiet. Nobody was talking. And I heard that [sings the ascending saxophone riff from “The Grunt”], and I was like, “What is that?” It was kind of silly to me for a bit, because the beat wasn’t in yet, and they were just listening to that [riff].

As Bobcat reveals, producers frequently start with the drums, or “the beat,” which explains his confusion about the particular process he witnessed. But some producers, such as Public Enemy and their production team, the Bomb Squad, begin the production process with elements of the groove other than the drums. The sampled saxophone riff, combined with drums sampled from

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specific case” (Making Beats, 13). Thus, to discuss the sources of the various layers of a sample-based track would, in Schloss’s view, be an ethical violation. Schloss’s knowledge and understanding of groove is thus limited, at least in his scholarly expression, by a need to preserve the privacy of a producer’s source materials.

17 DJ Bobcat, telephone interview with the author, 24 August 2012.
James Brown’s “Funky Drummer,” becomes part of the groove of “Rebel Without a Pause” when it is looped and heard nearly continuously throughout the new track.

My assessment of groove is indebted Felicia Miyakawa and her study of rap of the Five Percent Nation. Miyakawa separates groove into two layers, melodic and percussive. She argues that her conception of groove, as notated in a system she terms a “groove continuum,” graphically illustrates individual moments of a track and also demonstrates the layering and interplay within a groove. My definition of groove goes a step farther than Miyakawa’s, however, because the four subtypes of sample-based grooves in the typology are differentiated on the basis of how many samples appear in the groove and how those particular samples interact. Miyakawa does not make a distinction between the roles of sampled and newly-performed layers in a hip-hop groove, but I differentiate the four structural sample types in the typology on the basis of which parts are sampled and which, if any, are newly performed.

Additionally, as noted above, a sample-based groove can contain both rhythm section and melodic instruments; unlike the grooves of jazz or funk, the instrumentation of a sample-based groove is not limited to instruments of the rhythm section. When looped continuously with drums and other instruments, what was a two-measure riff in a funk record becomes an equal participant in a sample-based groove, heard continuously across several measures in addition to sampled drums and other instruments. For example, the groove of A Tribe Called Quest’s “Check the Rhime” consists of a drum line from Grover Washington’s “Hydra,” bass and keyboards from Minnie Riperton’s “Baby, This Love I Have,” and, in the introduction and choruses, saxophones from Average White Band’s “Love Your Life.” A Tribe Called Quest (they are jointly credited as producers in most of their tracks) loops the saxophone sample continuously atop the other samples of drums, bass, and keyboards; this repetition and continuity creates the sense that the saxophones participate in the repetitive layers of the groove rather than function as a separate

melodic layer. Additionally, the saxophone sample is added to the groove during the choruses of “Check the Rhime,” directing the listener to hear the saxophones as a layer of the groove rather than a melody because they are heard simultaneously with the rapped lyrics of the chorus.

Thus, the structural sample types in the typology constitute a track’s groove. Individual structural samples coalesce to form the track’s groove. Samples of drums and other instruments looped continuously throughout a track form the rhythmic foundation for the track, but it is important to note that the vast majority of grooves change during a track. Producers may add or delete sampled layers of sound or they may add additional non-structural samples to create some type of contrast. Here, Mark Butler’s assessment of groove in electronic dance music (EDM) is quite helpful. Butler notes that in EDM, “groove” has two meanings: the short sonic configurations that DJs loop, and the rhythmic flow or unfolding that occurs over the course of the music.19 Thus, it is important to note that a sample-based hip-hop groove is rarely static. The ways in which a hip-hop producer changes the groove to create a sense of growth or change over the course of a track will be discussed at greater length throughout this chapter and this dissertation. When addressing notions of musical growth and development, however, I am cautious not to rely too heavily on Western concepts of harmonic progressions and harmonic teleology because, as Fink has effectively argued, most African American popular musics are ruled by a sense of rhythmic rather than harmonic teleology.20

As both Walser notes, hip-hop producers usually assemble the structural samples before the rappers write or deliver their lyrics. For example, many of Public Enemy’s recordings were organized by first arranging the structural samples, then adding lyrics, and finally, tweaking and

19 Butler, Unlocking the Groove, 5.
20 The bulk of Fink’s “Goal-Directed Soul” effectively addresses this point, but for a brief summary, see p. 183.
retooling the structural samples in order to best complement the lyrics. According to Hank Shocklee, a member of the Bomb Squad, Public Enemy’s production team:

The first thing we would do is the beat, the skeleton of the track. The beat would actually have bits and pieces of samples already in it, but it would only be rhythm sections. Chuck would start writing and trying different ideas to see what worked. Once he got an idea, we would look at it and see where the track was going. Then we would just start adding on whatever it needed, depending on the lyrics.

Note that the Shocklee describes creating the “skeleton of the track” first; the structural samples are the first stage in the creation of a sample-based track. Therefore, the members of the Bomb Squad worked in tandem with rappers Chuck D and Flavor Flav to create a groove and lyrics that best suited each other. According to Noriko Manabe, producer Pete Rock employs a similar approach when working with rappers: Rock first provides a drum track and central musical sample, called a “plain beat,” and once the rapper delivers rhymes over this plain beat, Rock adds additional elements such as bass, brass, scratching, or drum fills to best complement the rapper’s lyrics. Clearly, a hip-hop groove is not just an accompaniment but something created simultaneously with the lyrics.

There are four main types of structural samples in sample-based hip-hop: percussion-only, intact, non-percussion, and aggregate.

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21 Rapper Chuck D of Public Enemy frequently mentions that the members of the Bomb Squad, Public Enemy’s production team, would present him with a “track,” that is, the pre-assembled collection of structural samples. With this “track” in hand, Chuck D would then write his rapped lyrics. See Chuck D with Yusuf Jah, *Lyrics of a Rap Revolutionary: Times, Rhymes, and Mind of Chuck D* (Beverly Hills, CA: Off Da Books, 2006), 48, 113, and 151 for these descriptions. For additional accounts of this process, see Russell Myrie, *Don’t Rhyme for the Sake of Riddlin’: The Authorized Story of Public Enemy* (New York: Grove Press, 2008), 59.


**Percussion-only**

In a percussion-only structural sample, sampled drums are looped throughout the new track. This process is a descendant of the two-turntable technique of early hip-hop in which a DJ would place the same record on each turntable in order to extend the drum break of a funk record.\(^\text{24}\) While playing the break on one record, the DJ spins the other record to the beginning of the break, creating a seemingly endless loop out of a previously one- or two-measure-long drum break.\(^\text{25}\) Pioneered by DJs such as Grandmaster Flash and Grandwizard Theodore, this process looped funk break beats, establishing the “equilibrium inside the rupture” that Rose described. Percussion-only tracks are most frequent in the earliest hip-hop tracks and are in fact quite rare after the mid-1980s. De La Soul’s “Take it Off,” for example, is built entirely on a looped sample of the drum break from “God Made Me Funky” by the Headhunters. “Take It Off” includes no other sampled material, only the new lyrics atop the looped drum sample.

In a percussion-only structural type, the drums are the only sampled material in the groove. In most cases, however, producers increase the harmonic, rhythmic, timbral, or melodic interest of the sampled drums by adding additional sonic layers. Schloss, in his conversations with hip-hop producers, has noted that many producers refer to this process as “fattening up” a beat. According to Schloss, most producers find it acceptable to add live or newly-performed instrumentation to an otherwise sample-based structure because “the producer is using the instrument to emphasize musical figures that are already there.”\(^\text{26}\) A Tribe Called Quest’s “Crew,” for instance, includes looped samples of the drums from Ruth Copeland’s “Suburban Family Lament,” but in addition to the sampled drums, they add newly-performed vibraphone

\(^{24}\) Jim Payne’s *100 Famous Funk Beats* (Pacific, MO: Mel Bay, 2006) includes transcriptions of many popular funk drum breaks as well as a recording of each break. I am grateful to David Scimonelli for bringing this resource to my attention.


\(^{26}\) Schloss, *Making Beats*, 70. Schloss’s entire chapter 3, “‘It Just Doesn’t Sound Authentic: Live Instrumentation versus Hip-Hop Purism,’” is devoted to how producers prioritize samples over newly-performed instrumentation.
riffs into the groove for harmonic, timbral, and textural interest and contrast. Producers can also combine drum samples with additional sampled elements, but this process produces an aggregate structure, a different subtype of structural sample which will be explained later in this section.

More recent technology permits stripping sonic layers from the sampled material and isolating a single layer. DJ Bobcat explains:

> Say there’s a record and they’re singing on it and everything, but we love the bass. But there’s not a place on the record where they stop singing. But we still love that bass. So we’ll filter out the singing. We’ll take out all the highs and muffle it to the highest level where nothing is left but the [bass]. Now you’ve got your bass.27

Thus, producers can extract a single element from a multilayered texture. Producers will isolate the drums—or bass, guitar, or horns—from a passage that originally contained multiple instrumental layers. In other words, everything a producer takes from the source track is not always everything that exists in the source track. For example, the percussion in Kid N Play’s “Do This My Way” is a sample from Lyn Collins’s “Think (About It),” but the producer Hurby “Luv Bug” Azor erased the bass, tambourine, sung lyrics, and background shouting from the source track, leaving only the drum line. In this instance, the structural sample type is percussion-only because the drums are the only sampled material heard.28 Drum samples can therefore be taken from a place in the source track where only the drum line is heard, such as the drum break, or they can be isolated from a thicker texture at any point during the track.

**Intact structure as sample**

The next type of sample, an intact structure, includes every element from the source material, usually drums and at least one other instrumental line.29 An intact structure may contain a variety of sounds from the source track, including bass, keyboards, synthesizer, brass, singing,

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27 DJ Bobcat, telephone interview with the author, 24 August 2012.
28 Only the verses of “Do This My Way” are the percussion-only sample type, because in the choruses, Hurby Luv Bug adds additional samples of bass, guitar, and brass from another track, Maceo and the Macks’ “Cross the Tracks,” to the sampled drums. Combining various samples from different sources in the groove is another sample type, the aggregate structural type.
29 Miyakawa refers to this practice of sampling more than one line from a particular source as “multiple-layer sampling.” See *Five Percenter Rap*, 109.
and background noise such as shouting or laughing. With few exceptions, an intact sample includes every sounding part from the sampled source material, although in exceptional cases producers will only include a few lines of an intact structure. Like percussion-only samples, intact source samples are looped to form the groove. For example, N.W.A.’s “I Ain’t tha 1” samples four intact measures from Brass Construction’s “The Message.” The intact sample used in “I Ain’t tha 1” includes drums, keyboard, bass, pizzicato strings, brass, and a vocal “ooh,” and producers Dr. Dre and DJ Yella loop those four measures throughout the new track.

When intact structural samples contain voices, the voices are typically singing a neutral syllable. If the intact sample contains a voice singing a specific word, the brevity of the sample combined with its frequent repetition in the loop negates any semantic meaning of the sampled word as part of the intact structural sample. Producer 9th Wonder (Patrick Douthit) frequently samples intact structures that include voices, and he told me that fellow hip-hop producer Questlove (sometimes styled ?estlove) described 9th Wonder’s intact samples better than he ever could himself. According to 9th Wonder, Questlove said:

“9th [Wonder] is not sampling the voices. He’s sampling the music behind the voices. It just so happens that the voices are there.” And I was like, “Wow, I didn’t know that.” . . . He said, “If he happens to catch a voice here or there, fine. And if he doesn’t, that’s fine too. But he’s sampling the music behind the voices. He’s sampling the bass line and the strings, it’s just going to happen. It just so happens that the dopest part of the record has voices on it.” And that’s what I do! That’s exactly what I do!30

9th Wonder, like a number of hip-hop producers, will frequently include a voice in an intact sample if that voice happened to appear in the source. It is important to note that most producers view the voice in an intact sample as secondary or as less important than the drums, bass, or other melodic instruments, however. As Mr. Len (Leonard Smythe) explains, “It’s like Bob Marley’s Wailers. There’s three women behind him going [sings], ‘ooh, ooh.’ It’s not taking away from the words.”31

30 9th Wonder, telephone interview with the author, 8 August 2012.
31 Mr. Len, telephone interview with the author, 23 August 2012.
Because intact structures usually include at least one melodic instrument, intact sample-based grooves usually imply some kind of harmonic progression, although the harmony is not necessarily the driving force of the track’s sense of teleology. For example, De La Soul’s “A Little Bit of Soap” samples the bass and drums from the opening of Ben E. King’s “Stand by Me.” However, the opening eight measures of “Stand by Me” include an entire harmonic progression from the tonic of F major through the circle of fifths and back to the tonic (see Figure 1.1). “A Little Bit of Soap,” though, samples only the first two measures of this eight-measure progression. Further, producer Prince Paul samples only the bass, replacing the chordal harmony (shown in the right hand of Figure 1.1) with drum hits.

Figure 1.1. Ben E. King, “Stand by Me,” measures 1-8

By looping two measures rather than the entire eight-measure harmonic progression, and by isolating the bass line, the harmony in this sample is limited to a continuous oscillation between the tonic and dominant. As Fink has noted, tonal teleology is an inappropriate analytical framework for the study of most African American popular musics because parameters such as timbre and rhythm are usually more important for a track’s sense of goal orientation than harmony. This is evident in “A Little Bit of Soap” because the harmony is limited to tonic and

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32 MacGregor Leo, a producer who typically does not sample, told me that when he wants his music to sound sampled, he will only play one or two bars instead of “a whole sixteen-bar progression loop.” Interview with the author, 7 September 2012. Thus, this sense of harmonic stasis pervades hip-hop loops to the point that even newly-performed loops lack a sense of harmonic teleology.
dominant yet the track still has a sense of forward movement. This forward motion is compounded in the middle of the track when producer Prince Paul adds a second layer, a non-sampled keyboard line, to the groove, and at the end of the track, when he adds sampled vocals from the Jarmels’ “A Little Bit of Soap.” Thus, the groove of De La Soul’s “A Little Bit of Soap” is established by looping a single intact measure of sampled material and then focusing on adding more layers rather than creating a sense of harmonic progression.

Non-percussion sample

A non-percussion sample is very similar to an intact structural sample, except that a non-percussion sample does not contain sampled drums. These grooves do contain drum sounds, but the drums are not sampled; at least, the drums are not an identifiable sample or a sample of a funk drummer’s break beat. In a non-percussion structural sample type, producers combine sampled bass, keyboards, guitar, or other combinations of harmonic or melodic instruments with non-sampled drums to create the track’s groove. For example, the EPMD track “You’re a Customer” samples the bass line from ZZ Top’s “Cheap Sunglasses,” and A Tribe Called Quest’s “What Really Goes On” samples the guitar, keyboard, and saxophone from the Ohio Players’ “Pain.” Both of these tracks do contain drum sounds, but those drums do not come from an identifiable sampled source.

The drums in one of these non-percussion grooves may come from one of three sources. First, a live drummer may play a new drum line. The Beastie Boys’ “Finger Lickin’ Good” is a non-percussion groove that comprises a four-note flute riff sampled from 5th Dimension’s recording of “Aquarius / Let the Sunshine In” from Hair and a guitar riff sampled from Johnny Hammond’s “Breakout.” These two samples are augmented with newly-performed percussion by Drew Lawrence, who plays both tamboura and mridunga. Second, a producer may create a drum
line using a drum machine such as the Roland TR-808 or E-mu SP-1200. “High Plains Drifter” by the Beastie Boys contains a sampled bass line from the Eagles’ “Those Shoes,” but the groove is then augmented with percussion created using MCA’s (Adam Horovitz) Roland TR-808 drum machine. Third, producers may combine dozens of fragmented samples that are too small to identify the source of each. As David Metzer notes, “Edited and combined together, these [sampled] parts can create a whole that is more impressive than the sum of its parts.” Shane McConnell explains how he can create a new drum loop using fragments of existing drum sounds:

> If I hear a song with a good drummer, and I like the sounds the drums are making, I can actually go into it and just sample out that little 15- or 20-millisecond long sample. I’ll take a kick [bass] drum, a snare drum, a hi-hat—I’ll sample all of the different instruments [drums] individually. Then I can actually sequence them out and make a drum loop like I’m actually playing the drums.

Thus, a producer can create a new drum part by sampling dozens of individual drum sounds. These fragments can come from the producer’s own samples or from sample kits, which are libraries of drum samples available for purchase. As DJ Bobcat explains, “I have all my files neat on my computer and I can just, if I want a Dr. Dre snare, I go here. If I want a Scott Storch stab, I go here. I can just pull it up.” This approach to creating a drum line—combining samples of a hi-hat from one source, a snare from another source, toms from a different source, and bass drum (which most producers call a “kick” drum) from yet a fourth source—is particularly appealing to producers who are (a) showing off their abilities to combine tiny fragments into a continuous line, or (b) avoiding potential lawsuits for using unlicensed samples.

Not only do producers take the sound of a single hi-hat or bass drum, but they will also manipulate that single sound before combining it with other fragments into a continuous

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33 For an overview of drum machines and their aesthetic value in hip-hop, see Rose, *Black Noise*, 74-80.
36 Shane McConnell, interview with the author, 13 September 2012.
37 DJ Bobcat, telephone interview with the author, 24 August 2012.
percussion line. KLC (Craig Lawson) will layer multiple versions of the same sound when creating a drum line:

If I take a record, I copy a kick three different times in Pro Tools. On one, I take all of the high end off of it to give it that really low frequency. On another one, I may take the low end and some of the high end to get more of the middle range of it. It will give me a harder hit. On the other one I may take it and run it through and put some distortion on it. I put those three different samples that I’ve done and mix them into one sound. It will give you a whole different style than one kick. One thing about sampling, when I’m producing or mixing, I try everything to make some of the sounds from before sound different.

Amanda: Just to get a single kick?

KLC: Just to get a single kick. I copy it two other times, EQ it differently, put them all together, and that gives me a whole other style of kick.38

KLC uses three different versions of the same kick drum sound, but other producers will combine sounds from different sources. MacGregor Leo told me that he will create the sound of a single kick drum by combining “a really punchy kick” from a drum break, an acoustic kick, and “something really hard like a dance kick.”39 A single bass drum hit is much less likely to be identified than a one- or two-measure long break beat, and the producer can also put his or her unique touch on that particular sound. Further, some producer combine sounds from both sampled and newly-performed drums: as Apple Juice Kid (Stephen Levitin) told me, combining “electronic and live” drums gives his music “a unique sound that no one else has.”40

Although non-percussion sample types occur the least frequently of any of the four structural types, they certainly warrant their own category. Many of the tracks on De La Soul’s album *Stakes is High* are examples of non-percussion types, a point which will be elaborated in chapter 5.

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38 KLC, telephone interview with the author, 28 August 2012.
39 MacGregor Leo, interview with the author, 7 September 2012.
40 Apple Juice Kid, telephone interview with the author, 25 August 2012.
Aggregate structure derived from multiple component samples

Like an intact structure, an aggregate structure includes drums and any combination of bass, guitar, keyboards, synthesizer, winds, or other instruments or sounds. The difference between an aggregate structure and an intact structure, though, is that the layers of an aggregate structure are sampled from different sources, whereas all sounds in an intact structure are from the same source. Aggregate structures are often some of the most complex and interesting sample-based structures because they include a variety of samples from disparate sources, genres, and time periods that interact in new and surprising ways when formulating the groove. Despite the diversity of source materials in the component samples of an aggregate structure, most producers try to fuse the individual elements together rather than highlighting their differences.41 As producer Vinroc explains, “It’s always fun to find samples from a different couple of records. For me as a producer, it’s more challenging and fun to take them from different sources and make something out of it.”42

DJ Bobcat produced the track “When Will They Shoot?” for rapper Ice Cube, and “When Will They Shoot?” is an aggregate track with a drum line sampled from Queen’s “We Will Rock You” and bass, guitar, and horns sampled from Charles Wright and the Watts 103rd Street Rhythm Band’s “Giggin’ Down 103rd.” DJ Bobcat explains that he liked the “Giggin’ Down 103rd” track but that the drums in the source track did not have the proper effect he was trying to achieve in “When Will They Shoot?”:

That was the militant song for the album [Ice Cube’s Predator], one of the militant songs. The beat, the Queen [sings the drum line from “We Will Rock You”], you know that with the games, the Olympics, and everything, that’s the anthem. It’s an English record, but it’s an American anthem! [laughs] It gets you going, it gets the adrenaline going.43

As DJ Bobcat reveals, not every sample comes perfectly crafted from its source tracks. In this case, he needed to blend samples from multiple sources in order to create a “militant” song for Ice

41 Schloss, Making Beats, 66.
42 Vinroc, telephone interview with the author, 10 August 2012.
43 DJ Bobcat, telephone interview with the author, 24 August 2012.
Cube. Producers frequently augment one sample with a second, third, or even fourth sample that help them achieve the desired aural effect.

It is relatively unusual to find an aggregate track in which all component samples are heard simultaneously for the entire duration of the track with no breaks or textural shifts. Producers layer samples at different times and at different rates to create rhythmic interest or demarcate specific sections of a track. In Kris Kross’s “Jump,” for example, producer Jermaine Dupri aggregates three different component samples: a drum line from the Honey Drippers’ “Impeach the President,” a three-note guitar riff from the Jackson Five’s “I Want You Back,” and a high-register, descending brass pattern from the Ohio Players’ “Funky Worm.” Only the first two samples are heard during the verses of “Jump,” but during the intro and choruses, Dupri adds the descending brass pattern. Miyakawa refers to these textural changes as “ruptures in melodic layers,” adding that “typical melodic ruptures can involve adding new melodic instruments over the current texture, alternating melodic instruments, or lifting all melodic instruments from the musical texture, leaving only voice and percussion.” Although these are useful observations, particularly in light of how hip-hop musicians differentiate specific sections such as verse and chorus with these textural shifts, her discussion of this phenomenon does not distinguish sampled and non-sampled material.

The component samples in an aggregate structure do not necessarily have to come from different sources. It is not uncommon for producers to sample different parts of the same source track when creating an aggregate structure. According to DJ Bobcat, “You can take another sound from the same song. A lot of times when somebody samples a bass and a guitar riff or a horn from the same song, it’s because sonically they’re the same. They’re taking it because they already sound the same.” For example, De La Soul’s “Can U Keep a Secret” is an aggregate structure that contains two component samples from different parts of “Got to Get a Knutt” by the

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44 On ruptures in melodic layers, see Miyakawa, *Five Percenter Rap*, 92-97.
45 DJ Bobcat, telephone interview with the author, 24 August 2012.
New Birth. The drums sampled from “Got to Get a Knutt” come from the break beat of the source recording (4:05), and the second component sample, a brass riff, comes from much earlier in the source recording (0:47). These two component samples still form an aggregate structure even though they come from the same source, because they are sampled from different sections of the same source track.

Aggregate structural types are conceptually similar to thirteenth-century motets which borrowed multiple melodies and texts. Before beginning this discussion, however, it is necessarily to point out that the connections I draw between musical borrowing in Western art music and the approaches of sample-based hip-hop producers are not intended to suggest either influence or causation. It is highly unlikely that hip-hop producers have encountered many of the historical music examples referenced, and in those cases, a producer probably only heard this music in a quest for unique sounds to sample, not in the pursuit of studying the interrelationships between borrowed materials. The purpose of drawing these connections across genres and centuries is to demonstrate that many types of musical borrowing share conceptual threads even if not directly influenced by one another. I draw these connections to highlight conceptual similarities across centuries of musical borrowing rather than to force an African American popular music peg into a Western art music hole.

Returning to the conceptual connection between thirteenth-century motets and aggregate sample types, both types of musical borrowing include materials from at least two different sources. In many cases, the simultaneous deployment of borrowed materials serves to enhance the textual meaning of the piece. For example, in her examination of the motet *Mout me fu grief / Robin m’aime / Portare*, Dolores Pesce has shown how the borrowed melodies and texts of the tenor, motetus, and triplum of this motet interact to create a fully integrated-sounded complex.46

As Pesce notes, the combination of two borrowed trouvère songs in the triplum and motetus and a chant tenor enhances the meanings of all three texts and emphasizes their Marian subtexts. More generally, Justin Lavacek, drawing on theories of Nicholas Cook, argues that the upper voices of a motet can either conform—thus amplifying the tenor’s message and meaning—or contest—thus changing the tenor’s meaning.

Much like thirteenth- and fourteenth-century motet composers borrowed and combined materials from contrasting genres such as chant and chanson to enhance both the sound and meaning of their compositions, hip-hop producers aggregate samples from a variety of sources to convey the meaning and atmosphere of a particular track. For example, the aggregate groove of the Beastie Boys’ “Egg Man” contains five component samples from very different sources: bass, scraped percussion, and rototom (tuned drums) from soul singer Curtis Mayfield’s “Superfly”; additional drums from funk band Lightnin’ Rod’s “Sport”; bass and brass from funk band Tower of Power’s “Drop it in the Slot”; the famous shrieking violins from Bernard Hermann’s soundtrack for the Alfred Hitchcock film Psycho; and rapid low-register strings from John Williams’s soundtrack for the film Jaws. Three of these samples convey a life-and-death sense of danger: “Superfly” evokes the film of the same name in which cocaine dealer Priest attempts to free himself from a life of crime, the shrieking violins from Psycho signal the approach of knife-wielding mama’s boy Norman Bates, and the low-register creeping strings from Jaws intimate the pursuit of a man-eating shark. The samples from Psycho and Jaws never occur simultaneously during “Egg Man”; instead, the Psycho sample appears in the choruses and the Jaws sample is heard in the verses. Both samples evoke two of the most notorious film killers of all time: Norman Bates and Jaws the shark.

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47 Ibid., 38.
It would seem that juxtaposing these particular samples in an aggregate groove would prepare the sonic palate for a gritty, crime-ridden tale of death-defying escapes and murderous intentions. “Egg Man” is a tale of hunters and their prey, but in this case, the hunters are the Beastie Boys, the prey is innocent passers-by, and the weapons are eggs. According to Dan LeRoy, the Beastie Boys began using eggs as weapons in 1982 after a doorman refused to admit them into a club; the Beasties retaliated by throwing eggs at him and the club. In interviews, they have also mentioned egging tourists, other musicians, club-goers, passing motorists, and each other. The relationship between the Beastie Boys and eggs was so well-known that a toy company even designed a Beastie Boys-brand egg-shooting gun. The lyrics of “Egg Man” are mock-murderous, then, with each member recounting various egg attacks or planning future attacks on victims ranging from children to sleeping people to convertible drivers to racists. The samples in “Egg Man” do enhance both the sound and meaning of the lyrics, but that enhancement is ironic rather than literal. The sampled music connotes life-threatening danger, yet the Beastie Boys’ rapped threats are quite innocuous in light of their weapons of choice and the consequences of being attacked with such a weapon. Being hit with a raw egg, while inconvenient and sticky, is certainly less dangerous than being mauled by a giant shark.

I have identified four subtypes of structural samples, each of which creates the groove in a sample-based track. Structural samples are looped in a sample-based track, creating a sense of rhythmic continuity and a stable basis for rapping or other sample-based components of the track. The four structural types are differentiated on the basis of which part or parts of the groove are sampled. Each of the four types contains different sampled components, however, ranging from a single drum line sample in the percussion-only tracks to six or more separate component samples in some aggregate tracks. Many hip-hop tracks contain more elements than just structural samples

and new lyrics, though. Various surface sample types participate in a sample-based track without necessarily being part of the groove.

Surface Samples

As mentioned above, scholars such as Walser and Adams have separated the sounds of sample-based hip-hop into two categories: the groove and the lyrics. Not all non-vocal or non-lyric sounds in a sample-based hip-hop track are actually part of the groove, however: samples can accent or rupture the groove or the lyrics without necessarily being a component of the groove or the lyrics themselves. These surface samples exist in a place between the lyrics and the groove because they are not necessarily part of the groove itself but are still an integral participant in the sonic character of a sample-based track.

While surface samples are not a layer of the groove in the sense of providing underlying solidity and rhythmic cohesion, they do help to define the sonic character of a particular moment, measure, section, or entire track. In some tracks, they are used singularly, appearing only once during the track to emphasize a particular word, phrase, or section. In other tracks, they recur more frequently, signaling the start of the chorus or verse. Additionally, surface samples may engage in a riff-like relationship with the track’s sample-based groove. In fact, the same sampled sound may be used for a variety of different sample types: it is not the specific material that defines its type but instead, how and where that sampled material appears in the new track.

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50 Surface sample types are not the same concept as what Miyakawa calls “ruptures”; as she notes, “But just as layering helps to delineate form, so, too, do moments of discontinuity, moments when effective producers and DJs manipulate musical layers to interrupt—or rupture, as Rose would have it—the musical groove and continuity for a variety of expressive and formal purposes.” These manipulations of musical layers she describes are (a) not contingent on the presence of samples in a track, and (b) more appropriate in a discussion of the various component samples that appear in an aggregate structural type. See Miyakawa, *Five Percenter Rap*, 81.

51 Krims noted and notated sounds that serve similar functions to what I have called surface samples, although he does not differentiate sampled and newly-performed sounds in his analyses. In his layering graphs of hip-hop tracks, Krims labeled “upbeats,” which are “one-measure combinations of tracks that directly precede points of formal articulation in the song” and “adjuncts,” which are “one or more tracks superimposed either to configurations or to refrains.” See *Rap Music and the Poetics of Identity*, 98.
The source materials for surface samples are unlimited. Some surface samples are instrumental, such as a drum fill or saxophone squawk. Surface samples can also be sound bites from various cultural icons, such as the *Green Acres* television show theme song (sampled in the Beastie Boys’ “Time to Get Ill”) or a recording of Liberace’s rendition of “Chopsticks” (sampled in De La Soul’s “Jenifa Taught Me (Derwin’s Revenge)”). Other surface samples are vocal but non-semantic, such as grunts, yells, or yodels. Samples of recognizable words, phrases, or sentences are a separate type to be discussed later in this chapter. There are three main types of surface samples: momentary surface samples, emphatic surface samples, and constituent surface samples.

**Momentary surface samples**

Momentary surface samples occur only once in a track, and they have no regularity in terms of where in a track’s form they will fall. However, most momentary surfaces samples emphasize a specific musical, formal, or rhetorical point in the track. In Public Enemy’s “One Million Bottlebags,” for example, the track’s groove is an intact structure of bass and drums sampled from Zapp’s “More Bounce to the Ounce.” After the second chorus of “One Million Bottlebags” (2:04-2:20), Public Enemy’s production team adds two additional samples to the intact groove: drums from Bob James’s “Take Me to the Mardi Gras” and winds from Bobby Byrd’s “Hot Pants.” A single sampled stab of winds from “Hot Pants” is repeated to match the bell pattern of the percussion from “Take Me to the Mardi Gras.” These are momentary surface samples and not aggregate component samples for several reasons. First, the samples from “Take Me to the Mardi Gras” and “Hot Pants” appear only during this single specific section of the track, whereas an aggregate component sample would recur during all of the verses or all of the choruses of a track. Second, the producers add these samples to the intact groove rather than replacing the groove with them; thus, they augment the existing groove instead of fundamentally altering it. Third, the section of the track in which these samples appear is an interlude between
the second chorus and the third verse of “One Million Bottlebags.” Both the contrasting momentary surface samples and the addition of an unidentified spoken text (most likely from a comedy album) aurally signal that this section is neither part of the verse or the chorus but instead is a break between them. In fact, these momentary surface samples and the sampled comedy bit only constitute the first half of the interlude. After the momentary surface samples drop out of the texture, the intact groove forges ahead while Flavor Flav resumes his characteristic chatter, further indicating a lead-in to the start of the third verse.

Other examples of momentary surface samples do rupture the track’s groove entirely, temporarily replacing the groove during an interlude for a specific rhetorical or dramatic purpose. In De La Soul’s “Jenifa Taught Me (Derwin’s Revenge),” Prince Paul created the intact groove by flipping and looping the bass, guitar, drums, and vocables from Maggie Thrett’s “Soupy.” He suspends the groove during an interlude and introduces a momentary surface sample to enhance the track’s plot. “Jenifa Taught Me” is a tale of rappers Posdnos and Trugoy the Dove and their early sexual experiences with a girl named Jenny.\(^52\) In the verse delivered by Posdnos, he relates that Jenny “asked was I a virgin / like some kid named Derwin?” After this question, the groove screeches to a halt (1:52-2:10), and one of the rappers announces, “Now wait a minute. Little Derwin got something to show us that Jenny could never do. Listen.” What follows is a momentary surface sample of Liberace’s recorded rendition of “Chopsticks.” By inserting this particular sample at this point in the track, Prince Paul suggests that poor Derwin might be sexually inexperienced, but at least he can play the piano.\(^53\) During this sample, the members of De La Soul heap praise on Derwin for his piano skills. After this interlude, the intact groove

\(^{52}\) It is likely that “Jenny” is a metonym for all teenage girls, or female sexuality in general; as Trugoy notes in his final verse of the track, “Or could it be the realization that all girls owned a Jenny?” \(^{53}\) Of course, listeners who identify the sample as Liberace’s performance could read intimations of homosexuality, suggesting that Derwin is inexperienced with females by choice. Alternately, listeners who hear “Chopsticks” as a low level of accomplishment in terms of pianistic ability might also feel an even greater amount of pity for Derwin: not only is he sexually inexperienced, but his pianistic skills are limited to the beginner-level piece “Chopsticks.” As I will explore in later examples, most samples can be read in multiple ways according to a listener’s knowledge and experience.
resumes and Trugoy continues the tale of his adventures with Jenny. In this instance, the groove was completely interrupted with a momentary surface sample that served a specific rhetorical function in the track, and once that point was made, the producer reinstated the groove.

As in the examples described above, most momentary surface samples have specific rhetorical functions in a track, whether creating a musical interlude, in the case of Public Enemy’s “One Million Bottlebags,” or serving as a dramatic interjection, in the case of De La Soul’s “Jenifa Taught Me.”

**Emphatic surface samples**

Emphatic surface samples signal the beginning or end of a particular section in a track or the beginning or end of the track itself. There are two subtypes of emphatic surface samples: 

*recurrent emphatic surface samples* (those which indicate the beginning or end of a specific section within a track, such as the verse or chorus), and *introduction / conclusion surface samples* (those which signal the beginning or end of the track itself).

A recurrent emphatic surface sample must happen more than once in a single track in order to be an emphatic surface sample; if it only appears once, then it is a momentary surface sample. The repeated use of a specific sampled sound before or after a discrete section of the track signals its function as a recurrent emphatic surface sample. A drum fill sampled from Trouble Funk’s “Drop the Bomb” is heard before each chorus of the Beastie Boys’ “Hold It, Now Hit It.” The appearance of this drum fill just before every chorus is a uniform means of indicating that the chorus is about to begin. This practice of using a sampled drum fill just before the chorus is a common practice in the music of the Beastie Boys, occurring in other tracks such as “Egg Man” and “What Goes Around.”

Introduction / conclusion emphatic samples occur at either the beginning or end of an entire track, and they often have a very different aural character from the rest of the track. For example, several tracks on A Tribe Called Quest’s album *People’s Instinctive Travels and the*
Paths of Rhythm conclude with the same emphatic sample. The tracks “Push It Along,” “After Hours,” “Bonita Applebum,” “Rhythm (Devoted to the Art of Moving Butts),” and “Ham ‘n’ Eggs” each end with a stepwise guitar figure sampled from Eugene McDaniel’s “Jagger the Dagger.” By placing the same emphatic sample at the ends of over a third of the album’s tracks, A Tribe Called Quest creates a sense of aural continuity throughout People’s Instinctive Travels and the Paths of Rhythm.

Emphatic surface samples do not necessarily have to contain melodic, harmonic, or rhythmic instruments, either. For example, the introduction of EPMD’s “It’s My Thing” consists of a sample of the helicopter from Pink Floyd’s “Another Brick in the Wall”; the helicopter sound ceases after a few seconds and the non-percussion structure (bass from Tyrone Thomas and the Whole Darn Family, “Seven Minutes of Funk” and a non-sample-based drum line) begins and remains throughout the track.

Constituent surface samples

Constituent surface samples are only a beat or a second long and usually appear only once every measure or two. They are layered against the groove, but constituent surface samples cannot function independently of the groove. Without the foundation of the groove, a constituent surface sample has no real sense of rhythmic continuity because of its brevity. Thus, while constituent surface samples accent the groove, they are a different sample type than an aggregate component sample because a constituent surface sample cannot be looped. Constituent surface samples act as ornaments or decorations; their presence is vital to the unique sonic identity of a track. As DJ Jazzy Joyce explains, “Records that have the ‘go, go, go!’ or ‘hey, hey, hey’—that’s the driving force in the record on some beats. A vocal can add characteristic elements to a beat.”

Most constituent surface samples tend to be one of three types of sounds: grunts, miscellaneous non-semantic vocal sounds, and instrumental snippets. First, James Brown and

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54 DJ Jazzy Joyce, telephone interview with the author, 20 August 2012.
James-Brown-like grunts frequently appear as constituent samples in sample-based tracks. For example, Public Enemy’s “Fear of a Black Planet” includes a sample of a grunt from Syl Johnson’s “Different Strokes,” and this grunt is heard on the downbeat of every measure in each of the choruses. Second, other vocal samples can also serve as constituent samples: the second chorus of Queen Latifah’s “Mama Gave Birth to the Soul Children” includes a sample of the word “jam” from Uncle Louie’s “I Like Funky Music” on the third beat of each measure. Finally, instrumental samples can also serve a constituent function. In the verses of Public Enemy’s “Don’t Believe the Hype,” production team the Bomb Squad places a brief saxophone sample from James Brown’s “Escape-ism” on the fourth beat of every measure, and the track “East Coast” by Das EFX contains a sample of a shrill, pulsating synthesizer from ESG’s “UFO.”

Surface samples are not part of the groove or the lyrics of a hip-hop track, but they are equal participants in the creation of a sample-based track’s aural character and meaning. Momentary surface samples appear once in a track, usually for a specific rhetorical or formal purpose. Emphatic surface samples signal the beginning or end of a specific track or section within a track. Constituent surface samples are layered with the structural samples, but constituent samples tend to be short and thus cannot function independently of the structural samples. Surface samples are primarily samples of instruments, synthesized sounds, or non-semantic vocal sounds. A sample of a word or phrase distorted, muffled, or otherwise manipulated beyond recognition is a surface sample rather than a lyric sample because it is heard as a sound rather than specific words or text. The final type of sample is the lyric sample, and these samples retain a semantic function in their new context.

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55 The word is indecipherable in this context, which is why I am classifying it as a surface sample, not a lyric sample; this point will be elaborated below.
Lyric Samples

As 9th Wonder explained to me, most hip-hop producers think of lyric samples as entirely separate entity from structural samples. Unlike surface samples, lyric samples are heard and understood as words in a sample-based track. Although a lyric sample has semantic function in both its original and new contexts, the syntax can be significantly altered when that lyric is sampled: words are truncated, phrases are truncated, words are used as homophones, words in the middle of phrases are eliminated, and phrases are placed in contexts which are opposite those of their source materials. Sampling a musician’s voice and words can have a powerful effect on the message of the track.

Lyric samples have many different uses and applications in sample-based music: layered against newly-rapped lyrics in an adjunct function, scratched into a track’s introduction or an interlude between verses, or substituted into a rapped lyric. An example of the third of these possibilities is Trugoy the Dove’s verse of De La Soul’s “Oodles of O’s” (0:30-0:35), in which a sampled phrase from “The Show” by Doug E. Fresh, Slick Rick, and the Get Fresh Crew stands in for a phrase that Trugoy could very well have said himself (the sampled text is italicized):

Some are lovey-Dovey, ah, you crazy crow
Some shake your hand, but this is called the show

The contrasting vocal timbre and strength of attack on the words set them apart from Trugoy’s lyrics, despite its grammatical and rhetorical continuity in the phrase. It is clear that the substituted words are not delivered by Trugoy, which highlights the fact that the substituted words are sampled rather than a new performance. Lyric substitutions draw attention to the process of sampling, the implications of which I explore in greater detail in chapter 2.

Other times, lyric samples create the choruses of new tracks. The practice of using lyric samples for new choruses is a very popular production technique, and these lyric-sample-based choruses include anywhere from one to several different vocal samples. Producers refer to these

56 9th Wonder, telephone interview with the author, 8 August 2012.
sample-based lyric choruses as “scratch hooks.” According to 9th Wonder, the practice of scratch hooks originated with Marley Marl’s production for Biz Markie’s “Nobody Beats the Biz,” and producers followed Marley Marl’s example. In “Nobody Beats the Biz,” Marley Marl combined a sample from Roxanne Shante’s “The Def Fresh Crew”—“he’s Biz Markie”—with multiple samples from James Brown’s “It’s a New Day So Let a Man Come in and Do the Popcorn”—including “the star of the show” and “heartbreaking.”

Choruses of new tracks may contain lyric samples from a single source or from a variety of sources, as in “Nobody Beats the Biz.” The chart in Figure 1.2 shows the sampled sources and lyrics that make up the choruses of 3rd Bass’s “Steppin’ to the AM.” “Steppin’ to the AM” was produced by the Bomb Squad, a production team best known for their work with Public Enemy, who have produced tracks for a variety of hip-hop artists.

Figure 1.2. Lyric samples in the choruses of 3rd Bass, “Steppin’ to the AM” (1:06-1:15, 2:12-2:21, 3:08-3:17, and 4:31-4:50)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sampled source</th>
<th>Sampled lyric</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beastie Boys, “Time to Get Ill” (1986)</td>
<td>“what’s the time?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schoolly D, “Gucci Time” (1986)</td>
<td>“it’s about that time”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beastie Boys, “Time to Get Ill”</td>
<td>“what’s the time?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Enemy, “Raise the Roof” (1987)</td>
<td>“it’s time to get stupid”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beastie Boys, “Time to Get Ill”</td>
<td>“what’s the time?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schoolly D, “Gucci Time”</td>
<td>“it’s about that time”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The rhetorical function of these particular samples is straightforward: each is a spoken or rapped question or answer about time. The Bomb Squad arranges these samples into a conversation in which one sample poses a question and the next sample answers that question.

In yet another variant of lyric sampling, a producer samples an entire verse or chorus of one track uses it intact in a new track. This type of sampling occurs in Jay-Z’s “A Dream,” which is a tribute to murdered rapper the Notorious B.I.G. The first verse of “A Dream” is a newly

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57 9th Wonder, telephone interview with the author, 8 August 2012.
rapped lyric by Jay-Z, the second verse (1:39-2:35) is a sample of an entire verse from the Notorious B.I.G.’s “Juicy,” and the third verse returns to Jay-Z. Each verse of “A Dream” is separated by a chorus sung by Faith Evans, the widow of the Notorious B.I.G. As Justin Williams has noted, the juxtaposition of Jay-Z’s newly-rapped verses with what Williams terms the “postmortem musical borrowing” of the Notorious B.I.G.’s lyrics creates a musical lament for the late rapper. By placing the sampled verse of “Juicy” amidst newly-rapped verses by Jay-Z and newly-sung choruses by Faith Evans, producer Kanye West uses this particular lyric sample to create an aural tribute.

Lyric samples serve specific rhetorical functions in a sample-based track, because these sampled words are meant to be understood by the listener. Moreover, by sampling an artist’s words in his or her voice rather than just restating them, lyric sample types preserve the identity of the sample’s source when placing it into a new musical context. Listeners are supposed to hear the old as part of the new. Lyric sample types in hip-hop thus resonate with the Ars Nova practice of poetic and musical citation. Hip-hop producers sample lyrics to borrow words or phrases in another musician’s voice, and Ars Nova composers cite to borrow words or phrases in another composer’s melody. As Yolanda Plumley has shown, composers of secular music in the fourteenth century borrowed words, phrases, and entire lines of text from one chanson and proceeded to set those same texts and melodies in a new chanson. By borrowing both the melody and the text, the composer preserved the source material’s musical identity while simultaneously placing it in a new musical context. For example, Plumley notes that Jacob de Senleches’s ballade En attendant, Esperance cites the text and melody of the anonymous rondeau Esperance qui en mon cuer. As Plumley argues, fourteenth-century listeners would have

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58 Justin Williams, “Musical Borrowing in Hip-Hop Music” (Ph.D. diss., University of Nottingham, 2009), 231-35.  
59 See, for example, Yolanda Plumley’s “Playing the Citation Game in the Late 14th-Century Chanson,” Early Music 31 (February 2003): 20-40 and “Citation and Allusion in the Late Ars Nova: The Case of Esperance and the En attendant Songs,” Early Music History 18 (October 1999): 287-363.
recognized the citations of the text and music of *Esperance*, and the recognition of this source material is integral to the new ballade’s meaning. Senleches also placed these citations in a simpler musical style than the idioms that appear in the rest of the piece, a gesture which would have further differentiated the citations from the rest of the new ballade or assisted those who may not have recognized the specific citation to at least realize that some type of contrast was occurring.\(^{60}\) Thus, both Ars Nova citation and lyric sample types borrow text and musical context, practices which enhance the meanings of the new work. Musical borrowing types across centuries may not directly influence one another, but they certainly reflect similar aesthetic aims. I will describe more specific examples of how lyric samples enhance the meanings of a new track in chapters 2 and 3.

**Intersections**

Having introduced and explained each of the types within the typology, the remainder of this chapter—indeed, the remainder of the dissertation—explains how various sample types interact with each other. The typology of sampling allows the listener to name the various types of sampling that occur in sample-based hip-hop. The remainder of the dissertation reveals how the typology permits deeper critical understanding of sample-based hip-hop. The typology is a tool for discussing specific musical styles because it is a new vocabulary for existing musical practices.

**A note on notation**

For most musical examples, I employ layering graphs rather than transcriptions in standard Western notation. Layering graphs, a notational concept developed by Adam Krims, convey the metrical position of layered musical events in hip-hop.\(^{61}\) A layering graph contains

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\(^{60}\) The entire discussion appears in Plumley, “Playing the Citation Game,” 26-31.

\(^{61}\) For Krims’s description and justification for layering graphs, see *Rap Music and the Poetics of Identity*, 97-98, footnote 5; for an actual layering graph and its accompanying description, see pp. 97-110.
measure numbers on one axis and musical events on the other axis, thus placing musical events in the space of measures rather than minute and second timings, although I do provide minute and second timings for ease of reference, particularly if a musical example occurs in the middle of a track. Musical events are represented by broken or unbroken lines rather than Western notation, a gesture which makes layering graphs accessible to those who do not read Western notation. A continuous or unbroken line (———) indicates musical events that are looped or which occur continuously, and a dashed or broken line (- - - -) indicates musical events that are not looped or that do not occur at regular intervals in the music. This approach to layering graphs emphasizes the roles and interaction of specific samples rather than of specific instruments. Of course, one sample may only contain a single instrument, such as a bass line, or it may contain several instruments, and this information is also provided in the layering graphs. Layering graphs make the content of each individual sample clear and demonstrate how individual samples interact to form the larger fabric of the groove. This approach to notation emphasizes both the source materials and how those source materials are combined.

*Interaction of sample types*

Many sample-based tracks include more than one of the sample types described above, and it is the interactions of those various samples that make for the most interesting and complex examples of sample-based music. Most tracks only combine two or three samples, but some groups such as Public Enemy, De La Soul, and the Beastie Boys often produce individual tracks that contain at least five and as many as fifteen different samples. Multiple sample types converge in Public Enemy’s “Welcome to the Terrordome,” which was produced by the Bomb Squad: aggregate, emphatic, constituent, and lyric samples. Figure 1.3 is a layering graph of the eight distinct samples that intersect in “Welcome to the Terrordome.”
These eight samples are applied in four different sample types. Each sample source, specific sound, and sample type are listed on the left side of the layering graph, and the right half of the graph shows in which measure each of those sounds appear. The track opens with a two-measure emphatic surface sample of brass from T. S. Monk’s “Bon Bon De Vie.” Then, the aggregate groove begins in measure three, combining component samples of drums from Dyke and the Blazers’ “Let a Woman Be a Woman,” additional drums from James Brown’s “Give It Up or Turnit A Loose,” and guitar from the Temptations’ “Psychedelic Shack.” Each of these three component samples is represented in the layering graph by an unbroken line, which indicates that they are continuously looped throughout the passage. The Bomb Squad accents the groove with a constituent sample, a grunt from James Brown’s “Cold Sweat”; since this sample is only heard once in each measure, it is represented with a dashed or broken line. The three lyric samples are each represented in the layering graph by solid lines, and the specific text of each momentary lyric sample is transcribed in the “sound” column of the layering graph. As the layering graph

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample source</th>
<th>Sample type</th>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T. S. Monk, “Bon Bon De Vie”</td>
<td>Emphatic</td>
<td>Brass</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Dyke and the Blazers, “Let a Woman Be a Woman”</td>
<td>Aggregate component</td>
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<td>James Brown, “Give It Up Or Turnit A Loose”</td>
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<td>The Temptations, “Psychedelic Shack”</td>
<td>Aggregate component</td>
<td>Guitar</td>
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<td>James Brown, “Cold Sweat”</td>
<td>Constituent</td>
<td>Grunt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kurtis Blow, “AJ Scratch”</td>
<td>Lyric</td>
<td>“hit it”</td>
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<td>Geoffrey Sumner, “Train Sequence”</td>
<td>Lyric</td>
<td>“this is a journey into sound” [scratched]</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Temptations, “Cloud Nine”</td>
<td>Lyric</td>
<td>“would you join me please in welcoming”</td>
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reveals, these eight distinct samples intersect and create the sample-based sonic atmosphere of the track. Removing any of these samples would fundamentally alter the sonic character of the track.

Another fascinating combination of samples occurs in a twenty-first-century phenomenon known as a mash-up. A mash-up is built entirely of samples, typically layering the sampled vocal line of one song over the sampled accompaniment of a different song. In other words, a mash-up of this type combines lyric samples from one track with an intact sample from a second track. A mash-up’s success is determined not only by how well the two tracks fit aurally, but also by how the meaning of one affects the other. Mash-ups delight in blending two previously disparate genres into a new track, often to the amusement of the listener. Frequently, the ironic distance between the two original tracks becomes downright funny when they are mashed into a new track. For example, DMX’s snarling arrogance in “X Gon’ Give It To Ya” turns farcical when the track is mashed with Ray Parker, Jr.’s theme from *Ghostbusters*.

The way one sampled element affects the meaning of the other sampled element is not always comic or ironic, however. Freelance Hellraiser’s “A Stroke of Genie-us” mashes Christina Aguilera’s bubblegum pop single “Genie in a Bottle” with the Strokes’ moody “Hard to Explain,” and the resulting mash-up offers a new way to hear both original songs as well as the new mash-up. According to Sasha Frere-Jones of *The New Yorker*, the mash-up was an improvement for both source songs:

[“A Stroke of Genie-us”] is a perfect pop song, better than either of its sources. What was harmonically sweet in the original songs becomes huge and complex in the combination. . . . Stripped of “Genie in a Bottle”’s electronic beats, Aguilera’s sex-kitten pose dissipates, and she becomes vulnerable, even desperate. The opening lines now sound less like strip-club talk and more like a damsel pining from a tower. . . . After another line, she shifts into a wordless “oh, oh” that lays over the Strokes’ chord changes so deliciously you can’t imagine why the song didn’t always do that. After hearing it twice, you can’t remember when it didn’t.  

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62 This term is spelled both with and without a hyphen. I have chosen to use a hyphen.
Thus, many mash-ups seek to undercut their source materials, but some, like “A Stroke of Genius,” have the potential to rewrite both sources into an even more successful and meaningful track.

*Alternation of sample types within a track*

As mentioned earlier in the discussion of aggregate grooves, producers add or remove aggregate component samples to demarcate specific sections within a track. Similarly, tracks can alternate between any of the four subtypes of structural samples. Typically, one sample type is used in the chorus and a second type is used in the verses. There are two ways in which a track can alternate sample types. First, a producer adds an additional sample to a percussion-only or intact groove, thus creating an aggregate groove. For example, the groove of Salt ‘n’ Pepa’s “Doper than Dope” alternates between intact and aggregate structural types; producers the Invincibles and Steevee-O add additional sampled material during the track’s choruses. The verses of “Doper than Dope” contain an intact sample from Bob James’s “Nautilus.” During the choruses, however, the producers add a guitar sampled from James Brown’s “Get Up, Get Into It, Get Involved” to the intact sample-based groove, thus creating an aggregate groove. Second, producers will use an entirely different group of samples in each section with no overlap of source tracks. N.W.A.’s “Fuck the Police” contains an intact structural sample during the track’s spoken interludes (saxophones and drums sampled from Marva Whitney’s “It’s My Thing”), and the rapped verses and choruses include an aggregate groove (drums from Fancy’s “Feel Good” and a syncopated guitar figure from Roy Ayers’s “The Boogie Back”).

*Mixing samples and live instrumentation*

As mentioned earlier in the context of the non-percussion structural sample type, producers will sometimes mix sampled and newly-performed sonic materials in a track. For example, a Tribe Called Quest’s “Verses from the Abstract” contains a drum line sampled from Joe Farrell’s “Upon this Rock” and guitar sampled from Heatwave’s “The Star of a Story.”
“Verses from the Abstract” also contains a new bass part performed by jazz bassist Ron Carter. Several Beastie Boys recordings contain both live and sampled material as well. The Beastie Boys were a punk rock band before becoming rappers, and in several tracks, particularly in later albums such as Check Your Head, they return to their punk roots and perform on their instruments. For example, in the track “Looking Down the Barrel of a Gun,” Ad-Rock plays guitar and MCA plays bass, and these newly-performed instrumental parts are layered with percussion sampled from the Incredible Bongo Band’s “Last Bongo in Belgium” to create the track’s groove.

**Sampling and other kinds of musical borrowing**

Artists do not sample in a vacuum. Sampling artists interact with the samples in a variety of ways, such as drawing attention to the samples in their lyrics, giving a “shout-out” to their producer or DJ, or interpolating lyrics alongside sample material. Sampling is only one kind of musical borrowing with which hip-hop artists engage.

“Juicy” by the Notorious B.I.G. includes both sampling and other types of musical borrowing. First, this track, produced by Poke and Sean Combs, is built on intact samples from Mtume’s “Juicy Fruit,” including the original track’s drums, bass, guitar, and synthesized keyboards. The transcription in Figure 1.4 shows all four layers of the sampled structure: synthesizer, guitar, bass, and drums.

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64 Justin Williams refers to Carter’s new bass line as a jazz code, marking “Verses from the Abstract” as part of the jazz art ideology of the 1980s. See “The Construction of Jazz Rap as High Art in Hip-Hop Music,” *Journal of Musicology* 27 (Fall, 2010): 444-45.
However, the samples above are not the only borrowed musical material in “Juicy.” The chorus of “Juicy” is nearly identical to that of “Juicy Fruit.” Although the subject of each chorus is different (“Juicy Fruit” is a sexy love anthem, and “Juicy” is a tale of overcoming the odds), the final rhyming word of each phrase from “Juicy Fruit” is left intact in the lyrics of “Juicy”:

“Juicy Fruit” chorus lyrics:
You know very well what you are
You’re my sugar thing, my chocolate star
I’ve had a few, but not that many
But you’re the only one that gives me good and plenty

“Juicy” chorus lyrics:
You know very well who you are
Don’t let ’em hold you down, reach for the stars
You had a goal, but not that many
’Cause you’re the only one, I’ll give you good and plenty

Not only are the lyrics and rhyme scheme similar, but the melody of the chorus of “Juicy” is virtually identical to that of “Juicy Fruit,” with the exception of a rhythmic subdivision added in order to accommodate extra syllables. This borrowing that occurs in the choruses is not sampling, however, because the chorus lyrics and melody of “Juicy” are newly-performed, not sampled. “Juicy” thus combines two types of musical borrowing from the source track: the intact structure is sampled, and the lyrics and melody of the chorus are borrowed with slight modifications.

Samples and rhythmic modeling

Sometimes, a rapper’s delivery will exactly mirror the rhythm of the sampled material in a track. This mirroring usually occurs for brief passage, often only a line or two of text.

According to the producers I interviewed, this match between rapped lyrics and sampled sounds can happen at various points during the creation of the track—sometimes a sample is chosen before the rapper delivers the lyrics, and sometimes a producer will add a sample in during post-production because it complements the lyrics so perfectly. DJ Bobcat told me about a saxophone line he heard and then scratched into a track he produced for LL Cool J (the track was never released commercially). LL Cool J had already recorded the lyrics, but according to Bobcat, “The way the sax was playing, you would have thought the sax player was playing along with LL, the way he was coming in.”

One artist who undoubtedly chooses the sampled material first and then raps over it is Busdriver. Many of his rapped lyrics follow the rhythms of the sampled material throughout the

65 DJ Bobcat, telephone interview with the author, 24 August 2012.
track. For example, “Me Time (With the Pulmonary Palimpsest)” is built on a sampled recording of the final movement of Mozart’s Piano Sonata No. 11 in A major (K. 331), better known the Rondo alla Turca; Busdriver raps his entire lyrical structure atop the existing rhythm of the sampled material, often at a dizzying rate of speed. His “Imaginary Places” also samples and borrows the rhythm of another “greatest hit” of the classical repertoire: a recording of the final movement of J. S. Bach’s Suite No. 2 in B minor (BWV 1067), better known as the Badinerie. Not only does Busdriver map his rapped lyrics according the rhythm of the samples, but often times, his pitch level or cadence rises and falls according to the trajectory of the melody of the sampled piece.

Sample exchange

Sample-based tracks that employ sample exchange have consistent drums, bass, or other instrumental line throughout the track, but multiple samples alternate in the formation of that particular line. In percussion exchange, at least two different drum samples alternate during a track; drums are always audible during the track, but producers alternate various samples to create a sense of continuity. The changes in layers and patterns results in what Miyakawa has termed “percussive rupture.”66 The groove of Stetsasonic’s track “Talkin’ All that Jazz” includes four distinct drum samples in alternation. Each of the four drum samples has a distinct sound and character. Producer MC Delite combines these drum samples with a bass line sampled from Lonnie Liston Smith’s “Expansions” to form an aggregate groove. The layering graph in Figure 1.5 demonstrates the percussion exchange in the third verse of “Talkin’ All that Jazz.” This layering graph contains only the four drum samples, not the sampled bass line.

66 Miyakawa, Five Percenter Rap, 82-85.
Figure 1.5. Layering graph, percussion exchange in Stetsasonic, "Talkin' All That Jazz," mm. 49-80 (2:19-3:31)

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<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80</th>
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<tr>
<td>Banbarra, “Shack It Up”</td>
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<td>Mtume, “Juicy Fruit”</td>
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<td>Sly and the Family Stone, “You Can Make it if You Try”</td>
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<td>The Turtles, “I’m Chief</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kamanawanaelea (We’re the Royal Macadamia Nuts)</td>
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At least one drum sample is always audible in this passage, but MC Delite changes the specific samples frequently.

Producers will also alternate other sampled sounds besides drums, although this is less common than percussion exchange. For example, in De La Soul’s “Oodles of O’s,” producer Prince Paul exchanges two different sampled bass lines throughout the track: one from “Stretching” by Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers and another from Tom Waits, “Diamonds on My Windshield.” Also, a Tribe Called Quest’s “Award Tour” includes two different vibraphone samples: a figure sampled from Weldon Irvine’s “We Gettin’ Down” in the choruses and the first half of each verse, and an arpeggiated vibraphone figure sampled from Milt Jackson’s “Olinga” in the second verse. Both of these examples contribute to aggregate grooves in which the drum line sample is consistent but the remaining portions of the aggregate groove alternate.

Thoughts

As I have shown in this chapter, samples have one of three basic functions in a hip-hop track: structural, surface, and lyric. Structural samples are looped and create the groove, or distinctive rhythmic character, of each track. Surface samples decorate, enhance, or emphasize the groove of the track. Lyric samples can occur either briefly or for entire verses or choruses, but the text and its meaning are essential to the role and character of a lyric sample. Each of the three main types contains a variety of subtypes, distinguishable by their placement and function in the sonic texture of a track. Producers can layer or alternate any of these sample types within a sample-based track. With this uniform conceptual and terminological approach presented in the typology, my subsequent analyses apply the typology to parse the sonic events of a track while also discussing the music’s meaning. The typology is a tool for discussing the form and organization of a sample-based hip-hop track. In the next chapter, I focus on a single type from the typology, the lyric sample, exploring its many sonic possibilities and semantic functions.
CHAPTER 2
THE LYRIC SAMPLE TYPE:
CULTURAL ICONS, LYRIC SUBSTITUTIONS, DIALOGUES AND CHARACTERS, AND
SELF-SAMPLING

The previous chapter introduced a typology of sample-based hip-hop. The present chapter focuses on several common iterations of a single type from the typology, the lyric sample. Unlike structural sample types, lyric samples are not integral to the track’s groove. Thus, lyric samples operate according to an entirely different aesthetic than do structural sample types because they offer a different sense of teleology. A lyric sample type may signal the start or end of a section of a track, or, in the case of the recurring lyric sample, it may continually reiterate the chorus of a track. However, removing a lyric sample from the track will not fundamentally alter the track’s harmonic or rhythmic sense of forward propulsion since the lyric sample is a separate entity from the groove.

The lyric sample clearly has value in sample-based hip-hop: nearly every hip-hop producer includes lyric samples in his or her music. What aesthetic and hermeneutic roles do lyric samples play that no other sounds or sample types can? Lyric samples provide producers with a wealth of possibilities to show off their production skills: they can manipulate lyrics to say something new or surprising, they can create dialogues or voices of characters within a track, or they can evoke another time, place, or musical genre all by sampling a few words in another person’s voice. Ultimately, lyric samples are a critical element of sample-based hip-hop because they carry specific kinds of value both for practitioners and for listeners.

Aesthetic and Technical Significance of the Lyric Sample Type

Despite the fact that they are difficult and time-consuming to produce, easy to re-perform, and not part of the groove or structural foundation of a sample-based track, lyric
samples are extremely popular in sample-based hip-hop. In this section, I introduce the technical and aesthetic significance of the lyric sample, and in the subsequent sections of this chapter, I analyze common occurrences of lyric samples.

Lyric samples are wholly unnecessary to the structural foundation of a sample-based track. In fact, according to 9th Wonder, most hip-hop producers view lyric samples as an entity separate from sample-based grooves. In our conversation, he repeatedly emphasized that lyric samples were different from “taking a record” or “taking a seventies record.”1 By “taking a seventies record,” 9th Wonder refers to the process of sampling a loop or a groove from a 1970s record, which is the most popular source material for producers to sample. Apple Juice Kid also notes that lyric samples are distinct from the sample-based grooves of hip-hop but that lyric samples can affect the sound of the groove or the loop nonetheless: “Hip-hop is really loop-based, so anything you can do to jar that loop-esque thing, like sampling a little bit of someone’s lyric, will make it 3D instead of 2D.”2 Thus, the division between lyric samples and other sample types is not arbitrary but is in fact a line the producers themselves acknowledge.

More than any other sample type, lyric samples are the only type of sample which most people could re-perform. It is reasonable to assume that a producer may sample drums, bass, vibraphone, or trumpet because they may not be able to perform on those particular instruments. The same cannot be said for lyric samples, most of which are short rapped, sung, or spoken phrases. Perhaps the most vexing question about lyric samples is why producer would sample a spoken or rapped phrase when it would be much easier for the rapper to just rap or say the text him- or herself.

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1 9th Wonder, telephone interview with the author, 8 August 2012.
2 Apple Juice Kid, telephone interview with the author, 25 August 2012.
It is necessary to point out, however, that the reason hip-hop musicians do not sample is not because they cannot play musical instruments.\(^3\) In fact, a sampler is a kind of musical instrument which requires technological knowledge, physical dexterity, well-timed execution, and an ear for cogent and coherent music.\(^4\) Indeed, Chuck D has equated sampling with other methods of musical composition, noting that he and the other members of Public Enemy thought “sampling was just another way of arranging sounds. Just like a musician would take the sounds off of an instrument and arrange them their own particular way.”\(^5\) Sampling requires skill, knowledge, and musical sensibility, just like any other type of musical performance. According to 9th Wonder, whenever a person claims that hip-hop production requires no skill, he invites him to come to his studio and see how beats are produced, often challenging the person to create a beat and thoroughly embarrassing him in the process.\(^6\)

Further, many hip-hop musicians are able to play other musical instruments, but they choose to sample instead of performing. The Beastie Boys were a punk rock band before becoming rappers, and they often played their own instruments on their hip-hop tracks. Apple Juice Kid is a jazz drummer who also performed extensively with West African percussion ensembles. Shane McConnell plays piano and drums. Forest Factory, KLC, and Mr. Len were drummers in a variety of genres, including both church and secular music. MacGregor Leo plays guitar, bass, and piano. Thus, a number of hip-hop artists are able to play musical instruments, but they choose to sample instead. In fact, rapper and producer Q-Tip only learned to play piano and drums after losing his entire record collection in a fire; when he no longer could sample, he

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\(^3\) Schloss observes argues that the belief that most early hip-hop producers were poor is erroneous and reflects class and cultural determinism. See Making Beats, 25-30. Most of the producers with whom I spoke, however, mentioned that early hip-hop was “an art form that was created by poor people” (DJ Jazzy Joyce, telephone interview with the author, 20 August 2012) or created by “kids who couldn’t afford to put bands together” (Vinroc, telephone interview with the author, 10 August 2012). This topic certainly deserves further investigation.

\(^4\) For Kembrew McLeod’s impassioned argument defending digital sampling as an art form, see Freedom of Expression, 79.

\(^5\) Chuck D, interviewed in McLeod, “How Copyright Law Changed Hip Hop.”

\(^6\) 9th Wonder, telephone interview with the author, 8 August 2012.
turned to live musical instruments.\textsuperscript{7} To hip-hop musicians, sampling is clearly as important as performing a live musical instrument.

Many hip-hop artists find satisfaction in the act of production and even the physical act of using a sampler. In a 2004 interview, Mike D of the Beastie Boys said that, even with much more modern technology available, he sometimes still prefers to use his 1980s-era samplers: “There’s just something about the tactile element of having the pads there on a machine and pounding out the beats by hand. There’s a satisfaction to that which you don’t quite get if you’re clicking your mouse in a step sequencer or in a MIDI window.”\textsuperscript{8} Even though the lyric sample is relatively easy to re-perform, hip-hop artists often prefer the act of sampling and making music using samplers.

Despite the musicians’ love of sampling, sample-based hip-hop production of the late 1980s and early 1990s was an extremely labor-intensive process. Sampling a sound on the E-mu SP1200, one of the most popular samplers from the late 1980s and early 1990s, is a time-consuming enterprise; turning those samples into a new track then requires several additional technical steps.\textsuperscript{9} DJ Jazzy Joyce told me that she still has several of her samplers from the 1980s, but she rarely uses them anymore because she “can’t do sixteen steps just to do one goddamn thing that I can do with these new, modern programs in half a millisecond.”\textsuperscript{10} Most samplers of the late 1980s and early 1990s could only hold ten total seconds of sampled material, only 2.5 seconds of which could be continuous. In fact, KLC told me that, in order to conserve data space, he and other producers would “sample a record and put it on 45 [instead of 33 1/3 RPM] and spin it on high speed. Then we’d sample it, put it in the machine, and go back and slow it down. You

\textsuperscript{9} For a facsimile of the original instruction manual for the E-mu SP1200 sampler, see <http://www.emulatorarchive.com/assets/PDF/SP1200%20User%20Manual.pdf>.
\textsuperscript{10} DJ Jazzy Joyce, telephone interview with the author, 20 August 2012.
can get ten or fifteen seconds instead of seven.” Therefore, any sample had to be short by nature of the sampler’s memory capacity. Some producers such as Prince Paul used several samplers simultaneously to assemble the proper number and length of samples.

Sample-based hip-hop artists frequently note the amount of time they spent creating sample-based tracks. For example, Chuck D recalls spending over a hundred hours listening to and selecting the samples for the Public Enemy album *Fear of a Black Planet*; note that Chuck D does not include the time spent actually putting together a sample-based track. Indeed, the process of assembling a sample-based track was sometimes so time-consuming that groups left errors in their albums rather than correcting them: both Prince Paul and Posdnuos have admitted that the De La Soul album *3 Feet High and Rising* contains many mistakes in the layering and continuity of sampled sounds. For instance, Prince Paul notes that during the track “Me Myself and I,” the groove stops for several seconds. It was simply too time-consuming for the producers to change these mistakes or discontinuities.

Even though sampling is an artistic and musical act, the lyric sample still seems like more trouble than it is worth in light of how much time and effort it takes to create a sample-based track. A sample-based groove loops continuously throughout a track, but most lyric samples appear only once during a track. Recurring lyric samples—what many producers call “scratch hooks”—appear only in the choruses of the new track. With all of the necessary technical knowledge and the amount of time required to sample a sound, why would a producer opt to

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11 KLC, telephone interview with the author, 28 August 2012.
12 In an interview, Prince Paul recalled that they used four different samplers when producing De La Soul’s album *3 Feet High and Rising*: “We were using the [Akai] S-900, which had just come out, an [E-mu] SP-12, and a Casio sampler like an SK-5. We also had a Juno. I can’t remember the exact model number.” See Prince Paul, interviewed in DJ Sorce-1, “Reconstructing the De La Soul Years with Prince Paul (Part Two),” *The Smoking Section*, 21 August 2008, available <http://smokinsection.uproxx.com/TSS/2008/08/reconstructing-the-de-la-soul-years-with-prince-paul-part-two>.
include a lyric sample in a track at all? More than any other sample type, a lyric sample would be easier for an artist to perform him- or herself, so why sample when you can re-perform?

Hip-hop artists include lyric samples in their tracks for several reasons. First, lyric samples, like all samples, capture a specific sound recorded a particular way at one precise moment in time. Hip-hop artists prefer samples over live instrumentation or re-performance because samples have a particular sound quality that live instruments cannot replicate in a studio. As DJ Bobcat explains, there are far too many variables for a producer to be able to replicate a recording:

Unless you know what kind of board was used on that particular song, it’s almost impossible to create that vibe [again]. You don’t know what compressors, gates, what kind of EQs was used. When you’re sampling, sometimes you’re sampling something that has echo on it, or it could be a guitar riff. The guitar riff might have an echo chamber. But what kind? There are so many different kinds of echo chambers, you know? Is it a flat back echo? Is it a hall? Is it an auditorium echo sound? You won’t be able to really, truly get the whole vibe back.  

As Bobcat reveals, a sample captures a specific sound, such as guitar or voice, and a sample also includes sonic elements of the recording itself that are not present in live performances, such as compression, equalization, and even the characteristic crackle of a vinyl record. As Forest Factory told me, “That’s the fun of hip-hop. The [sound] quality’s not so clean. You can hear the oldness in it.” To hip-hop producers, these particular elements and qualities cannot be replicated with live musicians.

Second, lyric samples offer an opportunity for producers to evoke or include the sounds of hip-hop DJing. The majority of lyric samples are scratched, and the sound of scratching creates

\[15\] DJ Bobcat, telephone interview with the author, 24 August 2012. Hank Shocklee of the Bomb Squad has also described the appeal of samples in similar language: “A guitar sampled off a record is going to hit differently than a guitar sampled in the studio. The guitar that’s sampled off a record is going to have all the compression that they put on the recording, the equalization. It’s going to hit the tape harder. It’s going to slap at you. Something that’s organic is almost going to have a powder effect. It hits more like a pillow than a piece of wood. So those things change your mood, the feeling you can get off of a record.” Interviewed in McLeod, “How Copyright Law Changed Hip Hop: An Interview with Public Enemy’s Chuck D and Hank Shocklee,” Stay Free! 20, available <http://www.stayfreemagazine.org/archives/20/public_enemy.html>.

\[16\] Forest Factory, telephone interview with the author, 19 August 2012.
an immediate aural connection with the practice of hip-hop DJing, which was the earliest musical component of hip-hop. Additionally, as Mr. Len points out, scratching on a turntable adds a performative dimension to sample-based music: “Where they use a [sampling] machine, you’re just looping. But now [with scratching] you’ve added this element of live musicianship.” All of the producers with whom I spoke either perform their own scratches on turntables or bring in a DJ to perform the scratches on these lyric samples; none of them use DJ software tools that would allow them to scratch digitally. Lyric samples are not only a different type of sound from structural or surface samples, but they are also treated differently by sampling musicians because they frequently invoke the sounds of the earliest hip-hop production, DJing.

Finally, although lyric samples are the sample type easiest to re-perform, they are also the most personal and easily identifiable of all sample types since they involve the human voice. Lyric samples are more distinctive than samples of instruments because they capture an individual’s voice and that individual’s particular inflection, intonation, range, and timbre. Sampling a person’s voice keeps both the words and the unique sonic fingerprint of that individual intact. In “Go, Cut Creator, Go,” a track he produced for LL Cool J, DJ Bobcat sampled the single word “go” from the Beastie Boys’ “Slow and Low.” According to Bobcat, “There’s no way you can make me believe, ever, that something else would have sounded better on that record besides the Beastie Boys saying ’go.’” Although he considered sampling several other tracks, all of which contained the word “go,” none had the perfect inflection he found in the Beastie Boys’ voices.

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17 See the discussion of the origins of hip-hop DJing in the introduction to this dissertation. On the origins of scratching, see Katz, Groove Music, 59-61. On specific types of scratches, such as the baby scratch, the twiddle, the stab, the crab, the tear, the flare, the orbit, and the transformer, see Katz, Groove Music, 62, and Felicia Miyakawa, “Turntablature: Notation, Legitimization, and the Art of the Hip-Hop DJ,” American Music 25 (Spring 2007): 81-105.
18 Mr. Len, telephone interview with the author, 23 August 2012.
19 DJ Bobcat, telephone interview with the author, 24 August 2012.
Hip-hop artists, for the most part, are pleased and honored when other artists sample their voices. Sampling an artist’s voice is almost always an act of homage. According to 9th Wonder, DJ Premier was one of the earliest producers to sample rappers’ voices, and “if Premier took your words and scratched them in a chorus, you made it. . . . That was an honor, when Premier scratches your voice.” Mr. Len told me that he samples people’s voices because “it’s props. I’m influenced by those people.” Mr. Len pays homage to his influences and predecessors by sampling their voices. Producers are also flattered and honored when other artists sample their work. DJ Bobcat told me, “I get happy every time somebody samples ‘I Need Love’ [a track he produced for LL Cool J]. I get excited.” Because one’s voice is so personal and recognizable, though, some artists do not want their voices associated with certain kinds of recordings. For example, Ad-Rock of the Beastie Boys claims that he does not mind other artists sampling his voice unless “the song they’re using my voice in is saying some dumb, negative shit.” Therefore, most artists do not object having their voices sampled, as long as the sampling tracks have some merit; rappers such as Ad-Rock do not want their voices and, indirectly, themselves associated with new tracks that articulate negative or disagreeable messages.

Lyric samples offer a specific lens with which we can view sample-based hip-hop. More than any other sample type, lyric samples offer four specific hermeneutic approaches for sample-based hip-hop. First, lyric samples function as cultural icons to listeners because a sampled sound represents particular shared knowledge or experiences. Second, lyric substitutions, a specific kind of lyric sample which replaces phrases of rapped lyrics, draw attention to the act of sampling by creating sonic contrast between the sampled and rapped lyrics. Third, producers use the contrasting voices or timbres of lyric samples to create characters or dialogues between sampled and rapped words. Finally, a striking number of hip-hop artists sample their own voices in new

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20 9th Wonder, telephone interview with the author, 8 August 2012.
21 DJ Bobcat, telephone interview with the author, 24 August 2012.
22 Ad-Rock, interviewed in Steuer, “The Remix Masters.”
recordings, a phenomenon I term “self-sampling”; self-sampling demonstrates pride in one’s own record collection and simultaneously highlights the process of sampling. Of course, these categories of lyric samples can and do frequently overlap: an artist can sample his own recording for a lyric substitution which then creates a sense of value for the listener. As we will see, focusing exclusively on the lyric sample is a fruitful vantage point from which to view sampling and sample-based hip-hop.

Cultural Icons

Lyric samples often function as cultural icons for listeners. When a sampled sound functions as a cultural icon, the sound itself represents various aspects of the listener’s knowledge. Much like a religious icon is both a picture of and an embodiment of the figure pictured, a lyric sample is both a sound and a representation of a particular association with that sound. As Margaret Kenna has written of icons in the Orthodox Christian tradition, “An icon is not just a picture, not simply a copy or a reminder of an original. By representing that original in a particular way it maintains a connection with it, as a translation does with the original text.”

As a cultural icon, a lyric sample summons for the listener a particular experiential or associative framework.

DJ Jazzy Joyce relayed to me how certain sounds can evoke a particular memory for her:

Whatever my mother’s record collection was, and then whatever she exposed me to socially, is what influenced my choices [of materials to sample], my musical choices. Those are the things that were being programmed and being repeated in my ears at the time. I might hear a song that my mom played when she was cleaning up the house on Saturdays, and there might be a certain section of that song that, every time I hear it, I maybe saw her do a little two-step, smile a little, snap her fingers a little more like, “oh!” And then I might take that section of the record and see how I can manipulate it because my mother let me know that was a sweet spot in the record.

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24 DJ Jazzy Joyce, telephone interview with the author, 20 August 2012.
Jazzy Joyce’s anecdote reveals several ways in which specific sounds may hold significance for sampling artists. First, they can reflect a familiar song, one which was “programmed” or “repeated” in one’s childhood. Second, they can capture a specific memory associated with a particular song or moment in a song, such as Jazzy Joyce’s recollection of her mother dancing or snapping her fingers to a song. Finally, sounds can evoke a larger scenario or emotion. In particular, Jazzy Joyce’s anecdote reveals not a specific song or a specific day, but a larger and more generalized relationship with both her mother and the music of her childhood. For many producers and listeners, a single sample is an icon for a particular song, experience, or memory.

The sampled sound may be an icon for a variety of meanings and associations, all of which depend on the listener’s knowledge and experience. When a listener recognizes a specific sound and then places that sample in an experiential or associative framework, the listener’s experience then forms the meaning for that particular icon. The late Frank Zappa’s band often employed several “stock modules” in their live performances, which were quotations of or allusions to popular musical themes or styles such as the *Twilight Zone*, *Mr. Rogers’s Neighborhood*, and Devo. As Zappa explained, “Those [stock modules] are Archetypal American Musical Icons, and their presence in an arrangement puts a spin on any lyric in their vicinity. When present, these modules ‘suggest’ that you interpret those lyrics within parentheses.”25 In other words, Zappa counted on his audience to recognize those musical moments and to have specific associations with those particular musical moments. Zappa noted that a listener need not recognize every detail about the quotation or allusion, but the associative framework for that particular sound would enrich one’s listening experience:

The audience doesn’t have to know, for example, who Jan Garber or Lester Lanin is to appreciate those textures—the average guy is not going to say “Hey Richie! Check this

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Zappa’s Archetypal American Musical Icons lend meaning to their surroundings, but that hinges on the listener’s association with and understanding of that musical moment.

A single sample functions as a cultural icon for several different frameworks, and these frameworks depend on the listener’s recognition of and knowledge about the sampled material. For example, many hip-hop producers compete with each other to find the most obscure or unusual sampled materials, but they also create music for a less knowledgeable, non-producer audience. Producers thus attempt to reach simultaneously a broad and niche audience. As Schloss has argued, hip-hop producers walk a tightrope because “they must impress each other with their creativity and the rarity of their samples without losing the affection of fans who have no interest at all in the esoterica of hip-hop production.” Mr. Len explained that producers and DJs can also reveal a little too much about themselves in the materials they choose to sample:

Back in the day, there was a show called The Magic Garden, and at the end of the show, they had this song that was like [sings], “See you! Hope I get to see you again.” I’m like, everyone my age probably knows that. You get to a point where you haven’t heard it in so long, that when you play that record, people are like, “Oh my god! That’s amazing!”

Amanda: Like, “I know that song!”

Mr. Len: There’s a connection. I could sample that and put it in a record, but because I’m a collector, I know I can play it at a party. I’m going to get a reaction no matter what I do with it.

Amanda: It helps you know how old all the people are there, too, right?

Mr. Len: Yeah. You also run the risk of making yourself look extremely old. Thus, many of the examples throughout this chapter have different layers of meaning for listeners depending on their individual knowledge and experiences. In Mr. Len’s case, the sample might

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28 Mr. Len, telephone interview with the author, 23 August 2012.
remind one listener of a television show from his youth, but it might sound terribly antiquated to another listener.

If one simply realizes that sampling is taking place, then that sample is an icon for sheer recognition. In the following example from “Finger Lickin’ Good” (2:59-3:06) by the Beastie Boys, a lyric sample from Bob Dylan’s “Just Like Tom Thumb’s Blues” replaces an entire line of rapped lyrics (in this and all subsequent examples in this chapter, the sampled lyrics are italicized):

I can do the Freak, the Patty Duke, and the Spank  
Gotta free the funk fish from the funky fish tanks  
I’ll sell my house, sell my car and I’ll sell all my stuff  
I’m going back to New York City, I do believe I’ve had enough.

A listener will recognize that a sample has been inserted into this particular phrase, even if he or she is unable to identify the source track or artist or that sample. During the sampled phrase, the sample-based groove stops and is replaced with Dylan’s crooning voice and guitar, a stark contrast to the groove and the earlier rapping. Such recognition creates a sense of insider knowledge for the listener. Recognizing that the act of sampling is taking place—“I know how the Beastie Boys sound, and that passage was certainly not any of the Beastie Boys”—offers a listener the opportunity to appreciate that particular moment in the music as well as his or her own ability to differentiate sampled and non-sampled materials. In this particular example, the lyric sample is an icon for a listener’s skills in distinguishing various sounds and their sources.

In other instances, lyric samples capture a specific moment of pop culture history, such as the following passage from the Beastie Boys’ “Pass the Mic” (0:40-0:50). The following excerpt

29 In fact, Zappa described the same phenomenon in the 1966 track “Call Any Vegetable,” which contains what Zappa called “a twisted reference to Charles Ives.” Toward the end of “Call Any Vegetable,” three separate groups in the band each played a different patriotic American tune, which in turn yielded “an amateur version of an Ives collision.” Zappa observed that an uninformed listener might think this passage was a mistake; however, he failed to note that different listeners might make different associations. One listener might hear a mistake, another listener might hear several simultaneous patriotic tunes, and a third might hear several simultaneous patriotic tunes and also catch the reference to the music of Charles Ives. As the Ivesian moment in “Call Any Vegetable” reveals, the same icon may have several different interpretations, all of which depend on the listener. See Zappa, The Real Frank Zappa Book, 167.
includes two lyric substitutions. The first is a phrase from EPMD’s “So Wat Cha Sayin’,” and the second is a single word sampled from a Jimmie Walker stand-up comedy album:

The name is [Mike] D, y’all, and I don’t play
And I can rock a block party ’til your hair turns gray.
So wat cha sayin’ I explode on site
And like Jimmie Walker I’m dyn-o-mite

The Jimmie Walker sample carries particular cultural connotations which are increased by Mike D’s rapped acknowledgment of the sample’s source. Walker’s signature phrase and unique delivery style of that particular phrase were made famous by his character J. J. Evans on the 1970s television show Good Times. The word “dy-no-mite” and the distinctive style of delivery signal both Walker and his character’s catchphrase, but Mike D’s rapped lyrics simultaneously highlight the sampled material and the source of the sample. Mike D’s attribution helps listeners who would not otherwise have recognized the sample’s source. This particular sample has cultural resonance for a listening audience who is familiar either with the television show or the catchphrase.

Depending on the listener’s experience and knowledge, lyric samples can summon a specific time, place, or sensibility. For example, in Wax Tailor’s “Where My Heart’s At,” rappers Johnny Madwreck and Mattic reminisce about their favorite hip-hop tracks and artists of the past, praising “hip-hop from the beginning when it was real” (0:51-0:53). One of Johnny Madwreck’s rapped phrases includes a lyric sample from N.W.A.’s “Fuck the Police.” Johnny Madwreck recalls being “on the school bus ’most every day, screaming fuck the police by N.W.A.” (1:11-1:16). This lyric substitution stands out as a sample not only because it contains a different voice than Johnny Madwreck’s, but also because it occurs at the moment in his narrative at which he was quoting the voice of his younger self. In addition to evoking a specific hip-hop track and its title, this particular sample also summons a specific time and scenario. In his reminiscence, Johnny Madwreck indirectly identifies the place and age at which he experienced this source track: “on the school bus” suggests youth, and “screaming” the lyrics intimates a playful form of
rebellion by being rowdy on the bus before or after the drudgery of school. Johnny Madwreck’s lyrics simultaneously praise the source material and place the sampled track in the context of his youthful listening experience. As a cultural icon, this example has different levels of meaning for a listener depending on his or her experience. On the most superficial level, a listener realizes that a sample is used; a more knowledgeable listener recognizes the sample as the title line from N.W.A.’s track; and yet another listener recalls listening to that particular track herself, perhaps an experience mirroring that of Johnny Madwreck’s description. This third level of recognition creates significant value for those who share Johnny Madwreck’s experience with this particular track.

The attendant meaning of a lyric sample can also be used for negative purposes. For example, Eazy-E’s 1993 “Real Muthaphukkin Gs” samples Eazy-E’s 1988 track “Eazy-Duz-It” in order to threaten Eazy-E’s former producer, Dr. Dre. Eazy-E and Dr. Dre had both been members of N.W.A., but a feud between the two erupted when Eazy-E refused to release Dr. Dre from a contract with Ruthless Records. Only after his mother’s life was threatened did Eazy-E release Dr. Dre from the recording contract.\(^3\) The two musicians repeatedly dissed (insulted) each other in their subsequent recordings, although Eazy-E was the only one of the two to incorporate lyric samples in these musical insults. As source material for these samples, Eazy-E and his new producer Rhythm D drew on recordings that he had made with Dre prior to their feud, thus transforming recordings from their friendly days into new recordings that disparaged his former friend and colleague. In the intro of the source track “Eazy-Duz-It” (0:10-0:13), Eazy-E calls, “Yo Dre! Gimme a funky-ass bass line!” In response to “Yo Dre!” Dr. Dre says, “What’s up?” These four words (“Yo Dre!” “What’s up?”) are sampled and placed in the choruses and the outro of “Real Muthaphukkin Gs” (1:32-1:34; 3:24-3:26; 4:16-4:35), but with an entirely different

purpose than in the sample’s original context. In “Real Muthaphukkin Gs,” after the sampled lines “Yo Dre!” and “What’s up?”, the sound of a gunshot follows, implying that Eazy-E called for Dre’s attention to shoot him. This particular example has different layers of value contingent on a listener’s knowledge of the relationship between Eazy-E and Dre: those who are familiar with both the source track and the feud between the two musicians will find this recasting of the source material particularly bittersweet. In the source track, Eazy-E asked his trusted producer for a bass line for the track; by the time of “Real Muthaphukkin Gs,” Dre’s production skills are set aside in favor of the feud between the two musicians. Eazy-E’s new track recasts the sampled material to suggest violence against Dre.

In his track “Ether,” Nas and producer Ron Browz include two different lyric samples to disparage Nas’s rival, Jay-Z. Jay-Z and Nas feuded in the early 2000s over which of them was the rightful successor to late New York rap giants Tupac Shakur and the Notorious B.I.G. In “Ether,” Nas samples the voice and attendant authority of Tupac Shakur to discredit Jay-Z, and then later in the track, he samples and inverts the meaning of a Jay-Z track. The intro of “Ether” (0:05-0:16) includes a lyric sample of the line “fuck Jay-Z,” sampled from the late Tupac Shakur’s “Fuck Friendz.” As Justin Williams has suggested, Nas legitimates his own place in hip-hop by sampling the iconic Shakur’s voice. Sampling the late, great Tupac’s dis lends the anti-Jay-Z sentiment greater credence than if uttered by another, lesser rapper or by Nas himself. Of course, a listener who does not recognize Shakur’s voice will still realize that the track is dissing Jay-Z, but those who do recognize Shakur’s voice will find the sampled phrase more convincing because Nas and Tupac share the same opinion of Jay-Z.

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32 Since Shakur was deceased at the time of the Nas recording, this is an example of what Justin Williams has termed “postmortem borrowing.” As he has argued, crucial to the success of postmortem borrowing is the “authority and aura” of the sampled recording. See Williams, “Musical Borrowing in Hip Hop Music,” 215.
33 Ibid., 227-28.
The second lyric sample in Nas’s “Ether” is dropped in during Nas’s rapped line about Jay-Z’s physical ugliness (3:44-3:51):

What, you thinkin’ you gettin’ girls now because of your looks?
Negro, please. You no-mustache-having, with whiskers like a rat.

Ron Browz places a sample from Jay-Z’s track “Girls, Girls, Girls” against Nas’s rapped lyrics. The sampled material is Biz Markie’s sung line “girls, girls, girls” from the choruses of the Jay-Z track. The subject of Jay-Z’s “Girls, Girls, Girls” is how easily he is able to seduce women, so Nas and Ron Browz sample this title line to negate and mock Jay-Z’s asserted sexual prowess.

Nas accuses Jay-Z of being physically and sexually inferior, and he includes this particular sample to turn the source track’s meaning on its head. Nas’s rapped verse from which the above example is excerpted engages in standard rap dis subjects, such as accusing Jay-Z of being gay (“you a dick-riding faggot”) and of being unoriginal (“How much of Biggie’s [the Notorious B.I.G.’s] rhymes is gonna come out your fat lips?”), but the above line about Jay-Z’s physical appearance is the only part of “Ether” with an accompanying lyric sample.34 The meaning of this sample is particularly rich for a listener who recognizes both the sample source and the inversion of the sample source’s meaning.

As mentioned earlier, hip-hop producers often attempt to impress each other with the rarity, obscurity, and, sometimes, downright weirdness of their samples. Placing multiple disparate samples together successfully is one hallmark of a gifted producer, so the more unusual the sample, the better. Producer Prince Paul recalls the process of selecting samples for the De La Soul album 3 Feet High and Rising:

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Prince Paul’s comments reveal that the members of De La Soul valued record collections that were “deep” or expansive, as well as records that were “weird” or “obscure.” Posdnuos’s record collection in particular was helpful to the group, which suggests the most unusual records were especially prized because no one else had them. For example, *3 Feet High and Rising* contains lyric samples from sources as diverse as Eddie Murphy’s stand-up comedy albums, the doo-wop group the Jarmels, Johnny Cash, the pianist Liberace, and early rap group Funky 4+1.

This tendency to “keep adding stuff” to *3 Feet High and Rising* and the musicians’ wide-ranging record sources are evident in the De La Soul track “Cool Breeze on the Rocks.” “Cool Breeze on the Rocks” is a quodlibet composed entirely of lyric samples (see Figure 2.1). A quodlibet consists of many borrowed elements, each of which share a particular characteristic yet remain distinct from each other; the main difference between a collage and a quodlibet is that a collage is created atop the piece’s “basic musical structure” or “underlying structure” while a quodlibet stands alone without supporting or accompanying music. There is no sample-based groove in this track, thus making “Cool Breeze on the Rocks” a quodlibet rather than a collage because it contains no underlying musical structure. The entire track consists of lyric samples, including single words, entire phrases, and lyric samples which contain audible instruments in addition to the words. Each sample contains the word “rock,” which links the samples in character. Further,
as Burkholder has noted of Charles Ives’s quodlibets, this type of musical borrowing process “seems entirely arbitrary, like a joke or compositional tour de force.”38 “Cool Breeze on the Rocks” seems like a compositional tour de force rather than a joke because it demonstrates to listeners the depth of the record collections from which the members of De La Soul drew their samples.

Figure 2.1. Lyric sample quodlibet in De La Soul, “Cool Breeze on the Rocks”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample source</th>
<th>Sampled lyric</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Richard Pryor, “Crap Game”</td>
<td>Cool breeze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Enemy, “Terminator X Speaks With His Hands”</td>
<td>Rock that shit, homie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaughan Mason and Crew, “Bounce, Rock, Skate, Roll”</td>
<td>Rock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MC Lyte, “Lyte as a Rock”</td>
<td>Light as a rock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashford and Simpson, “Solid” / MC Lyte, “Lyte as a Rock”</td>
<td>As a rock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Pryor, “Crap Game”</td>
<td>Cool breeze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fearless Four, “Rockin’ It”</td>
<td>Rockin’ it, rockin’ it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Rock Steady Crew, “Hey You”</td>
<td>Rock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afrika Bambaataa, “Planet Rock”</td>
<td>Rock it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crash Crew, “High Power Rap”</td>
<td>Keep on rockin’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cutmaster D.C., “Brooklyn Rocks the Best”</td>
<td>Rocks the best</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steady B, “Rockin’ Music”</td>
<td>Rockin’ music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Pryor, “Crap Game”</td>
<td>Cool breeze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run-DMC, “Hit It, Run”</td>
<td>The king</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jefferson Starship, “Rock Music”</td>
<td>Rock and roll is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Unidentified source]</td>
<td>Rock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gregory Abbott, “Shake You Down”</td>
<td>This world for you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beastie Boys, “The New Style”</td>
<td>King Ad-Rock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LL Cool J, “Rock the Bells”</td>
<td>Rock the bells</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange Krush, “Action”</td>
<td>I want</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Treacherous Three, “The Body Rock”</td>
<td>Body body rock, body body rock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Real Roxanne, “Bang Zoom”</td>
<td>You are now rockin’ with the best</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Enemy, “Night of the Living Baseheads”</td>
<td>I put this together to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The B-Boys, “Rock the House”</td>
<td>Rock the house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Enemy, “Cold Lampin’ With Flavor”</td>
<td>Knock’a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Jackson, “Rock with You”</td>
<td>I wanna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run-DMC, “Hit It, Run”</td>
<td>Rock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Jackson, “Rock with You”</td>
<td>With you</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One can imagine the musicians scrutinizing their record collections in search of every possible statement of the word “rock.” On the surface of this track, it is evident that the each of the many

38 Ibid., 371.
fragments originates in a different source, but only the most experienced and knowledgeable of listeners could potentially sort out the specific artist and source track of each individual sample.

Lyric samples are cultural icons whose meaning is contingent on a listener’s knowledge and experience. A listener who recognizes only that a sound is a sample will find that sound less relevant or interesting than a listener who can identify the source or context of that sample. Knowing that so many lyric samples have rich histories and backstories encourages listeners to not only listen for lyric samples but also investigate their sources and relevance. These layers of meaning are relevant for most lyric samples, although the subsequent analyses in this chapter focus more on varying interpretations of specific samples rather than the specific function of lyric samples as cultural icons.

Lyric Substitutions

Lyric substitutions are a popular but puzzling category of lyric sample. As noted in chapter 1, a lyric substitution places a sampled word or phrase in a newly-rapped lyric, and that sampled word or phrase serves the same rhetorical function as if the rapper had said the text him- or herself. Lyric substitution samples are consistent with the semantic function, rhyme scheme, and grammatical structure of the surrounding lyrics. However, a lyric substitution draws attention to itself because it differs from the surrounding lyrics in pitch, timbre, range, voice type, or audio quality. For example, the following passage from “Hey Ladies” by the Beastie Boys (1:24-1:33) contains a sample of a single word, “fresh,” from Fab Five Freddy’s “Change the Beat (Female Version)”:

The gift of gab is the gift that I have
And that girl ain’t nothing but a crab.
Educated, no, stupid, yes,
And when I say stupid, I mean stupid fresh.

In this example, “yes” and “fresh” create assonant couplet rhymes just as “have” and “crab” did in the previous phrase of the lyric. But, the word “fresh” is not delivered in the nasal semi-
shouted style of Beastie Boys rappers Mike D, Ad-Rock, and MCA; instead, “fresh” is a rapidly scratched word that sounds like an aural brushstroke. Although the sampled word is grammatically consistent with the poetic construction of its surroundings, its timbre and sound quality sets it apart from the surrounding rapped lyrics.

Lyric substitutions raise an interesting aesthetic question: which came first, the rapped lyrics or the lyric sample substituted into the rapped lyrics? According to most of the producers with whom I spoke, these lyric substitution samples often have a chicken-and-egg relationship with the rapped lyrics: that is, it is impossible to know whether the sample or the rapped lyric came first unless one was present in the room during production. For example, “Loyalty,” a track produced by 9th Wonder, contains two lyric substitutions. According to 9th Wonder, one lyric substitution was rapper Masta Killa’s as he was delivering the line, and the other was added later by 9th Wonder and another DJ, PF Cuttin.³⁹ I suspect that in the above example from “Hey Ladies,” the Beastie Boys and their producers planned from the start to include the Fab Five Freddy sample because otherwise they would have to spend hours combing through recordings in search of the perfect statement of the word “fresh” that would best complement the rapped lyric.

The specific sampled word “fresh” in the above example is particularly significant for hip-hop artists, further evidence that the Beastie Boys probably chose the sample first and then constructed the rest of the phrase’s lyrics. “Fresh” comes from a track by Fab Five Freddy, who was a major figure in early hip-hop. He was well-known as a graffiti artist, he helped produce the fictional 1982 hip-hop film *Wild Style*, he was an early host of the television show *Yo! MTV Raps*, and Blondie referred to him in their song “Rapture” (arguably the first mainstream hit to include rapping). By sampling Fab Five Freddy’s voice, the Beastie Boys sample the voice of one of the key players in early hip-hop. This single word in his voice stands for Fab Five Freddy as a person

³⁹ 9th Wonder, telephone interview with the author, 8 August 2012.
as well as the many elements of early hip-hop that he represented. By symbolizing Fab Five Freddy, the sampled word “fresh” is a sonic synecdoche for many elements of early hip-hop.

In addition to symbolizing Fab Five Freddy and his role in early hip-hop, the specific sampled word “fresh” represents another important aspect of hip-hop: turntablism. The word “fresh” sampled from “Change the Beat” is, in fact, the same sound that turntablist Grandmixer DST scratched in Herbie Hancock’s 1983 “Rockit.” Hancock performed “Rockit” live at the 1984 Grammys, and the performance prominently featured Grandmixer DST scratching the record on turntables. Mark Katz has called this performance “the scratch heard around the world.” Hip-hop DJs such as Q-Bert and Mix Master Mike cite “Rockit” as a significant influence in their own turntable music; in fact, many artists point to the performance of “Rockit” on the Grammys as the moment they became interested in hip-hop. Thus, the sampled word “fresh” refers both to Fab Five Freddy and to the sample of Fab Five Freddy that was so prominently scratched in “Rockit.” This sample functions grammatically as a lyric substitution, but it also carries various levels of meaning for a listener depending on whether the listener recognizes the sample and in what context they place that particular recognition.

Lyric substitutions sometimes contain instruments as well as voices, and these instruments are crucial for the listener’s recognition and interpretation of a passage. The Beastie Boys’ “The Sounds of Science” (2:50-2:55), for example, includes a lyric substitution sampled from reggae artist Pato Banton’s “Don’t Sniff Coke”:

Rock my Adidas, never rock Fila
_I do not sniff the coke, I only smoke sensimilla_

This sample contains more than just Banton’s sung lyric in his distinctive Jamaican accent and inflection; it also includes the syncopated guitar, two-chord harmonic progression, and pulsing

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40 On the role of “fresh” in turntablism, see Katz, _Groove Music_, 89-98.
41 Ibid., 93.
42 For these and other artists’ discussions of “Rockit,” see their interviews in the documentary film _Scratch_ (2002), dir. Doug Pray.
percussion that are characteristic of reggae music. By retaining the sounds of the other instruments from the sampled source material, the sampled lyric even more strongly signals its reggae roots and the connection of reggae, Jamaica, and the Rastafari movement with the act of smoking marijuana. There are three ways to read this particular lyric substitution, all connected to the characteristic sonic idiom of reggae audible in the sample.

First, the sample refers to the Beastie Boys’ own love of marijuana. The members of the Beastie Boys are relatively open about their own marijuana usage; in interviews, they often attribute their musical choices to having been high when they wrote a track, and they often claim that they are high during interviews. For example, the following excerpt from their interview with Terry Gross of NPR’s Fresh Air reveals the effects of marijuana on both their music and their fan base. Gross asked the three members of the Beastie Boys what prompted the stylistic changes between their albums Licensed to Ill and Paul’s Boutique:

Mike D: We switched [from beer] to weed.

Unidentified member: And then we made Paul’s Boutique.

Gross: Which was very different from the, which I think some fans loved and some fans felt disappointed because it was a departure. What was different about it?

MCA: Well, weed is a good word. It weeded out some fans, too, and that was okay.

Ad-Rock: And found some fans that were weeded out.

Mike D: Like, with Paul’s Boutique you had two things going on. You had, like, people who probably expected, like, “Fight for Your Right to Party Part Two” [the multiplatinum hit single from Licensed to Ill], and they were very disappointed and were like, this isn’t what I want at all.

MCA: And they got weeded out.

Mike D: And they got weeded out. And then there were fans that were like, wow, this is whatever. This is something I’m really into. And they got weeded out, too.

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MCA: They got weeded out.

Mike D: They got in a different meaning of the word.\textsuperscript{44}

In this interview, the members of the Beastie Boys reveal their affinity for both marijuana and wordplay, suggesting that by smoking marijuana while writing the album, they attracted an audience who also enjoyed smoking marijuana. For instance, in the middle of the \textit{Paul’s Boutique} track “Shake Your Rump” (1:59-2:03), the groove stops and is replaced with the characteristic bubbling sound that results when a marijuana smoker takes a “hit” from a water bong. Thus, it is not surprising that the group would include a lyric sample in “The Sounds of Science” that so robustly endorses the usage of marijuana.

This particular sample is about more than just the carefree use of marijuana, though. “Don’t Sniff Coke,” released by Pato Banton in 1988, promoted marijuana as a safe and spiritual alternative to the destructive powers of cocaine. Much like some American hip-hop artists released tracks to dissuade their listeners from using crack cocaine, such as Public Enemy’s “Night of the Living Baseheads” and De La Soul’s “My Brother’s a Basehead” (“base” is a slang term for crack cocaine), Banton asks his listeners not to use cocaine and suggests marijuana as an alternative. For two verses of “Don’t Sniff Coke,” he articulates a story about the shame of his own cocaine usage and how he learned not to use the drug, namely, by smoking marijuana. Out of context, the sampled lyric might sound like a shameless plug for the unfettered use of marijuana, but heard in light of its source material, it carries the implication of Banton’s spiritual awakening that resulted from using marijuana instead of the atrocities which accompany the abuse of cocaine.

Finally, this sample of a reggae recording evokes hip-hop’s roots in Jamaican musical traditions.\textsuperscript{45} As mentioned in the introduction, the earliest hip-hop was dually influenced by the

Jamaican practices of DJing and toasting. In the 1970s, Jamaican DJs began toasting over records, rather than over live music, a practice which influenced early hip-hop. As Cheryl Keyes has argued, three of the most important figures in early hip-hop, DJ Kool Herc, Afrika Bambaataa, and Grandmaster Flash, are of West Indian heritage, which further connects early hip-hop with Jamaican musical traditions and cultural knowledge. Additionally, Katz has shown that the sound systems that early Bronx hip-hop DJs used were replicas of Jamaican models in their use of bass-heavy speakers and echo or reverb units.46 In fact, Kool Herc, who popularized several elements of hip-hop such as scratching and extending the breakbeat, was born in Kingston, Jamaica and immigrated to the Bronx at the age of twelve. It is important to note, however, that there was little aural presence of recorded reggae music in the earliest hip-hop; in fact, according to Afrika Bambaataa, Kool Herc used funk and soul recordings when developing his unique musical style because listeners responded poorly to reggae music.47 Although reggae music itself was not popular with early hip-hop’s listening audiences, most listeners know that reggae music originates in Jamaica. In addition to the connection between reggae and Jamaica, hip-hop also shares production and aesthetic values with certain Jamaican music genres. Tricia Rose notes that production values in hip-hop such as volume, density, and the quality of low-sound frequencies are closely connected with Caribbean music genres and styles such as Jamaican talk-over and dub; both hip-hop and these Jamaican music genres privilege repetition and emphasize rhythm as the central musical force.48 Thus, a listener who identifies the Pato Banton sample in “The Sounds of Science” as reggae connects reggae and Jamaica and then connects Jamaica and early hip-hop. Including a reggae sample in “The Sounds of Science” acknowledges a generic and cultural predecessor of hip-hop.

Many lyric substitutions occur in tracks recorded by the Beastie Boys. The Beastie Boys include lyric substitutions more often than any other group studied in this dissertation. For example, their album *Paul’s Boutique* contains at least twelve lyric substitutions, whereas groups such as De La Soul or A Tribe Called Quest typically include one or two lyric substitutions per album. I will more directly compare albums by these particular artists in chapter 5, but the Beastie Boys’ preference for lyric substitutions can be tied directly to their style of vocal delivery.

In his study of styles of rap flow, Adam Krims identified the Beastie Boys’ rapping as an example of sung delivery style, which is characterized by rhythmic repetition, on-beat accents, and strict couplet groupings.\(^{49}\) Within this style of flow, the Beastie Boys also alternate or interlock their words or phrases to create a cohesive rhythmic and sematic unit, a trait that Cheryl Keyes has observed in early hip-hop groups such as Run-D.M.C.\(^{50}\) Individual rappers alternate small segments of text within a phrase, each delivering part of the text in order to create a logical, continuous phrase. In addition to trading words or phrases within a textual unit, the Beastie Boys typically end phrases with at least two members rapping or shouting the final word, which further emphasizes the final word of the phrase. As the transcription in Figure 2.2 demonstrates, the Beastie Boys all participate in a rapped phrase.

Figure 2.2. First phrase of “(You Gotta) Fight for Your Right (To Party)” (0:21-0:46)
Ad-Rock’s lyrics are italicized, Mike D’s lyrics are underlined, and MCA’s lyrics are in boldface.

You wake up late for school, man, you don’t wanna go
You ask your mom *please* but she still says *no*.
You miss two classes and no *homework*
But your teacher preaches class like you’re some kind of *jerk*.

The three Beastie Boys alternate lines within a stanza, alternate words within a line, and double or triple up on important words—often, but not always, the final word of a line. In fact, later in

\(^{49}\) Krims, *Rap Music and the Poetics of Identity*, 50.

\(^{50}\) For several examples and transcriptions of this type of lyrical flow, see Keyes, *Rap Music and Street Consciousness*, 126-31.
“Fight for Your Right” (2:24-2:26), when they state the name of their group, they actually alternate the individual syllables of the words: “Bea–stie–Boys.” Thus, the Beastie Boys frequently emphasize particular words either by alternating individual rappers or by coming together to utter the final word of a phrase.

Lyric substitutions can serve the same function as the alternation of rappers within a phrase, drawing attention to a specific word or phrase by placing it in a different voice, either sampled or delivered by a contrasting rapper. The following passage from “Hey Ladies” (see Figure 2.3) includes individual rapping, two or three rappers on the same word, and a lyric substitution sampled from Sweet’s “The Ballroom Blitz.”

Figure 2.3. Final phrase of the Beastie Boys, “Hey Ladies” (3:03-3:13)

Lyrics delivered by one rapper are unaltered; lyrics delivered by two or three rappers are in **boldface**, the lyric sample is in *italics*.

**Girls** with **curls** and big long **locks**
And **beatnik chicks** just wearing their **smocks**
Walking high and mighty like she’s number one
*And she thinks she’s the passionate one.*

The Beastie Boys not only emphasize words at the ends of phrases, but they also highlight internal rhymes. The internal rhymes “girls” and “curls” as well as “beatnik chicks” are delivered by multiple rappers, a process which highlights those particular words. Similarly, the couplet rhymes “locks” and “smocks” are emphasized with multiple voices. The final phrase of this passage is a lyric sample, delivered in a wavering timbre dissimilar to the vocal timbres of the three Beastie Boys. By changing the delivery style of certain words, either by sampling or by using multiple rappers to deliver a phrase, the Beastie Boys highlight both end words and internal rhymes. Such a practice in their style of lyric delivery demonstrates their sensitivity to the text, thus explaining why they might use lyric substitution samples to set apart a particular word or phrase of text in the lyrics.

Lyric substitutions are significant because they replace rapped lyrics grammatically and rhetorically, a role that no other sample type can play. A lyric substitution draws attention to its
role as a sample by contrasting with the timbre and style of the surrounding lyrics. Many lyric substitutions may be interpreted in a number of ways, which suggests that the samples are selected first and the remaining rapped lyrics are then constructed around that sampled phrase. In the above examples, lyric substitutions coincide with the rapper’s narrative. The following section addresses a specific variety of lyric substitutions in which the sampled lyrics function as a character or voice in a dialogue.

Lyric Substitution Subtype: Dialogues, Characters, and Conversations

A specific variety of lyric substitution creates a dialogue or a character within the lyrics. Lyric samples also create dialogues between the sampled and newly-rapped lyrics. Lyric substitutions often ask or answer a question posed by the newly-rapped lyrics. For example, in following lyric from De La Soul’s “Pease Porridge” (2:04-2:09), rapper Mase asks what sounds like a rhetorical question until the sampled voice of James Brown from “Funky Drummer” answers the question Maseo poses:

Why do people think just because we speak peace we can’t blow no joints?  
*I don’t know.*

This kind of lyric sample can be light-hearted and straightforward, such as the above example, or it can have several different possible interpretations, all of which depend on the listener’s knowledge of the sample’s context.

“Like That,” a track recorded by the Black-Eyed Peas and guest artists Q-Tip, John Legend, and Cee-Lo Green, includes a lyric sample of Q-Tip’s rapped phrase from A Tribe

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51 Of course, any listener who recognizes this sample and connects it with James Brown and his role as the “grandfather of hip-hop” will find a much richer meaning than what I have alluded to above. Most lyric samples can be interpreted from any number of perspectives and carry multiple levels of meaning, as I discussed in the above section on cultural icons. Using Brown’s voice to answer Maseo’s question suggests that Maseo has called upon a highly respected figure for an answer to his question. However, for this particular example, I have simplified the meaning of this sample to demonstrate that a lyric sample may just serve as an answer to a question.
Called Quest’s “Can I Kick It?” The sampled phrase from “Can I Kick It?” is substituted into rapper will.i.am’s verse (1:13-1:19):

> You know I’m known to cook a nigga like charcoal,  
> Steady jumpin’ round like it’s heavy cargo.  
> *Can I kick it?* Yep, really far, though,  
> From El Segundo to Toronto.

Like all lyric substitutions, this sampled phrase is congruent with the grammar and the rhyme scheme of its new context. However, the new and sampled tracks interact in several ways. First, Q-Tip’s sampled voice poses a question that will.i.am proceeds to answer in his next phrase; will.i.am’s response contains an end rhyme consistent with his previous two lines. Second, will.i.am’s response refers to another track by A Tribe Called Quest, “I Left My Wallet in El Segundo.” Finally, because the sampled phrase was delivered by Q-Tip in the source track, the sample is thus linked with guest rapper Q-Tip’s own verse in “Like That.” In this example, the sampled lyric substitution both asks a question and interacts with several elements of the new track.

Another example of a lyric sample providing a voice in a dialogue occurs in Eminem’s “Jealousy Woes II.” This track includes a sample from “The World is Yours” by Nas. “Jealousy Woes II” is about an unnamed woman’s infidelity, and in the following phrase (1:57-2:07), the Nas sample stands in for the woman’s voice:

> It made complete sense, there was someone else you liked  
> So I confronted you and asked you who was Mike, and you was like  
> *I need a new nigga*, someone rich that I can follow.  
> And you’ll be over me by the time you see tomorrow.

Note, however, that the sampled voice only initiates the quotation of the woman’s voice and that Eminem completes the quotation from the woman himself. This sample is remarkable for several reasons, all of which are grounded in issues of gender identity, race, and musical or stylistic influences.

The lyric sample provides the voice of a character in the lyrics’ storyline; at the moment in the lyrics when Eminem would quote the girlfriend’s words, the sampled lyric appears. This
seems like a perfectly appropriate place to include a lyric substitution that functions as a character’s voice in the story, but the sampled voice is incongruous with how the listener expects a female character to sound. Although the character in the dialogue is a woman, the sampled voice the producer provides her is that of male rapper Nas. Surely there were suitable lyrics in tracks by female artists such as MC Lyte or Roxanne Shanté that producer Mr. Proof could have sampled, yet Eminem and Proof chose to sample Nas’s voice instead. Other aural presentations of characters in the track are consistent with their perceived genders. For example, the choruses of “Jealousy Woes II” include male voices singing the word “jealousy,” sampled from LL Cool J’s “Jealous.” Just before the new track’s final chorus (2:40-3:15), Eminem interacts with the sampled voices of the chorus, commanding, “Fellas, sing it.” These choruses also include a woman chattering about Eminem’s various shortcomings, and thus the woman in the story is characterized with a female voice during the choruses. The lyric substitution of Nas’s voice is the only incident of gender inversion in the entire track. The choice to sample Nas’s voice for the female character reflects Eminem’s influences and stylistic models rather than a desire to present an actual female voice. As Loren Kajikawa has noted, Eminem’s early rhyming style, filled with internal rhymes and complex rhythmic schemes, was heavily influenced by New-York-based rappers such as Jay-Z and Nas. The choice to include his model Nas’s voice in “Jealousy Woes” is therefore not surprising, although the choice to include it for a female character is unusual.

Additionally, the female character in the story is seeking “a new nigga,” which may seem a startling term for the white Eminem to use to describe either himself or his romantic replacement. However, “Jealousy Woes II” is a track from Eminem’s earliest album, *Infinite* (1996), and as Kajikawa notes, at no point on this album does Eminem mention his own whiteness. Throughout “Jealousy Woes II” and the entirely of the album *Infinite*, Eminem refers

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53 Ibid.
to himself and other men using the term “nigga.” In fact, as mentioned, the choruses of “Jealousy Woes II” contain both the sampled voices of male singing and a female voice listing Eminem’s various shortcomings in an effort to explain why she left him (1:20-1:39):

- Fuck Eminem, he just mad ’cause I left that nigga [Eminem] for another man.
- Me and Eminem don’t need nothing but my and his money.
- Immature, me?
- Nigga [Eminem] ain’t got no dick, no swang in his thang.

Both Eminem and the added voices and characters in the track refer to him as “nigga” and avoid mentioning his whiteness. Instead, both Eminem and the female voice of the chorus focus on attributes such as financial stability, confidence, and sexual prowess rather than race.

In rap, the term “nigga” is frequently applied as an identifier of a person’s social or economic status rather than as a racial identifier. As the literary theorist Ronald (R. A. T.) Judy suggests, the term “nigga,” particularly in hard-core or gangsta rap, describes a person who expresses communicable affects such as rage, anger, and intense pleasure. Judy argues, one’s status as a “nigga” results from one’s identification with the economic and political margins of society: “The status as being at once both rooted in experience and available for appropriation marks nigga as the function by which diverse quotidian experiences and expressions are ‘authenticated’ as viable resistance to the dominant forms of power.” This process of authentication in Eminem’s music often occurs through his identification with economic and social experiences rather than a racial identity. For example, Jason Middleton and Roger Beebe have argued that Eminem authenticates his identity with socioeconomic rather than racial identifiers, such as describing his experiences growing up in a very poor area of Detroit.

Similarly, Carl Hancock Rux suggests that it is not disingenuous for Eminem to use the term

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54 Judy argues that the use of the term “nigga” in rap tends to connote a sense of the hard-core. Judy notes, “The hard-core gangster rapper traffics in affect and not values. In this sense, hard-core rap is the residual of the nonproductive work of translating experience into affect—it is pulp fiction, drawing into its web all the real nigga experiences it can represent in the affect constitution of niggaz.” See “On the Question of Nigga Authenticity,” boundary 2 21 (Autumn 1994): 211-30.
“nigga” to describe himself because Eminem “performs a New White Nigga” in his music. According to Rux, Eminem’s music is “infused with authenticity because he has lived in Nigga neighborhoods and listened to Nigga music and learned Nigga culture.” The phrase “I need a new nigga” in “Jealousy Woes II” thus implies that the woman is seeking a new boyfriend who exhibits similar personality traits, political or cultural marginality, or socioeconomic status, regardless of his race.

As this example demonstrates, a particular lyric sample can create a dialogue within a rapped lyric, pay tribute to one’s influences, and establish a character within a track. It can also highlight issues of racial, social, gendered, and socioeconomic identity. As with nearly all lyric samples, scratching the surface reveals several possible interpretations or layers of meaning for the sampled material. This particular subset of lyric substitutions reveals another level of meaning for lyric samples. Not only can a lyric substitution create contrast with its surroundings, drawing attention to its role as a sample, but this particular kind of lyric substitution can also create a character or persona within the rapped lyrics. Asking and answering questions via rapped lyrics and samples demonstrates a means of interacting with sampled material not possible in other sample types.

Self-Samples

Many hip-hop artists frequently sample their own recordings, and the remainder of this chapter is devoted to that phenomenon. Almost without exception, self-sampling occurs in the lyric sample type; very rarely will an artist sample his or her own sample-based grooves. The term “self-sampling” encompasses four different possible relationships between sampled and new material:

1. Solo to solo: a solo artists sample his own earlier solo recordings
2. Group to group: a rap ensemble samples its own earlier ensemble recordings

3. Solo to group: a solo artist samples a recording that he made with an ensemble
4. Group to solo: a rap ensemble samples a solo recording made by one of its members

First, solo artists sample their own earlier recordings: Nas’s One on One” contains a sample of Nas’s earlier track “The World is Yours,” using the line “dwellin’ in a rotten apple, you get tackled” in the outro of “One on One.” Second, groups sample their own earlier recordings, as in Public Enemy’s “Brothers Gonna Work It Out,” which contains samples from the group’s own “Bring the Noise” and “Rebel Without a Pause” in the track’s intro. Third, solo artists sample earlier recordings that they made with a group: KRS-One’s “Black Cop” contains a sample of his line, “don’t be the sucker coming into my face” from “Gimme, Dat (Woy),” a track he recorded with his group Boogie Down Productions. Finally, groups sample their individual members’ solo recordings: N.W.A.’s “Fuck the Police” includes a lyric sample of the word “fuck” from N.W.A. member Eazy-E’s solo track “Ruthless Villain.” Each of these four examples is self-sampling because the recordings sample the artist’s voice and words and then place that sampled material into a new track by the same artist or a group of which the same artist is a member.

Borrowing from one’s own music is a common practice in many genres and historical periods of music. George Frideric Handel’s self-borrowing has been debated, vilified, and praised for over two hundred years.58 Musicologists have documented self-borrowing by composers as diverse as Guillaume Du Fay, J. S. Bach, Gioachino Rossini, Vincenzo Bellini, Irving Berlin, and Lou Harrison.59 Although self-sampling is a specific form of self-borrowing, self-sampling differs from other kinds of self-borrowing in two fundamental ways.

First, self-sampling is always a conscious process, while self-borrowing is sometimes unconscious or subconscious because composers who borrow from themselves do not necessarily do so intentionally. For example, Marian Wilson Kimber suggests that the similarities between Felix Mendelssohn’s second piano concerto and his Serenade and Allegro giojoso are a result of Mendelssohn having “not yet worked the concerto’s musical material out of his artistic consciousness.”  

Similarly, George Buelow claimed that many of Handel’s so-called borrowings were actually a result of the composer “working with common idioms of Baroque music, those commonplaces of motifs and thematic passages” that were familiar to most composers of the period. Both of these examples suggest that composers who borrowed from themselves did not always compose with a model or source at hand but instead drew from an array of inspirations, some of which had already been written and some of which were common gestures of the style or period. This subconscious self-borrowing is very different from self-sampling because sampling, by definition, is a conscious process of selection and integration. Producers who self-sample actively select the material to borrow and make a specific effort to extract a particular sound. To sample a sound, musicians are actively involved at every stage of the process, selecting, isolating, and reincorporating the selected sample from its source track into its new context. Sampling does not happen accidentally.

The second way self-sampling differs from other types of self-borrowing is in the specific musical material that is borrowed. Self-sampling requires actual recorded sound, not melodies, polyphonic textures, generic tropes, or other musical gestures. Sampling, unlike any other kind of musical borrowing, uses recorded sound as its source material in order to create a new recorded sound product. When Bellini reused eight numbers from his failed 1829 opera Zaira in his new

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opera *I capuleti e i Montecchi*, he transformed elements of a failed apprentice work into a successful mature work. However, in this transformation, Bellini borrowed his own melodies, textures, and poetic meters from one notated score and transformed them into a new notated score, and these scores would then be realized by performers. A hip-hop artist who self-samples borrows his own recorded voice and places that recording of his voice into a new sonic product. Self-borrowing creates notated music, and self-sampling creates recorded music.

As argued above, lyric samples create contrasts between rapping voices and the selected sampled material. By including samples rather than re-performing the material, the aural contrast between the sample and the rapper’s voice draws attention both to the sampled word or phrase and to the fact that the material is sampled. This issue appears to become moot in the case of self-sampling, however. Why would an artist choose to sample his own recorded voice and words when he could simply re-perform the material that he wants to borrow? Why would N.W.A. sample Eazy-E’s recording when Eazy-E was present and could easily have re-performed the lyrics from his earlier track? It would certainly be much more technologically efficient, not to mention easier in terms of legal sample clearance. Hip-hop artists sample their own recordings for several reasons: samples of themselves represent a particular sonic memory, self-samples demonstrate a sense of pride in one’s own recordings, and most self-samples are not intended to sound live.

First, a sample represents a specific moment in time and sonic space. Of course Eazy-E could have re-performed the words and saved N.W.A. and its producers a significant amount of time and technological effort. However, a sample is more than just the words. As argued earlier, a sample includes a precise acoustic space that cannot be replicated. No matter how often the rapper restates the lyrics, he can never perfectly replicate the sound, intonation, timbre, and acoustic space that were captured on the recording of the source track. Moreover, every recording

and recording session has a unique story and significance to the musicians involved, and by including a recording of one’s own voice rather than creating a new recording, the musician also includes the sonic memory of the moment in which he recorded that particular lyric. This sonic memory is potent to self-sampling artists because they alone can recall the precise conditions under which they recorded the original track.

In interviews, the members of De La Soul fondly reminisce about the recording sessions for their debut album *3 Feet High and Rising*. According to Posdnuos, he, Maseo, and Trugoy would goof around in the studio without knowing that producer Prince Paul was recording them; Prince Paul recalls that they eventually decided to include many of these recorded moments of silliness in the album.°°°° *3 Feet High and Rising* contains several skits and quirky moments in which the listener can easily imagine the members of De La Soul playing around: every third or fourth track includes a mock game show in which the “contestants” are asked for the answers to questions posed at the beginning of the album (“How many fibers are intertwined in a shredded wheat biscuit?” “How many times did the Batmobile catch a flat?”), and the track “De La Orgee” is a recording of all the group members moaning as a recording of Barry White’s “I’m Gonna Love You Just a Little More, Baby” plays in the background. Each of these tracks captures what was surely a memorable experience for the members of De La Soul. Any subsequent track which samples these recordings would remind them of that particular experience. For example, “Intro,” the first track on De La Soul’s second album, *De La Soul is Dead*, contains a sample from “D.A.I.S.Y. Age,” a track on *3 Feet High and Rising*. “Intro” is also a skit, imitating a children’s book on tape in which a narrator reads a story and a bell rings to signal each page turn. After each bell in “Intro,” a different scene is heard, one of which is a sample of the game show skit from “D.A.I.S.Y. Age.” The skit itself evokes *3 Feet High and Rising* more generally since that album

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°°°° Posdnuos, interviewed in Rabin, “Interview: De La Soul”; Prince Paul, interviewed in DJ Sorce-1, “Reconstructing the De La Soul Years with Prince Paul (Part Two).”
contained so many skits, but by sampling a specific track from *3 Feet High and Rising*, Prince Paul and De La Soul evoke the specific session in which they recorded that gag.

Second, producers self-sample to show familiarity with and pride in one’s own recordings. This is not to imply that self-sampling is a process that emerges out of convenience or self-interest; as argued above, if artists were only concerned with convenience, they would simply re-perform their own lyrics rather than sampling them. Several tracks on Public Enemy’s album *It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back* include scratched lyric samples, and the vast majority of those lyric samples come from Public Enemy’s own recordings. For example, “Prophets of Rage” includes a scratched sample from “Miuzi Weighs a Ton” in the intro (0:04-0:14); “Night of the Living Baseheads” includes a scratched sample from “Bring the Noise” as an interlude (1:54-2:12); and “Black Steel in the Hour of Chaos” includes two different scratched samples from “Bring the Noise” as an outro (5:18-6:01). The overwhelming majority of lyric samples—both in the music of Public Enemy and in sample-based hip-hop in general—come from other hip-hop records, most of which are records released by respected artists. According to Vinroc, it makes aesthetic sense for a producer to sample a famous and well-respected artist: “They just say more interesting things. That’s probably why they’re well-known.”

By sampling their own recordings nearly as often as they sample other hip-hop artists, Public Enemy and the Bomb Squad place themselves alongside the other artists sampled, including the Beastie Boys, Kurtis Blow, DJ Grandwizard Theodore, Run-D.M.C., Salt 'n’ Pepa, Spoonie Gee and the Treacherous Three, and T La Rock and Jazzy Jay, all of whose recordings provide lyric samples on the album *It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back*. By sampling their own recordings at the same frequency as the recordings of other respected hip-hop artists, Public Enemy reveals, through sampling, that they are also worthy of respect.

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64 Vinroc, telephone interview with the author, 10 August 2012.
When Mr. Len produced for the group Company Flow, he frequently sampled the groups’ earlier recordings. When I asked him why he sampled the voices from recordings when the musicians were standing right there and could just say them again, he laughed and responded, “Total arrogance. I love being conceited sometimes. There’s no other record that can get this point across as well as our record. I justified [sampling] it as, our record was so amazing that I could only use our record.” To Mr. Len and others, one samples oneself because there are no better sounds available, plain and simple.

Finally, hip-hop artists sample themselves to draw attention to the process of sampling. The vast majority of self-samples are supposed to be heard as sampled material, not as something newly performed in the recording studio. As mentioned above, one way a producer draws attention to sampled material is to scratch it on a turntable. Producers also highlight the act of sampling by placing many samples closely together in rapid succession. Both the juxtaposition and the contrast between the sounds highlights the fact that the sounds are samples. For example, “The Pressure” by A Tribe Called Quest contains a collage of lyric samples from the group’s recordings. These samples are heard atop a groove, and although the groove itself is not sample-based, it does contain a constituent surface sample of an electric guitar from Funkadelic’s “Get Off Your Ass and Jam.” According to Burkholder, musical collage is

the act of pasting diverse objects, fragments, or clippings on to a background, or to the work of art that results. Musical collage is the juxtaposition of multiple quotations, styles, 

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65 Mr. Len, telephone interview with the author, 23 August 2012.
66 There are a few instances of self-sampling in which none but the most devoted of listeners would recognize that sampling is taking place, however. For example, the first chorus of De La Soul’s “Oodles of O’s” samples a single syllable, “oh,” from the group’s earlier “Jenifa Taught Me.” During the first chorus, the sampled “oh” is heard at the same time the rapper says the word “o’s”: “oodles and oodles of ohs you know.” In this case, the single word “oh” will not have intertextual resonance for a listener who does not identify it as a sample; after all, it is a single letter of the alphabet delivered by the members of De La Soul. None but the most devoted of De La Soul listeners would recognize the sample, which suggests that some self-samples are included to serve intertextual functions only for members of the group or their most zealous listeners. However, the vast majority of self-samples are produced or aurally positioned in such a way as to signal that they are samples, not new performances.
67 The lyric samples in the collage must be understandable as text and words; otherwise, they function as momentary surface samples. Examples of collages of momentary surface samples will be discussed in chapter 4.
or textures so that each element maintains its individuality and the elements are perceived as excerpted from many sources and arranged tighter, rather than sharing common origins.68

In this example (see Figure 2.4), the “background” is the groove, and the lyric samples are the “diverse objects, fragments, or clippings.” Burkholder has noted elsewhere that in a collage, borrowed material is added to an “underlying structure” or “the basic musical structure” of a piece.69 In the case of sample-based hip-hop, the structure of a track is its groove, whether or not that groove contains samples.

Figure 2.4. Lyric sample collage in A Tribe Called Quest, “The Pressure” (0:20-0:50)
Note: all source tracks are by A Tribe Called Quest70

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sampled source track</th>
<th>Sampled lyrics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Steve Biko (Str it Up)”</td>
<td>Tribe Called Quest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“God Lives Through”</td>
<td>it’s the bomb shit, so recognize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Electric Relaxation”</td>
<td>pretty little something on a New York street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Buggin’ Out”</td>
<td>the five-foot assassin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Verses from the Abstract”</td>
<td>Phife d-dog, d-dog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Steve Biko (Str it Up)”</td>
<td>Tribe Called Quest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[unidentified source]</td>
<td>[indecipherable] over here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Scenario”</td>
<td>who’s that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Award Tour”</td>
<td>we on award tour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[unidentified source]</td>
<td>Ali Shaheed Muhammad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Scenario”</td>
<td>causin’ rambunction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[unidentified source]</td>
<td>the [indecipherable] check it out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Steve Biko (Str it Up)”</td>
<td>Tribe Called Quest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Midnight”</td>
<td>you know the transaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Jazz (We’ve Got)”</td>
<td>pay attention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The Chase Part II”</td>
<td>run and tell your dad the Abstract’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“We Can Get Down”</td>
<td>Q-Tip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Verses from the Abstract”</td>
<td>is in the house</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

69 Burkholder, *All Made of Tunes*, 370. The borrowing techniques in “The Pressure” also resemble the Ivesian procedure of patchwork. As Burkholder notes, “In a patchwork, fragments of several tunes are joined together into a single melody, sometimes elided through paraphrase and sometimes interspersed with new music. The sources for any one piece are usually drawn from a single genre.” See *All Made of Tunes*, 301. In a patchwork, the borrowed fragments coalesce to create a melody “which succeeds on its own, without requiring that the scraps be recognized, because the sources all share a similar character” (304). “The Pressure” is not a patchwork because the samples do not create a melody, are not all in the same voice, and do not create a grammatically coherent statement. Further, they are intended to be heard as individually-recognizable scraps, not a new vocal phrase. A patchwork of lyric samples would need to sound much more consistent and linear than does the above example from “The Pressure.”  
70 Thanks to Brandi Neal for her help in identifying the samples and their sources.
Despite the fact that all lyric samples in “The Pressure” are from other tracks by A Tribe Called Quest, each sample in the collage has a unique sonic character. The juxtaposition of samples signals to the listener that these sounds are pieced together from many different sources rather than delivered continuously by a single rapper.

Each sample in “The Pressure” refers to A Tribe Called Quest as a group, a specific member of the group, a track title, or a specific lyric. Some samples, such as the phrase “we on award tour,” refer to the title of a particular track (“Award Tour”), and others, such as “Tribe Called Quest,” “Ali Shaheed Muhammad,” “Phife d-dog,” or “Q-Tip” refer to the group or its members. By including lyric samples from their own tracks and of their own names, the members of A Tribe Called Quest present an aural collage of their history and music. Thus, “The Pressure” is a self-conscious example of self-sampling in which lyric samples of the group’s recordings highlight both their own record catalogue and the process of sampling.

Hip-hop artists self-sample for a number of reasons. Samples carry specific associations, whether aural or historic; some of these associations will be familiar to many listeners, and others are reserved for only the most devout listeners as well as the artists themselves. A re-performance cannot replicate a recorded sound exactly, so by using samples, hip-hop artists ensure that they include not only the desired lyrics, but also the precise acoustic space captured in the original recordings. For artists who self-sample, their own recordings may have particular associations or memories either for them or for their listeners. Finally, an artist’s own catalogue is a familiar repository of recorded material that offers a source of pride.

Thoughts

Identifying a lyric sample as a structural type is only one element of its significance in a sample-based track. Close reading of many lyric samples reveals that this sample type has a specific value for listeners and performers of sample-based hip-hop. Lyric samples are imbued with cultural resonance for musicians and listeners, and they are among the most distinctive of all
sample types because they capture human voices. Additionally, lyric samples, like all samples, represent a specific time, place, and space, a characteristic which becomes particularly poignant for artists who sample their own recordings. By narrowing the focus of sample-based music to a single type, we see the many hermeneutic possibilities of a single sample type, possibilities which differentiate the meaning and function of this type from other sample types. Such a close reading within the sample type is possible for any of the other sample types presented in chapter 1’s typology, albeit one which reveals unique interpretive roles for each sample type. This investigation of each individual type is one which will be left for a future endeavor, however. In the next chapter, I shift the focus to a single sample-based track, Public Enemy’s “Bring the Noise,” applying the typology to construct an intertextual web around this track.
Public Enemy’s 1987 track “Bring the Noise” and the tracks that sample it offer an opportunity to study, in a microcosm, the history and musical style of sample-based hip-hop. “Bring the Noise” itself contains many samples, and more than 80 tracks include samples of “Bring the Noise.” Although plenty of hip-hop recordings have been sampled more often than “Bring the Noise”—Slick Rick and Doug E. Fresh’s “Ladidadi,” Run-D.M.C.’s “Here We Go (Live at the Funhouse),” and Afrika Bambaataa’s “Planet Rock,” to name a few—Public Enemy’s “Bring the Noise” is uniquely positioned because it is one of the few hip-hop tracks that both contains many samples and has also been sampled dozens of times. Released right at the beginning of what Kembrew McLeod and Peter DiCola, as well as most of the producers with whom I spoke, term “the golden age of sampling,” “Bring the Noise” and the tracks that sample it capture a brief span of time when a hip-hop track could not only contain many samples but also be sampled many subsequent times.1 The lawsuit Grand Upright Music Ltd. v. Warner Brothers Records, Inc., decided in 1991, essentially put an end to this golden age and led artists to sample much less frequently. Actual lawsuits, threatened lawsuits, and the excruciating process of licensing samples all contributed to artists sampling fewer recordings. By studying the tracks that sampled “Bring the Noise” between 1987 and 2011, we can see that, after 1991, the number of samples plummeted as well as the diversity of sample categories used by sampling artists. While this drop

1 According to McLeod and DiCola, “The golden age of sampling refers to a moment in time in the late 1980s and early 1990s when artists had more freedom to create sample-based music. The legal and administrative bureaucracies of the music industry had not yet turned their attention to hip-hop, which was considered a passing fad. This vacuum allowed many hip-hop artists to make music the way they wished, without a proverbial (or literal) attorney looking over their shoulders. And the music they made was groundbreaking.” See Creative License, 5-6. I will detail the effects of copyright law on the musical style of sample-based hip-hop in chapter 5.
in diversity may be attributed to fears of legal consequences, however, it also reflects the establishment of traditions of borrowing within sample-based hip-hop.

In this chapter, Public Enemy’s “Bring the Noise” is the centerpiece of an analytical web. I created the threads of this web by mapping the samples and the interactions of those samples from 1987 through the end of 2011. We can see trends and preferences in the sampling artists’ musical styles within specific tracks and over time. The trends I have identified in this chapter are in some ways specific to “Bring the Noise,” its samples, and the tracks that sample it, but several trends and approaches speak for sample-based hip-hop more generally. It is possible to create this kind of web around virtually any sample-based track that other artists subsequently sampled, but for purposes of brevity and clarity, I limit this study to a single track.

Applying the typology to “Bring the Noise” as a both a sampling and sampled track offers perspectives on case-by-case sampling practices as well as how sampling practices change over time. These analyses allow us to see stylistically how “Bring the Noise” and its sampled and sampling tracks frame a specific period in the history of sample-based hip-hop. As we will see, the sheer numbers of samples of “Bring the Noise” plummet after 1991. Larger stylistic and historical issues, such as why artists chose to sample “Bring the Noise” or Public Enemy’s relationship to its sampling artists, also become apparent once the musical trends in sampling are identified using the typology. For example, artists repeatedly sample the same few phrases from “Bring the Noise,” which reflects a specific tradition of musical borrowing. The typology helps us identify the various interrelationships among sampling tracks, and these interrelationships build meaning for the borrowed and borrowing tracks. The tracks that sample and engage with “Bring the Noise” participate in a version of what Henry Louis Gates, Jr., identifies in African American literary tradition as the constant repetition and revision of a specific text. Ultimately, “Bring the Noise” is the nexus of an analytical web as well as of an interpretive web.
“Bring the Noise”: History and Analysis

“Bring the Noise” was first released in November 1987 on the soundtrack of the Marek Kanievska film Less Than Zero. Public Enemy also included the track on their second album, It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back, released in April 1988. As Chuck D recalls, “Bring the Noise” was directed toward those who found rap noisy and obnoxious: “It was common to hear, ‘Cut that noise off, it’s irritating, it has no melody.’ We [Public Enemy and the Bomb Squad] were like, ‘If you’re calling that noise, we have some noise for your ass. This will throttle you to the edge.’” Similarly, producer Hank Shocklee of the Bomb Squad has said of his music, “Noise? You want to hear some noise? I wanted to be music’s worst nightmare.” “Bring the Noise” became Public Enemy’s rejoinder to criticism about the “noisiness” of rap.

The “noise” its practitioners intended to be so irritating actually helped propel Public Enemy’s and the Bomb Squad’s popularity. “Bring the Noise” is one of the earliest tracks to feature the sample-based musical style of production team the Bomb Squad, a musical style that came to characterize Public Enemy’s sound in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Like many tracks produced by the Bomb Squad, “Bring the Noise” has an aggregate sample-based structure with several additional surface and lyric sample types. The track’s aggregate groove contains drums sampled from the Commodores’ “Assembly Line.” Component samples of saxophones are audible in both the verses and choruses, but the verses’ saxophones are sampled from Marva Whitney’s “It’s My Thing” and the choruses’ saxophones are from James Brown’s “Give It Up or Turnit a Loose.” The aggregate groove also includes a component sample of a screaming electric guitar riff from Funkadelic’s “Get Off Your Ass and Jam.” Throughout the track, this Funkadelic sample is added to or subtracted from the texture every two measures, that is, it is present in the

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2 Chuck D, Lyrics of a Rap Revolutionary, 50.
texture for two measures, absent for two measures, back in for two measures, and so on. These four aggregate component samples form the rhythmic basis of the entire track.

“Bring the Noise” contains one surface sample type. A momentary surface sample appears in the first four measures of the second verse and temporarily replaces the entire groove. This momentary surface sample is the famous Funky Drummer break, Clyde Stubblefield’s legendary and frequently-sampled drum break from James Brown’s “Funky Drummer.”

“Bring the Noise” also contains four lyric sample types. “Turn it up” from DJ Grand Wizard Theodore and the Fantastic Five’s “Fantastic Freaks at the Dixie,” appears in every chorus, juxtaposed against Chuck D’s delivery of the track’s title line, “bring the noise.” “Too black, too strong,” a sample from a speech given by Malcolm X, is heard in the opening few seconds of the track before the groove is established. “Brothers and sisters,” a spoken sample from the Soul Children’s “I Don’t Know What the World is Coming To,” appears during the second verse; in fact, Chuck D says, “brothers and sisters” along with the sample. “Hurry up,” a sample from James Brown’s “Get Up, Get into It, Get Involved,” is scratched in an interlude before the final verse of the track begins. This combination of an aggregate sample-based structure with multiple lyric and surface sample types is characteristic of the Bomb Squad’s production technique and resulting musical style.

The rapped lyrics of “Bring the Noise” address issues such as racial bias, the universality of music, and the difficulties in obtaining radio airplay for music with controversial lyrics. A transcription of all the lyrics in “Bring the Noise” appears in a supplement at the end of this chapter. For example, Chuck D addresses the perceived danger of a powerful pro-black musical message (“now they got me in a cell / ’cause my records they sell”) while simultaneously challenging black radio stations to play this record (“radio stations, I question their blackness / they call themselves black, but we’ll see if they play this”). In a later verse (2:08-2:21), both Flavor Flav and Chuck D stress the universality of music (“beat”) in general and hip-hop in particular, mentioning multiple artists in their assessment:
Chuck D: Whatcha gonna do? Rap is not afraid of you. 
Beat is for Sonny Bono.

Flavor Flav: Beat is for Yoko Ono.

Chuck D: Run-D.M.C. first said a DJ could be a band. 
Stand on its feet, get you out your seat. 
Beat is for Eric B. and LL [Cool J] as well, hell.

Flavor Flav: Wax is for Anthrax.

Chuck D: Still it can rock bells.

In their assertion that beat (music) is universal, Chuck D and Flavor Flav acknowledge a variety of musicians from several genres, not just other hip-hop artists. According to Chuck D, “We’re all in the music business. Don’t just give props to R&B and not give props to rap, because we’re legitimate too, and Anthrax was a rock group that I felt should have gotten more props.”⁴ By “giving props to” and acknowledging musicians as diverse as Fluxus artist Yoko Ono, thrash metal band Anthrax, pioneering hip-hop DJ Eric B., and pop-rock singer Sonny Bono, Chuck D and Flavor Flav advocate a broad acceptance of musical styles and implicitly request the same acceptance for their own music. In fact, thrash metal band Anthrax was so flattered by their inclusion in the track that they invited Public Enemy to record a second version of “Bring the Noise” with them. This version, whose title is usually styled “Bring tha Noize,” appeared on Anthrax’s album Attack of the Killer B’s and on Public Enemy’s album Apocalypse ’91. . . The Enemy Strikes Black.⁵

“Bring the Noise” is a good centerpiece for this study for several reasons. First, it is highly respected as a hip-hop record by both critics and musicians. It ranks #160 on Rolling Stone’s list of the 500 greatest songs of all time, and a variety of scholars and hip-hop artists

⁴ Chuck D, Lyrics of a Rap Revolutionary, 51.
⁵ While “Bring tha Noize” indicates a crucial intersection between rap and metal, its place in the present study is limited because it does not sample the original “Bring the Noise.” The 1987 “Bring the Noise” contained many samples, but the 1991 “Bring tha Noize” is newly-performed by the members of Anthrax. Even the Funky Drummer break that figured so prominently in “Bring the Noise” is replayed by Anthrax drummer Charlie Benante. See Jeffrey Ressner, “Thrashers Pay Tribute to Rap,” Rolling Stone 610 (8 August 1991), 21.
regard it as tremendously influential. Second, while “Bring the Noise” was not Public Enemy’s first single, it was one of their earliest singles to feature the Bomb Squad’s characteristic sample-based musical style. Third, the members of Public Enemy regard “Bring the Noise” as one of the most important records that they ever released. According to Chuck D, “Bring the Noise” and the later track “Fight the Power” were the two tracks that signified Public Enemy’s entire recording career. Fourth, the track prominently features lyrics from both Chuck D and hype man Flavor Flav, and, as we will see, other artists frequently sample the voices and lyrics of both rappers. Finally, the lyrics of “Bring the Noise” are wide-reaching in subject, message, and style, providing ample options and variety for sampling artists.

Sampling “Bring the Noise”: An Overview

Eighty-four tracks released between 1987 and 2011 contain at least one sample from “Bring the Noise.” Most of the sampling artists are hip-hop, although a few pop, rock, and R&B artists also released tracks that sample “Bring the Noise.” These 84 sampling tracks contain a

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6 For example, Mike D of the Beastie Boys has said of both “Bring the Noise” and “Fight the Power”: “These songs rank up there with the most urgent rebel political music of any genre of all time.” See “Mike D: Classic New York Hip-Hop,” *Rolling Stone* 1142 (27 October 2011): 71. Additionally, Alan Light of *Rolling Stone* has called *It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back* (the album on which “Bring the Noise” was released in 1988) “hip-hop’s masterpiece.” See “Public Enemy #1,” 34.


8 Chuck D claims that he delivered each verse of “Bring the Noise” in a distinct style, which further increases the lyric interest of this particular track and broadens the possible choices for sampling artists. According to Chuck D, he was unsure which style of rapping best suited the groove of “Bring the Noise” and thus wrote several verses, each in a different “cadence” (the term he uses to describe his delivery style and the relationship of lyrics to the beat). Producer Hank Shocklee of the Bomb Squad suggested that Chuck D retain the differences and simply deliver each verse in a contrasting style. In Chuck D’s assessment of his delivery styles, the first verse was delivered in a similar style as the lyrics of the earlier track “Rebel Without a Pause,” the second verse (mapped on the rhythm of Clyde Stubblefield’s “Funky Drummer” break) “is a totally different style,” and the third verse “actually rides the beat faster.” See *Lyrics of a Rap Revolutionary*, 48-49. It is worth noting that all three of these lyric delivery styles are consistent with what Krims termed “effusive rhythmic style,” in which rapped lyrics “spill over the rhythmic boundaries of the meter, the couplet, and, for that matter, of duple and quadruple groupings in general.” See *Rap Music and the Poetics of Identity*, 50-52.

9 As mentioned in chapter 1, this study does not include sampling tracks from the genre of electronic dance music. While approximately 20 electronic dance music (EDM) tracks include samples of “Bring the Noise,” the aesthetics and form of EDM are so different from that of hip-hop, pop, and R&B that it is impossible to assess the use of samples by applying the typology. The typology is designed for song-oriented forms with verses and choruses, and EDM primarily avoids song-oriented forms, relying
total of 103 samples from “Bring the Noise” because 14 of those 84 tracks include at least two separate samples from the source track. Additionally, three of the sampling tracks use the same sampled material in two different types, and I count these three instances as separate examples as well.

Figure 3.1 charts the number of times “Bring the Noise” was sampled per year between 1987 and 2011. These numbers are how many times “Bring the Noise” was sampled each year, not the number of tracks that sample it; as noted above, several tracks sample “Bring the Noise” multiple times. These numbers account for the three tracks that used the same sample of “Bring the Noise” in different ways in the same track; these three tracks are each counted twice in the graph.

instead on an open, continuous musical structure. As Mark Butler has noted, EDM typically does not contain a lyric or verbal component. Thus, any EDM tracks that sample “Bring the Noise” use the sampled material according to a different set of aesthetics than that for which the typology was conceived. For more on the aesthetics of EDM, see Butler, *Unlocking the Groove*, especially chapters 5 and 6.
Although only two tracks sampled “Bring the Noise” in 1987, recall that “Bring the Noise” was released in November of 1987; therefore, the 1987 numbers reflect less than two months during which the track was available for musicians to sample. The highest rates of sampling occur between 1988 and 1991, when “Bring the Noise” was sampled an average of over 17 times per year. After 1991, the number of samples per year sharply declines, which, as mentioned above, can be attributed to stricter sample licensing fees as well as a general shift away from the extant style of sample-based music.10 Between 1987 and 1991, “Bring the Noise” was sampled 71 times, and from 1992 to 2011, it was only sampled 32 times. In other words, in the five-year period

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10 For an overview of the sampling clearance system, see McLeod and DiCola, *Creative License*, especially chapter 5, “The Sample Clearance System: How It Works (and How It Breaks Down).”
spanning the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, producers sampled “Bring the Noise” more than twice as often as they would in the next 20 years. Public Enemy’s 2007 single “Black is Back” is responsible for the slight spike of samples in 2007, because “Black is Back” includes three distinct samples from “Bring the Noise,” a point that will be elaborated later.

The only sounds sampled from “Bring the Noise” are the words and voices of rappers Flavor Flav and Chuck D. No track samples the sample-based groove or any other instrumental or non-vocal sounds from “Bring the Noise.” As producers only sampled lyrics from the source track, it is not surprising that all 103 samples from “Bring the Noise” appear in the new tracks as either a lyric sample type or a surface sample type. No samples are used as a structural sample type. Additionally, only two of the 103 samples are surface types, and both of those samples are the constituent surface sample subtype. The remaining 101 examples are lyric sample types.

Lyric Sample Categories

In chapter 2, I argued that lyric samples offer a number of rhetorical and interpretive functions, most of which are contingent on the listener’s recognition and attendant knowledge about the sampled material. In this analysis of “Bring the Noise,” however, it becomes obvious that the lyric sample type is still much too broad to offer much in terms of analytical specificity. Felicia Miyakawa notes that vocal samples “reinforce common rap forms, usually appearing in the introduction, chorus, or coda, or are used as verbal interjections.”11 I take her observations a step farther, dividing the lyric sample into categories based on their structural or formal functions within a track: lyric substitutions, collage, adjunct, framing, and recurring.

Lyric substitutions

As noted in previous two chapters, a lyric substitution places a sampled word or phrase in a newly-rapped lyric, and that sampled word or phrase serves the same grammatical function as if

the rapper had said the text him- or herself. Lyric substitution samples are consistent with the semantic function, rhyme scheme, and grammatical structure of the surrounding lyrics. However, a lyric substitution draws attention to itself because it differs from the surrounding lyrics in pitch, timbre, range, voice type, or audio quality. In the following example from the Beastie Boys’ “Egg Man” (1:30-1:38), the sampled lyric from “Bring the Noise” is grammatically consistent with its surroundings, but it offers a contrasting, deeper vocal timbre and a slower rhythmic delivery style that draws attention to its function as a sample (sampled lyrics are italicized):

People laugh. It’s no joke.
My name’s [Adam] Yauch and I’m throwing the yolk.
Now they got me in a cell but I don’t care.
It was then that I caught catching people out there.

As mentioned in chapter 1, the Beastie Boys have a long-running relationship with eggs and egg-related pranks. In this particular example, the sampled lyrics are recontextualized. Chuck D’s original line in “Bring the Noise” from which this sample was taken regards imprisonment over spouting controversial black-power rhetoric:

Now they got me in a cell ’cause my records they sell
’Cause a brother like me said, “Well,
Farrakhan’s a prophet and I think you ought to listen to
What he can say to you, what you ought to do.”

By isolating and sampling only the phrase “now they got me in a cell,” the Beastie Boys and production team the Dust Brothers transform a politically-charged accusation into a mock punishment for assaulting people with raw eggs.

This particular sample retains the sounds of the groove from the source track; the screaming guitar from Funkadelic is particularly audible in this sampled phrase. Clearly, listeners are intended to recognize the reference and note the dissimilarity between the source and the new context.

Collage

As shown in chapter 2, a collage of lyric samples is a collection of discrete sounds from various sources that are then placed atop a sample-based groove. As Burkholder has defined it, collage in visual art is “the act of pasting diverse objects, fragments, or clippings on to a background, or to the work of art that results.”\textsuperscript{13} Thus, in music, the lyric samples are the “diverse objects, fragments, or clippings,” and the track’s groove is the “background.” The samples in a collage can be connected to each other in several ways. Sometimes the lyric samples in a collage create grammatically intact phrases or sentences (similar to a lyric substitution, except that all the components are sampled), or sometimes, all the samples in the collage refer to a similar word or concept. In collages of lyric samples, the samples come from a variety of sources, vary in length and grammatical continuity, and differ in timbre or character from the other lyric samples that surround them in the collage. The samples in the collage must be understandable as text and words; otherwise, they function as momentary surface samples. Examples of collages of momentary surface samples will be discussed in chapter 4.

Of the 84 tracks that sample “Bring the Noise,” only three contain collages of lyric samples, and all three collages occur in tracks by Public Enemy itself. For example, Public Enemy’s “Mind Terrorist” includes a collage of three different lyric samples of Flavor Flav: “get that,” from “Terminator X Speaks with His Hands,” “bass for your face” from “Terminator X Speaks with His Hands,” and “yeah, boy” from “Bring the Noise.” These three samples are juxtaposed and scratched throughout “Mind Terrorist.” The relevance of collage in Public Enemy’s musical style will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter in the context of Public Enemy’s self-sampling.

\textsuperscript{13} Burkholder, “Collage.”
Adjunct

An adjunct lyric sample is placed against the newly-rapped lyrics. Adjunct lyric samples are sometimes challenging to hear because they are secondary to the rapped lyrics and may blend into the groove of the sample-based track with little or no recognition from the listener. Often times, an adjunct sample has almost a subliminal effect, not unlike the momentary surface sample type described in chapter 1. Despite the fact that an adjunct sample may not be immediately obvious for a listener, these lyric samples are strategically placed and serve important rhetorical functions. For example, in EPMD’s “Crossover” (0:57-1:04), a sample of Flavor Flav’s “yeah” from “Bring the Noise” is heard in the first verse against Erick Sermon’s rapped line, “Thinkin’ about a pop record, something made for the station for a whole new relationship of a new type of scene.” The sampled “yeah” is dropped in against the word “relationship.” Sermon’s lyrics about fighting the temptation to “sell out” or change one’s musical style to receive more radio airplay and sell more records, reflect the aesthetic value of “keeping it real.” As Public Enemy is widely considered to be a group that “keeps it real,” this sampled “yeah” in EPMD’s “Crossover” creates the aural presence of Public Enemy and Public Enemy’s “realness” within Sermon’s verse. EPMD subtly connects its own hip-hop authenticity with the perceived authenticity of Public Enemy through this single adjunct lyric sample.14

14 In his study on perceptions of authenticity in hip-hop, Kembrew McLeod has identified six semantic divisions of authenticity in hip-hop, such as racial, gender-sexual, and cultural, in which artists demonstrate their ability to either be fake or keep it real; “real” hip-hop artists are those who stay true to themselves, are black, represent the underground, have a hard style, come from the street, and symbolize the old school rather than the mainstream. Public Enemy’s hard-driving style, origins in New York, and charged political messages make the group a representative of the “real” in all six of McLeod’s semantic divisions of authenticity. See “Authenticity within Hip-Hop and Other Cultures Threatened with Assimilation,” Journal of Communication 49 (December 1999): 139.

For just a few examples of various media which almost unanimously declare Public Enemy’s participation in the “real” of all six of McLeod’s semantic divisions of authenticity, see Sam Chennault, “Review: Public Enemy, Revolverlution,” pitchfork.com, 19 August 2002, available http://pitchfork.com/reviews/albums/6501-revolverlution/, and Clover Hope, “Public Enemy Keeps it Real,” Billboard 188, no. 36 (9 September 2006): 30. Additionally, every “definition” of Public Enemy on the online message board urbandictionary.com mentions at least one of McLeod’s semantic divisions. For example, the definition provided by user KY Jelly describes Public Enemy as “abrasive, hardcore, and eloquent,” while user RockCity calls the group “the thinking man’s rap.”
**Framing**

A framing lyric sample is similar to the emphatic surface sample type described in chapter 1. A framing lyric sample can appear at the beginning or end of an individual track, or it can be heard before or after a specific section within a track. The difference between a framing sample and an emphatic surface sample, of course, is that a framing sample is a recognizable word or phrase of text, while emphatic surface samples are instruments or non-semantic vocal sounds. Framing lyric samples offer an opportunity for artists to showcase longer swaths of sampled lyrics without having to place them in either the verses or choruses of the track.

Almost without exception, framing lyric samples are scratched or “cut” by a DJ on a turntable. Sampling familiar lyrics offers a DJ the opportunity to draw attention both to the original lyrics and to his skills on the turntable:

Amanda: So the listener is supposed to hear the original?

Mr. Len: It’s a magic trick. David Blaine doesn’t actually levitate, but he makes you think, wow, that guy is up off the ground. Everyone has their theories about what it is, but only the person who’s doing it knows the truth. I know that when I cut off certain parts of words that I can get you to think that it’s what I want you to think it is.15

Thus, listeners are supposed to hear a scratched lyric as an excerpt from a specific source as well as an object that the DJ has transformed aurally. The listener may not know exactly how the DJ transformed the material on the turntable, but they do recognize that transformation took place.

Framing lyric samples can appear in many different places in a sampled track, but the sample’s relationship to the other lyrics defines it as a framing lyric sample. For example, Chuck D’s line “once again back is the incredible” is a framing lyric sample in several separate tracks. The framing sample appears in different places in many of these tracks, however. For example, “The Track” by ASAP Productions scratches the sample in the track’s intro (0:00-0:18), “Jimmie’s Jam” by DJ Jimmie Jam scratches the sample in the track’s outro (3:00-3:35), and “Jazzy’s Groove” by DJ Jazzy Jeff and the Fresh Prince scratches the sample between the fourth

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15 Mr. Len, telephone interview with the author, 23 August 2012.
and fifth verses of the track (2:25-2:44). In all of these instances, the sampled lyrics are prominent but are not part of the verse or chorus; the combination of their comprehensibility as lyrics and their placement between or among discrete sections in a track marks them as framing lyric samples.

**Recurring**

Recurring lyric samples do just that: they appear more than once in a new track. Most often, recurring lyric samples function as the chorus or refrain of a new track. The producers with whom I spoke often referred to this kind of lyric sample as a “scratch hook” because this sample type is often scratched or cut by a DJ. For consistency of terminology, I will call it “recurring.” Recurring samples may appear in the chorus alone, they may be combined with other sampled lyrics in the chorus, or they may be combined with newly rapped or sung lyrics in the choruses. For example, Chuck D’s single word “bass” appears as a recurring sample in the choruses of several different tracks. In Salt ’n’ Pepa’s “I Like It Like That,” both Salt and Pepa sing the lyrics of the chorus and the sampled “bass” then closes each statement of the chorus. In Misa’s “Shake the House,” rapper Misa’s shouted “shake the house!” alternates with the sampled and scratched word “bass” in each chorus. In Public Enemy’s own “Night of the Living Baseheads,” the sampled word “bass” is scratched throughout each chorus amid a variety of sampled and new sounds.

These categories of lyric samples increase the precision for analyzing the musical style of the sampling tracks. As the distribution of the lyric sample categories in Figure 3.2 shows, producers overwhelmingly prefer the recurring and framing lyric samples to all other categories.
Although sampling artists do prefer recurring lyric samples to all other categories, these data contradict Miyakawa’s assertion that “sampled texts usually become refrains in their new settings.”\(^{16}\) Sampling artists almost equally prefer recurring (41) and framing (40) lyric samples, meaning that producers use sampled lyrics in the choruses of new tracks about half the time.

Framing lyric samples and recurring lyric samples account for 81 of the 103 total samples from “Bring the Noise,” that is, over three-fourths of the total samples are either framing or recurring. Why do sampling artists prefer these two categories of samples over all others? Both of these categories of lyric samples prominently feature the sampled text outside the context of the rapped verses. Producers place framing samples before, between, or after sections of rapped text, which presents the sampled text as a text distinct from the rapped lyrics. Nearly all of the recurring lyric samples are heard in the chorus of a new track, and these recurrences also prominently mark the text of a recurring lyric sample. Thus, both framing and recurring lyric samples prominently feature the sampled lyrics: framing lyric samples by highlighting the sampled text outside the context of the rapped lyrics, and recurring lyric samples by reiterating

\(^{16}\) She does note, however, that samples of text can frame lyrics in the introductions, interludes, and codas of new tracks. See *Five Percenter Rap*, 116-17.
the sampled material multiple times throughout a new track, most often in the new track’s choruses. According to Apple Juice Kid, these kinds of lyric samples are a way to add interest and excitement to a track in a dimension other than the groove or the rapped lyrics. As he explains, “Sampling a lyric, that’s pretty extreme in some ways. It makes your track that much more exciting than just a flat layer of synthesizers and rap.”

Not only are recurring and framing lyric samples the longest and most prominent categories of lyric samples, but they are also the two types that are most often performed by a DJ. Both recurring and framing lyric samples are almost always scratched. As I argued in chapter 2, scratching is both a performative act and an aural connection with hip-hop DJing, the earliest form of hip-hop musicianship. Because it is performed live rather than sampled and looped, scratching a record calls attention to the DJ’s presence in the track. As DJ Bobcat explains, scratching is an opportunity for the DJ to show off his skills:

Every artist won’t let their DJ scratch on their record. It’s not like everybody’s saying, “We want to give the DJ [credit],” [in the same way that] back in the day, James Brown used to say, “Give the drummer some.” So in hip-hop, rappers would say, kind of like “give the drummer some,” you know, “let me let Jazzy Jeff scratch, or let me let Bobcat scratch, or Cut Creator scratch.” So a hip-hop culture embraced that concept. To Bobcat, a DJ scratching a sample on the track is equivalent to a drummer in a funk band playing a drum break. In both cases, a musician who is not the lead singer or rapper can shine for a few measures, showing off their performance skills. Most of the producers with whom I spoke are also DJs and thus perform their own scratches; these kinds of samples give them the opportunity to highlight their DJing abilities.

As mentioned above, in two instances, samples from “Bring the Noise” function as constituent surface sample types rather than lyric sample types. Both of these tracks, “Because I’m a Pro” by 2 Nice and Kool Joe (who also record under the moniker MDS Productions) and “Get Busy” by Mr. Lee, sample the same material from “Bring the Noise”: the single word

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17 Apple Juice Kid, telephone interview with the author, 25 August 2012.
18 DJ Bobcat, telephone interview with the author, 24 August 2012.
“yeah” that Flavor Flav utters in the track’s intro. Per the definition in chapter 1, constituent surface samples are instrumental or non-semantic vocal sounds. In both of these sampling tracks, the sampled word “yeah” is repeated at regular intervals in every measure of the new tracks; this repetition causes the word to lose its semantic meaning and thus function as a constituent sample rather than a lyric sample. In these two cases, the samples emphasize the sound of the voice rather than the meaning of the particular word.19

Of the 84 separate tracks that sample “Bring the Noise,” 13 include at least two distinct samples from “Bring the Noise.” These 13 tracks contain a total of 32 samples, which accounts for over one-fourth of all samples of “Bring the Noise.” Five of those tracks are by Public Enemy. Nine tracks contain two samples, and four tracks contain three separate samples each. Otherwise, the numbers of these multi-sample tracks parallel those of all sampling tracks studied. The number of samples fell sharply after 1991, and only a single post-1991 track, Public Enemy’s own “Black is Back,” samples “Bring the Noise” multiple times.

The distribution of types described in this section only scratches the surface of how and why artists sample “Bring the Noise.” As I will show in the following sections, once we understand how the categories of lyric samples are distributed throughout the sampling tracks, the aesthetic and artistic preferences of sampling artists become clear. Additionally, specific trends over time emerge, such as artists’ repeated sampling of the same phrase and their choice to employ new material in only one of two different categories of lyric sample. Traditions of sampling emerge around “Bring the Noise.”

“Bring the Noise” and Traditions of Sampling

While the greatest diversity of sampling practices occurred in 1988 and 1989, artists continued sampling “Bring the Noise” well into the 2000s. Sampling fell off in frequency after

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19 A corollary might be Steve Reich’s tape-music pieces *Come Out* and *It’s Gonna Rain*, in which human speech is transformed into a melodic rather than semantic utterance.
1991, but both the specific passages producers sampled and the ways in which they incorporated the sampled material in new tracks remains relatively consistent over the 25-year period studied. These sampling practices include producers sampling the same select phrases over and over, certain producers sampling each other repeatedly, several degrees of sample-based tracks which all originate in “Bring the Noise,” and producers’ preference for placing specific samples into new tracks in specific ways. Through twenty-five years of samples, “Bring the Noise” begins to take on a life and a history richer than just the track itself.

Most popular sampled phrases

Despite the number of dropped names and the politically- and racially-charged lyrics in “Bring the Noise,” nearly all of passages sampled from it are either relatively innocuous or else are recontextualized in such a way as to negate the implications of their original setting, as mentioned in the earlier example of Chuck D’s “now they got me in a cell” that appears in “Egg Man” by the Beastie Boys. For example, in the second verse of “Bring the Noise,” Chuck D challenges black radio stations to play Public Enemy’s music: “Radio stations, I question their blackness / they call themselves black, but we’ll see if they play this.” Only a single track samples this line: in Run-D.M.C.’s “Radio Station,” producer Davy D extracts the two words “radio stations” and scratches them in the introduction and choruses of the new track, thus creating a recurring lyric sample. Rappers Run and D.M.C.’s lyrics in “Radio Station” present the opposite sentiment as Chuck D does in “Bring the Noise”: the two rappers apologize to the radio stations for their absence (this track was released following Run-D.M.C.’s two-year hiatus) and then praise various aspects of radio stations. In this example, the sampled lyric’s meaning is transformed and now has a semantic function totally opposite that of the source track.20 The vast

20 This is not to say that the sampling tracks are devoid of meaning or isolated from the meaning and message of “Bring the Noise.” As I argued in chapter 2, listeners’ experience and knowledge inform their reading of a new track, and a listener who identifies the sampled material and its original context is
majority of sampling artists either sample simple phrases from “Bring the Noise” or else transform the meaning of the sampled phrase when recontextualizing it.\(^{21}\)

Four passages in “Bring the Noise” have been quite popular for producers since 1987. Twenty-six tracks sampled Flavor Flav’s “yeah, boy,” 16 tracks sampled Chuck D’s “bass,” 11 tracks sampled Chuck D’s “once again back is the incredible,” and nine tracks sampled Chuck D’s “here we go again.” In other words, of the 103 total samples of “Bring the Noise,” well over half of those samples (62) were of one of these four passages. Why are these four passages so appealing to producers?

Flavor Flav’s “yeah, boy” has been sampled a total of 26 times: 12 samples of “yeah, boy,” 12 samples of “yeah” only, and two samples of “boy” only. This passage was one of the first to be sampled, appearing in Kyper’s 1987 “Throw Down.” It most recently appeared in 2010, in “Project Boy” by Joell Ortiz. It is the only passage from “Bring the Noise” that has appeared in every possible sample type: constituent surface, recurring lyric, lyric substitution, collage, adjunct, and framing. “Yeah, boy” is Flavor Flav’s signature phrase, and he utters it frequently both live and in recordings. In his role as Public Enemy’s “hype man,” Flavor Flav balances the seriousness of Chuck D’s lyrics with a more puckish attitude. As Joseph “Run” Simmons of Run-D.M.C. has said, “Flav’s the hype man and Chuck’s the rapper—they help each other out. I don’t know if the message would be as powerful if Flav was hyping around alone or Chuck was rapping alone.”\(^{22}\) This phrase encapsulates Flavor Flav’s role. Flavor Flav’s “yeah, boy” is likely to read the sampling passage or track very differently than a listener who does not recognize a sample.

\(^{21}\) A corollary is Charles Ives’s “Tom Sails Away,” in which Ives quotes George M. Cohan’s “Over There” ironically. As J. Peter Burkholder has said of this moment, “Cohan’s musical recruiting poster becomes, in this context, an emblem of separation; ‘over there’ is a long way away, and Tom’s return is uncertain.” In the process of quoting this melody, Ives transforms the song’s original meaning by undermining it in a new context. See All Made of Tunes, 364.

\(^{22}\) Joseph “Run” Simmons, quoted in Mariel Concepcion, ““Public Enemy: Our Black Planet,” Billboard 122, issue 11 (20 March 2010): 42. Curiously, Def Jam hesitated about signing Flavor Flav until the other members of Public Enemy were able to convince them that he played an important role in the group. According to Hank Shocklee, “You gotta have Flavor, because Chuck might be too serious, so you
uniquely positioned both because it is both Flavor Flav’s signature phrase, and because its text can serve any number of variety of grammatical and semantic functions.  

Another popular passage for sampling artists is the single word “bass” uttered by Chuck D, which is, in fact, the first word of the first verse of “Bring the Noise.” This word is popular among sampling artists for several reasons. First, the word “bass” is often employed as a homophone for “base,” a slang term for crack cocaine. For example, Melle Mel and the Furious Five’s “White Lines Part II (Don’t Do It)” juxtaposes “bass” (base) against the word “blow”—a sample from Melle Mel’s own “White Lines (Don’t Do It),” released six years earlier—in the choruses of the new track. Public Enemy’s own anti-crack anthem “Night of the Living Baseheads” scratches the sampled word “bass” (base) throughout the track’s choruses. Jealous J also plays on the homophone in “Work that Body,” including the sampled word “bass” as a lyric substitution in the first verse (0:23-0:24): “It’s for all you bass junkies.” Jealous J’s lyric substitution has two meanings: a bass junkie, meaning one who enjoys low-pitched resonant music, and a base junkie, meaning a crack cocaine addict. Second, this sample is frequently used to create new words or phrases. MC Connection’s “Ridiculous Bass,” for example, juxtaposes two samples to create the choruses: “bass” from “Bring the Noise,” and “pump up the,” sampled from Eric B and Rakim’s “I Know You Got Soul.” MC Connection thus creates the grammatically intact phrase “pump up the bass” in the choruses by placing two lyric samples in rapid succession. Similarly, by juxtaposing the sampled fragments “bass” from “Bring the Noise” and “-tronic” from Mantronik’s “Do You Like Mantronik,” the Unknown DJ creates a brand new
word, the track’s title, and the choruses of his own “Basstronic.” Thus, “bass” is a popular choice for sampling musicians due to its brevity, versatility, and potential for use as a homophone.

The two other most-sampled phrases from “Bring the Noise” are “once again back is the incredible” and “here we go again.” Both phrases contain the word “again,” and both sampled phrases are heard, almost without exception, to articulate some type of return. These “returns” can encompass a variety of meanings. First, the return can be that of a specific artist. For example, multiple artists have used one of these two samples in tracks on their non-debut albums, thus suggesting with the sampled material that they as an artist are returning to the music scene. Kanye West’s “Everything I Am” was a track on his third album, Fat Joe’s “Safe 2 Say (The Incredible)” was a track on his fourth album, and De La Soul’s “Much More” was a track on their seventh album. Alternately, Kid Sensation’s “Seatown Ballers” was the third single released from his debut album, and the presence of this sample thus suggests his return in the sense of releasing another single. Second, the return can be that of a specific genre or style. For example, ASAP Productions’ “The Track” and DJ Jimmie Jam’s “Jimmie’s Jam” are both DJ tracks that appear on albums in the Return of the DJ series (ASAP Productions is on volume 1, and DJ Jimmie Jam is on volume 2). Thus, the samples from “Bring the Noise” that contain the word “again” suggest the return not of an artist but of a genre, namely that of the hip-hop DJ. Finally, the return can be a return within the form of the track. Sonic Solutions’ “Don’t Speak” and Mind Over Matter’s “Rappers in Wonderland” use the sampled material in the same way. Both tracks are a verse-chorus form, and the sampled “here we go again” is heard at the end of each chorus. In other words, “here we go again” is heard before all verses except the first verse, thus suggesting that the return is that of the verse within the form of the track.

25 On the Return of the DJ series of albums, see Katz, Groove Music, 142-43. According to Katz, the Return of the DJ series “became a galvanizing force for turntablism, helping form and then enlarge the turntablism community.”
With the exceptions of Chuck D’s “how low can you go,” which was sampled seven times, his “death row, what a brother know,” which was sampled four times, and his “now they got me in a cell,” which was sampled three times, all other sampled passages from “Bring the Noise” were sampled two or fewer times. Interestingly, no tracks sample any part of the fourth verse of “Bring the Noise,” and only three tracks sample the third verse. All other samples are taken from the introduction, chorus, or first two verses. Moreover, of the three tracks that sample the third verse, one is a track by Public Enemy itself and the other two tracks include more than one sample from “Bring the Noise,” suggesting that only the groups most familiar with “Bring the Noise” reach beyond its opening two verses for material to sample.

Public Enemy and self-sampling

Public Enemy and production team the Bomb Squad sample “Bring the Noise” in 11 tracks. Five of those 11 tracks contain multiple separate samples from “Bring the Noise.” Of the 103 total samples of “Bring the Noise” that occurred between 1987 and 2011, just under a fifth (18) of those samples occurred in tracks by Public Enemy. A handful of other artists have sampled “Bring the Noise” more than once—LL Cool J and German hip-hop group IAM have sampled “Bring the Noise” multiple times in different tracks, and Ice-T and Tyree Cooper sampled “Bring the Noise” two or three times in the same track—but no artist comes close to sampling it as often as Public Enemy does. Public Enemy far and away samples “Bring the Noise” more often than any other group or artist.

As argued in chapter 2, artists who self-sample capture a specific sound and sonic memory while demonstrating a sense of pride in and depth of knowledge of their own recording catalogue. Rather than relying on the same passages that were popular with other sampling artists, Public Enemy chooses to sample different phrases than do other artists or producers. Of the 18 times Public Enemy sampled “Bring the Noise,” they have only sampled the same section twice: Chuck D’s “black is back,” and Flavor Flav’s “yeah, boy” (although one track only uses “yeah”
and the other uses the entire “yeah, boy). Of the remaining phrases from “Bring the Noise” that they have sampled, such as Chuck D’s “power to the people,” Chuck D’s “soul on a roll,” Chuck D’s “Terminator X-it,” and Flavor Flav’s “they could get us smacked for that,” Public Enemy is often the only artist who has sampled those particular phrases. Including samples that are different from those used by other artists has two effects. First, Public Enemy creates unique-sounding passages that still are recognizable as Public Enemy samples. Second, the passages they select do not carry with them any associations from prior artists’ samples, a point I will elaborate below.

Not only do Public Enemy’s samples of itself encompass a more diverse selection of lyrics from the source track, but Public Enemy also tends to situate those samples in their new tracks differently than do other artists. Specifically, they include collage samples just as often as framing or recurring lyric samples. Public Enemy’s 18 total samples of “Bring the Noise” are distributed as follows:

Collage: 5  
Framing: 6  
Lyric substitution: 1  
Recurring: 6  
Total samples: 18

Although Public Enemy’s use of recurring and framing lyric samples roughly parallel those of other sampling artists and producers, Public Enemy also opts for the less-common sample categories, particularly the lyric sample collage.

In fact, Public Enemy is the only group or artist who samples “Bring the Noise” for lyric sample collages. Three Public Enemy tracks, “Mind Terrorist,” “Show ’Em Whatcha Got,” and “Brothers Gonna Work it Out,” contain collages of lyric samples. These collage samples originate in “Bring the Noise” as well as other Public Enemy tracks. “Brothers Gonna Work it Out,” for example, opens with a collage of lyric samples from several Public Enemy recordings. These collage samples (see Figure 3.3) are pasted to an aggregate groove comprised of drums sampled from Melvin Bliss’s “Synthetic Substitution” and a distorted electric guitar riff sampled from
Prince’s “Let’s Go Crazy.” A leaping-octave guitar figure is also audible in the track’s groove, but if this is a sample, I have been unable to identify its source.

Figure 3.3. Lyric sample collage in Public Enemy, “Brothers Gonna Work it Out,” intro (0:14-0:24)

Note: all source tracks are by Public Enemy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source track</th>
<th>Sound</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Rebel Without a Pause”</td>
<td>Chuck D: “the rhythm, the rebel”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Don’t Believe the Hype”</td>
<td>Flavor Flav: “don’t believe the hype”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Rebel Without a Pause”</td>
<td>Chuck D: “yes”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Bring the Noise”</td>
<td>Chuck D: “how low can you go?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Bring the Noise”</td>
<td>Flavor Flav: “show them that we can do this”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Bring the Noise”</td>
<td>Chuck D: “here we go again”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As argued in chapter 2, samples represent a particular sonic memory, and this sonic memory is perhaps most powerful and personal for artists who sample their own recordings. Artists self-sample to demonstrate pride in their own recorded catalogue. Public Enemy frequently samples its own recordings, and by juxtaposing several samples of themselves in the intro of “Brothers Gonna Work it Out,” they draw attention both to their own recordings and to the process of sampling.

Moreover, Public Enemy prominently features either “Bring the Noise” or tracks that sample “Bring the Noise” in the first music tracks of three different albums: 

*It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back* (1988), 
*Fear of a Black Planet* (1990), and 
*Apocalypse ’91... The Empire Strikes Black* (1991). The first music tracks on *It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back* and *Fear of a Black Planet* are not the first tracks on the albums, however, because each album includes an introductory track. However, the second track on *It Takes a Nation of*

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26 The very first track on *Nation,* “Countdown to Armageddon,” is an introduction that samples an introduction of Public Enemy from their Def Jam tour, complete with a screaming crowd and the voice of a British announcer. The first track on *Planet,* “Contract on the World Love Jam,” is also an introduction, featuring a swirl of dozens of sampled voices atop an aggregate groove of synthesized chords from The Meters’ “What’cha Say” and drums from Kid Dynamite’s “Uphill Peace of Mind.” I have been unable to confirm the total number of sampled voices in “Contract on the World Love Jam.” In fact, as of this writing, I have only identified the sources of about six of the sampled voices. According to Chuck D, there are somewhere between 40 and 50 separate sampled voices in this particular track. See *Lyrics of a Rap*
Millions to Hold Us Back is “Bring the Noise” itself; although “Bring the Noise” was released on the film soundtrack Less than Zero in November of 1987, Public Enemy also included it on It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back five months later, in April 1988. The second track on Fear of a Black Planet is “Brothers Gonna Work It Out,” which, as shown above, contains a collage of lyric samples, several of which originate in “Bring the Noise.” Further, the first track on the album Apocalypse ’91... The Enemy Strikes Black, is “Lost at Birth,” a track contains two different samples of “Bring the Noise.” In “Lost at Birth,” DJ Terminator X scratches samples from several Public Enemy recordings while Chuck D and Flavor Flav utter praises for Public Enemy. Most prominent among these scratched samples in “Lost at Birth” are Chuck D’s phrases “black is back” and “once again back is the incredible, the rhyme animal, Public Enemy number one” from “Bring the Noise.” Thus, on three Public Enemy albums released in three successive years, listeners heard “Bring the Noise” either in its entirety or in a sampled excerpt in the first music track on each album. Why would Public Enemy feature samples of its own recordings, and of “Bring the Noise” in particular, at the beginnings of three separate albums?

According to DJ Bobcat, a producer will sample a rapper’s own voice on the first track of an album because it can help the listener “know his body of work. When they listen to it, they can go, ‘Oh yeah, that came from this song.’” Bobcat told me that when he produced a solo album for MC Ren, who is best known as a member of the rap group N.W.A., he sampled several of Ren’s most memorable lines from various N.W.A. recordings. As Bobcat explains, “I wanted to scratch in everything that Ren did that people could remember.” 27 By scratching a rapper’s earlier lyrics during the intro of a new track, a producer can help create connections for the listener between the new track and the rapper’s earlier work.

Revolutionary, 105-106. Neither “Countdown to Armageddon” or “Contract on the World Love Jam” contains any new rapped or spoken lyrics by Chuck D or Flavor Flav.

27 DJ Bobcat, telephone interview with the author, 24 August 2012.
These samples also link the group’s past music with its new releases. Public Enemy is known for creating cohesive albums; as MCA of the Beastie Boys said, “[Public Enemy was] the first rap group to really focus on making albums you can listen to from beginning to end. They aren’t just random songs tossed together.”

But Public Enemy not only connects the individual tracks on a single album, but they also seek a sense of continuity between and among their various albums. As Chuck D has said of “Lost at Birth,” the first track on *Apocalypse ’91 . . .The Enemy Strikes Black*, “The album *Apocalypse ’91* opens up where *Fear of a Black Planet* leaves off. At the end of *Black Planet* it says, ‘What’s the future of Public Enemy?’ And the first thing [heard] on *Apocalypse ’91* is, ‘The future holds nothing but confrontation,’ and it’s ‘Lost at Birth’ that takes place.”

To Chuck D, Public Enemy’s recordings are not disparate collections of unrelated items but instead represent continuous threads of past and present. Public Enemy has an eye toward the past as well as the future, and it is reasonable that they would borrow liberally from music of their past while creating new music. By incorporating samples of their earlier recordings, Public Enemy creates a dialogue with their own musical past, present, and future.

Public Enemy’s self-sampling accounts for the slight spike in samples of “Bring the Noise” that occurred in 2007 (refer to graph in Figure 3.2). In 2007, “Bring the Noise” was sampled a total of five times, and three of those samples occurred in the single Public Enemy track “Black is Back.” The three samples from “Bring the Noise” are placed in close proximity during the choruses of “Black is Back” (0:46-1:07):

- Flavor Flav: “Yeah”
- Chuck D: “Black is back”
- Flavor Flav: “Yeah”
- Chuck D: “We got to demonstrate”
- Chuck D: “Black is back”
- Flavor Flav: “Yeah”
- Chuck D: “Black is back”
- Flavor Flav: “Yeah”
- Chuck D: “We got to demonstrate”

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29 Chuck D, Lyrics of a Rap Revolutionary, 173.
Chuck D: “Black is back”

It is important to note, however, that these samples are not the only lyrics heard during the choruses of “Black is Back” because DJ Lord scratches them in amidst the chorus’s sung lyrics. Each appearance of Chuck D’s phrase “black is back” is scratched, which emphasizes to the listener that this phrase is sampled and thus digitally mediated as opposed to newly performed. Even those listeners not familiar with earlier Public Enemy recordings would recognize that sampling is taking place.

By sampling their own recordings, Public Enemy creates historical links among both tracks and albums in its recorded oeuvre.

Sample exchanges among artists: Public Enemy and Run-D.M.C.

Several artists who sampled “Bring the Noise” were also sampled by Public Enemy. In multiple instances, an artist sampled Public Enemy’s music, and then Public Enemy turned around and sampled that artist’s music. Occasionally, this exchange between artists happened multiple times, creating a rich interchange of samples tying two different groups together. The table in Figure 3.4 reveals the frequency with which the hip-hop groups Public Enemy and Run-D.M.C. sampled each other between 1988 and 1991.

30 I have been unable to decipher these chorus lyrics of “Black is Back,” and no online lyrics databases include them, either.
Public Enemy and Run-D.M.C. sampled each other a total of ten times between 1988 and 1991. Each group also appears to have had favorite source tracks: Public Enemy sampled Run-D.M.C.’s “Here We Go (Live at the Funhouse)” twice, and Run-D.M.C. sampled Public Enemy’s “Bring the Noise” three times. Clearly the two groups hold each other and their music in high esteem, judging by the frequency with which they sampled each other’s music.

Sampling is not a one-way street where an artist samples sounds in isolation without the knowledge of the source track’s artist, music, or history; instead, as the relationship between Public Enemy and Run-D.M.C. reveals, artists respond to other artists’ sampling of their tracks, both musically and socially. Chuck D mentions Run-D.M.C. by name in “Bring the Noise” when describing the universality of music, and he also credited the group with inspiring him to be a rapper: “They were the group that made me feel like rap was worth building a career on as an artist.”

Run-D.M.C. praised Public Enemy in return: according to Hank Shocklee, on a Saturday night in 1988, rapper D.M.C. of Run-D.M.C. drove along 125th Street in Harlem, blaring Public Enemy’s “Bring the Noise.”

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Enemy’s “Don’t Believe the Hype” from the window of his Ford Bronco.\textsuperscript{32} In the instances described above, Public Enemy and Run-D.M.C. did not sample each other simply for the words or the appealing sounds available on the other’s albums; instead, their sampling indicates a relationship of mutual respect and admiration between the two groups.

This exchange of samples between the two artists stops after 1991. Although both groups continued to record, they no longer sampled each other’s music in those recordings. The sampling probably stopped not because they began to dislike or disrespect each other but because the cost of licensing each other’s samples skyrocketed. Both groups included fewer total samples in their music produced after 1991, and for most sampling artists, lyric and surface sample types were the first to be eliminated. As I will explain in greater detail in chapter 5, the musical styles of sampling artists changed when they sampled fewer recordings. The collaboration and mutual respect between members of Public Enemy and Run-D.M.C. continued to flourish even when the groups stopped sampling each other: for example, Public Enemy’s production team the Bomb Squad produced two tracks on Run-D.M.C.’s 1993 album \textit{Down with the King}.

Run-D.M.C. and Public Enemy have the largest number and most frequent instances of exchanges of any artists who sample “Bring the Noise.” However, there are other back-and-forth sampling relationships between Public Enemy and other artists who sample “Bring the Noise,” such as the Beastie Boys, LL Cool J, and Prince, although none of these are as long-running or as intricate as the relationship between Run-D.M.C. and Public Enemy.

\textbf{Sampling “Bring the Noise” after the early 1990s}

By the mid-1990s, sampling artists seem to have settled on specific approaches to sampling “Bring the Noise.” Any artist who sampled “Bring the Noise” after 1994 selected one of

a very few specific phrases, and those specific phrases were included in new tracks in only one of
two of the categories of lyric samples.

Only seven different phrases from “Bring the Noise” were sampled after 1994. Four of
these seven phrases are the same four discussed above—“yeah,” “once again back is the
incredible,” “bass,” and “here we go again.” Clearly, hip-hop producers had established a
tradition of sampling, and anyone who sampled these four phrases drew not only on the music of
Public Enemy but also on the music of earlier artists who had sampled one or more of these four
key phrases.

In addition to those four phrases, producers also sampled three additional phrases after
the mid-1990s: Chuck D’s “black is back,” Chuck D’s “we got to get them straight,” and Chuck
D’s “how low can you go?” However, both “black is back” and “we got to get them straight”
were sampled in new tracks by Public Enemy itself. As argued earlier, to showcase their
knowledge of their own record catalogue as well as to establish their role in the historical
trajectory of their own music and of sample-based hip-hop in general, Public Enemy frequently
samples not only their own recordings but also samples some lesser-known phrases and sections
of their own recordings. These two phrases sampled after 1994 are no exception: Public Enemy is
the only artist who has ever sampled these two phrases. In fact, of all the samples surveyed in this
chapter, “we got to get them straight” is the only phrase that was sampled for the first time after
1991. Of the dozens of different passages from “Bring the Noise” that artists sampled, every one
of those passages except “we got to get them straight” was sampled within three years of the
initial release of “Bring the Noise.”

The only other phrase sampled after the mid-1990s is Chuck D’s “how low can you go,”
which was sampled by producer T-Minus for the 2009 Ludacris track “How Low.” Although
“How low can you go” was not as hugely popular as the four phrases mentioned above, this
phrase was sampled six times between 1988 and 2009. The appeal of this particular phrase for
sampling phrases lies in its dual interpretations. “How low can you go?” can refer either to ethical
failings or else to “going low” or “getting low” while dancing. PMD’s “Shade Business,” for example, includes “how low can you go” as a lyric substitution when rapping about artists who sell out (0:46-0:50), and in “How Low,” Ludacris promises, “If she really getting low / then I’m a shoot a video and put it all on TV” during a rapped verse. Its appearance after 1994 is less predictable than those of the four most-sampled phrases, but “how low can you go” does share with those phrases its semantic flexibility.

After the mid-1990s, artists not only sampled a limited number of phrases from “Bring the Noise,” but they also limited the sample categories included in new tracks. After 1994, samples from “Bring the Noise” appeared in new tracks in only one of two categories: the framing sample (9) and the recurring sample (13). As noted earlier, these two sample types most prominently feature the sampled text, and they are set off from the rapped lyrics of a new track in sound, style, and form, especially because they are usually scratched by a DJ. The aesthetic appeal of these sample types lies in their ability to include texts that are not delivered by the rappers and to draw attention to the act of DJing. Financially, too, it seems reasonable to assume that if sampling artists pay a licensing fee for a sample, then they want to feature it prominently in the new track. Why pay a licensing fee and then bury the sample against rapped lyrics where none but the most observant listener will hear it? Additionally, these two categories of samples were by and large the most popular categories for artists who sampled prior to 1994, as well, which means artists were drawing on tradition in terms of the categories of samples.

The sole exception to this trend is again the 2009 Ludacris track “How Low.” First, the sampled phrase “how low can you go” is significantly distorted in register, timbre, and rhythm from its source material. Producer T-Minus manipulates Chuck D’s baritone voice and syncopated lyric delivery into a high-pitched, cartoonish timbre whose text falls on the downbeats with sing-song regularity. Were it not for the identification of this sample in the copyright material of Ludacris’s album *Battle of the Sexes*, its identity as a sample of Public Enemy would
probably go unnoticed, at least by this listener. Of all the samples of “Bring the Noise” in this chapter, this one is by far the most distorted from its source material.

Why would Ludacris and T-Minus choose to sample “Bring the Noise” just to distort the sample beyond recognition? Tradition! Frequently, Ludacris will borrow rapped phrases from the music of his hip-hop predecessors—such as Slick Rick and Doug E. Fresh, DJ Jazzy Jeff and the Fresh Prince, UTFO, and the Notorious B.I.G.—and incorporate them into his new rapped lyrics. These lyrical borrowings are not samples but a restatement of existing lyrics. By simultaneously restating and recontextualizing these phrases, Ludacris aligns himself with tradition while creating new lyrics. In these instances, Ludacris casts lyrics of hip-hop’s history in his own voice but not the source’s voice. Similarly, by distorting the sample of Chuck D in “How Low,” Ludacris and T-Minus recast the lyrics in a new voice and context. In this case, the new voice is not that of Ludacris himself but that of a cartoonish-sounding, dance-commanding character.

Not only is the sampled material in “How Low” digitally manipulated to avoid sounding like its source material, but it is also the only sample of “Bring the Noise” after 1994 that occurs in a category other than the framing or recurring lyric sample. However, “How Low” is one of the three tracks in this study that uses the same sampled material in two different sample categories during the same track. “How low can you go” appears as a recurring lyric sample in each chorus of “How Low,” and T-Minus also drops it into the first verse as an adjunct lyric sample against Ludacris’s rapped verse. It is extremely unusual to have any sample type other than a framing or a recurring type after 1994, but the single instance of an adjunct type occurs in a track in which the same sample already appears as a recurring type. It seems likely that this sample was used as an adjunct lyric sample type only because it had already been licensed as a recurring sample.

Artists sampled the same phrases over and over because they were influenced not only by Public Enemy but also by other groups who sampled these same passages. As Ralph Waldo

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33 For identification of this sample in the liner notes of the Ludacris album *Battle of the Sexes*, see http://www.discogs.com/Ludacris-Battle-Of-The-Sexes/release/2229527.
Emerson wrote, “Next to the originator of a good sentence is the first quoter of it.”\(^{34}\) For example, when Liszt quoted the melody of the *Dies irae* sequence in both his *Totentanz* piano concerto and the first movement of his *Dante* symphony, he was following Berlioz’s lead as well as quoting the plainchant from its source. If a musical idea is borrowed repeatedly, it begins to take on associations of its new contexts as well as of its original context. In 1953, Robin Gregory argued:

> In its original form *Dies irae* had a grave and religious connotation; it was part of one of the most solemn rites of the Church and it was intended to call to mind awe-inspiring events, but it had no associations with anything evil. The parodies by Berlioz, Liszt and others . . . intentionally gave the melody a baleful significance. Repeated use in this manner has tended to debase its real character so that now it is almost taken for granted that its use is cynical in intention.\(^{35}\)

As Gregory observed of the *Dies irae*, if borrowed musical material is used in a similar manner over and over again, it begins to take on meanings associated with the composers’ borrowings. Composers who borrow the *Dies irae* melody not only borrow that melody but also the associations it carries from the other borrowings that came before it. Over time, the borrowed material represents its early borrowings as much as, if not more than, its original source.

In an interview with hip-hop producer 9th Wonder, he described how a lyric sample can accumulate meaning over time.\(^{36}\) 9th Wonder was preparing to produce a track for rapper Lil B, who is also known as the Based God. When he was preparing to produce this track, 9th Wonder had two criteria for a sample: first, he wanted to include a lyric sample that contained the word “bass,” since Lil B is the Based God. Second, he wanted to sample a classic hip-hop line to legitimate Lil B and his music. As 9th Wonder explained, “What can I take to make this guy who the music industry people tend to hate and make him feel authentic? Let’s go to a record which is arguably the number one hip-hop album ever made, *It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back*. It’s easy.” With these criteria, 9th Wonder then narrowed his choices to three possible lyric

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\(^{34}\) Ralph Waldo Emerson, “Quotation and Originality,” in *The Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, vol. 1 (New York: Taylor and Francis, 1913), 470.


\(^{36}\) 9th Wonder, telephone interview with the author, 8 August 2012.
samples: Chuck D’s “bass, how low can you go?” from “Bring the Noise”; Flavor Flav’s “bass for your face, London!” from Public Enemy’s “Black Steel in the Hour of Chaos”; or the character Gee Money’s spoken phrase “they came back for the base” from the 1991 film New Jack City.

“Bring the Noise” and “Black Steel in the Hour of Chaos” both appear on the classic Public Enemy album It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back, which 9th Wonder and many other hip-hop artists regard as one of, if not the, most important hip-hop album ever made. But what is the significance of Gee Money’s spoken line from New Jack City? In 9th Wonder’s estimation, the spoken line from New Jack City was not only about base (crack cocaine) but also about Public Enemy: “I knew that when [the character] Gee Money says that [phrase] in the movie, he was talking about Public Enemy himself. Like, ‘it came back BASE’ like that. It all got it together.” By placing strong emphasis on the word “base,” Gee Money, portrayed by Allen Payne, simultaneously plays on the homophone and also invokes Chuck D’s delivery of the word “bass” from “Bring the Noise.”

Ultimately, 9th Wonder selected Flavor Flav’s “bass for your face” for the new Lil B track instead of Chuck D’s “bass, how low can you go?” or Gee Money’s “they came back for the base,” but not without carefully considering several different samples and the associations each of those samples would carry for the listener. Had 9th Wonder sampled the line from New Jack City, he knew that he would have been sampling both that spoken line and that spoken line’s invocation of Chuck D’s lyric delivery from “Bring the Noise.”

Moreover, artists who sampled “Bring the Noise” seem to have incorporated the samples into new tracks very similarly to Public Enemy’s own use of lyric samples in their 1988 album It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back. As mentioned earlier, “Bring the Noise” was released on the Less than Zero film soundtrack at the end of 1987 and also appeared on Nation the following April. Produced by the Bomb Squad, Nation includes all five categories of lyric samples described in this chapter, distributed as follows:
The lyric samples in *Nation* come from sources as diverse and wide-reaching as the Beastie Boys, Bob Marley, Stevie Wonder, and the Disco Four, and the distribution of lyric sample categories almost exactly mirrors that of the categorical distribution in the tracks that sample “Bring the Noise”: framing and recurring dominate, while lyric substitutions, collage, and adjunct each account for a few additional samples. Sampling artists probably listened to the entirety of *Nation*, not just the single track “Bring the Noise,” which may explain why so many sampling artists seem to mimic the sampling approaches of Public Enemy while also sampling the lyrics of a Public Enemy track. The musical style of these sampling tracks reflects not only “Bring the Noise” itself but also the album and the musical style of the album on which that track appeared.

**Traditions of Sampling: Revision, Critique, and Hip-Hop’s Gift Economy**

This transmission of “Bring the Noise” through samples and the attendant establishment of borrowing traditions is closely connected to how traditions in African American literature are established. In his brilliant study of African American literary theory, Henry Louis Gates, Jr., writes that the basis of a tradition in African American literature “must be shared patterns of language use. By this I mean the shared, discrete uses of literary language in texts that bear some sort of relation to each other.”

For Gates, traditions in African American literature are possible only via formal literary revision. He argues further that the blackness of black American literature is established by “specific uses of literary language that are shared, repeated, critiqued, and revised.” Revision, in this instance, does not refer to correction but to reinvention: “The revising

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38 Ibid.
text is written in the language of the tradition, employing its tropes, its rhetorical strategies, and its ostensible subject matter.”39 As Gates demonstrates in his readings of texts by authors such as Zora Neale Hurston, Paul Laurence Dunbar, and Sterling A. Brown, many African American writers define themselves rhetorically by imitating and critiquing the works of other African American writers.40 Gates’s assessment of African American literary identity and tradition is apt for considering the relationship between “Bring the Noise” and the tracks that sample it, because later hip-hop artists engage in specific uses of musical language by imitating, repeating, and revising “Bring the Noise.” By sampling “Bring the Noise,” sampling a few key phrases of “Bring the Noise,” and including those sampled phrases in a new track in a specific way, a hip-hop producer engages with the tradition of sample-based hip-hop. The discrete uses of samples and the practice of sharing, repeating, and revising the same source is a corollary to Gates’s view of how traditions in African American literature are established.

By placing “Bring the Noise” at the center of this study, it becomes clear that sample-based hip-hop exploded in 1987, peaked in 1991, and has remained relatively static since the mid-1990s. As Chuck D observed, “In the 1990s somebody smelled money and, just like with the gold rush, led a 15-year stripping of the ecosystem that the [hip-hop] culture organically stood on.”41 This “ecosystem” Chuck D refers to encompasses the volume and frequency of sampling that occurred prior to 1991. Luckily for him and the other members of Public Enemy, “Bring the Noise” was released at the beginning of the period in which anyone could sample without fear of lawsuits. Not only did “Bring the Noise” contain many samples itself, but it also was sampled by dozens of artists and helped form a canon of samples upon which the next generation of hip-hop producers drew. While the number of artists who sampled “Bring the Noise” plummeted after

39 Ibid., 124.
40 Ibid., 122.
1991, it remains a frequently-sampled track, although the rate at which a track is sampled “frequently” has a different definition after 1991.

“Bring the Noise” and the tracks that sample it help us to identify historical trends in terms of the numbers and kinds of samples that have occurred over time, revealing that the number and variety of sample types dramatically decreases. After the mid-1990s, artists used lyric samples only for recurring lyric samples and for framing lyric samples, most likely because these two categories most prominently feature the text of the sampled lyrics. This may reflect either a stylistic change in the music or else a decision to highlight the sampled text for which a licensing fee was paid. The lyric samples from “Bring the Noise” represent a microcosm of the overall change in sample-based hip-hop that occurred after 1991. Further discussion and analysis of changes in sample-based musical style after 1991 form the basis of chapter 5.

The limited categories of sampling and the limited sampled material may reflect not only legal reasons but also artistic purposes: clearly, a tradition of sampling “Bring the Noise” was well-established. The samples and their placement in new tracks become traditions of musical borrowing. The tradition includes borrowing a particular gesture—either “Bring the Noise” itself or a key phrase from the track—as well as using that borrowed gesture in a specific way, that is, in one of a limited number of sample types. The typology is a diagnostic tool for identifying these traditions of musical borrowing. These traditions reveal the mutual enrichment of the borrowed and borrowing materials. Kembrew McLeod calls this mutual enrichment the “gift economy” of hip-hop because the sampling track helps sustain the financial or artistic security of the sampled track.42 In this sense, the new, borrowing text renews an old, borrowed text, yet the new text will always refer back to the old text.

42 McLeod, *Freedom of Expression ®*, 307. The example McLeod cites is Grandmaster Flash’s “appropriation” (not sample) of Liquid Liquid’s “Cavern” in his 1983 “White Lines.” The Sugar Hill house band replayed the bass line from “Cavern,” and that replayed material is featured in “White Lines.” As Richard McGuire, the bassist of Liquid Liquid, told McLeod, “I think it [‘White Lines’] helped keep our
Samples are not just sounds; they capture both specific moments and also a more general sense of historical and artistic significance for sampling artists. Certain passages from “Bring the Noise” have proven especially popular with sampling artists—such as Flavor Flav’s catchphrase and grammatically or rhetorically flexible words such as “bass,” “yeah,” and “again”—and sampling artists borrow more than just words or sounds from the source track. An artist could sample certain words from virtually any recording; surely Gene Simmons, MC Hammer, or George Carlin uttered the words “yeah” or “bass” at some point in their recordings. But a sample of Chuck D’s words is not just a sample of the words—it is a sample of the artist himself and everything that artist represents. As DJ Jazzy Joyce told me “Chuck’s voice is incredible. That’s why they [producers] keep going back to him.”

A sample of Chuck D’s words simultaneously invokes the words, Chuck D, Public Enemy, and an awareness of hip-hop. Certainly, some artists do sample simply for the text, but most are sampling a sound, an artist, and a history. And what exactly is Public Enemy’s place in hip-hop’s history? According to Chuck D, “Defiance, pride, attitude, nationalism, a little bit of rhetoric, who we have as our heroes, and who we are as a people, and giving them a top-notch place in our history.”

43 DJ Jazzy Joyce, telephone interview with the author, 20 August 2012.
Supplement. Transcription of lyrics in “Bring the Noise”


**Sampled**: Too black, too strong; too black, too strong

**Flavor Flav** (spoken): Yo Chuck, these honey drippers are still frontin’ on us. Show them that we can do this, ‘cause we always knew this. Haha. Yeah, boy.

Verse 1

**Chuck D**: Bass, how low can you go?

Death row, what a brother know.

Once again, back is the incredible

The rhyme animal

The incredible

**Others**: D

**Chuck D**: Public Enemy number one.

Five-oh said

**Others**: “Freeze,”

**Chuck D**: and I got numb,

Can I tell ’em that I really never had a gun?

But it’s the wax that the Terminator X spun.

Now they got me in a cell ’cause my records they sell,

’Cause a brother like me said, “Well,

Farrakhan’s a prophet, and I think you ought to listen to

What he can say to you, what you ought to do is,”

Follow for now, power of the people, say,

“Make a miracle,

**Others**: D

**Chuck D**: pump the lyrical.”

Black is back, all in, we’re gonna win.

Check it out

**Flavor Flav**: Yeah y’all, come on

**Chuck D**: here we go again.

Chorus

**Chuck D**: Bring the noise.

**Sample**: Turn it up.

**Flavor Flav** (spoken): Hey, yo Chuck, they sayin’ we too black, man. Yo, I don’t understand what they’re sayin’, but little do they know they could get a smack for that.

Verse 2

**Chuck D**: Never badder than bad ’cause the brother is madder than mad

At the fact that’s corrupt like a senator.

Soul on a roll but you treat it like soap on a rope

‘Cause the beats in the lines are so dope.

Listen for lessons I’m saying inside music

That the critics are blasting me for.

They’ll never care for the

**Sample and Chuck D**: brothers and sisters

**Chuck D**: Now across the country has us up for the war

We got to demonstrate,
Flavor Flav and Chuck D: Come on
Chuck D: They’re gonna have to wait
Flavor Flav and Chuck D: ’til we get it right.
Chuck D: Radio stations I question their blackness
They call themselves black, but we’ll see if they’ll play this.

Chorus
Chuck D: Bring the noise.
Sample: Turn it up.
Flavor Flav (spoken): Hey, yo, Chuck, they illin’. We chillin’. Yo, PE in the house. Yo Chuck, show them what you do, boy.

Verse 3
Chuck D: Get from in front of me, the crowd runs to me.
My DJ is warm, he’s X, I call him Norm, you know.
He can cut a record from side to side
So what, the ride, the glide much should be safer than a suicide.
Soul control, beat is the lather of your rock and roll.
Music for whatcha, for whichin’, you call a band, man
Makin’ a music, abuse it, but you can’t do it, you know.
You call ’em demos
Flavor Flav: But we ride limos, too.
Chuck D: Whatcha gonna do? Rap is not afraid of you.
Beat is for Sonny Bono
Flavor Flav: Beat is for Yoko Ono
Chuck D: Run-D.M.C. first said a DJ could be a band.
Stand on its feet, get you out your seat.
Beat is for Eric B. and L. L. as well, hell.
Flavor Flav: Wax is for Anthrax,
Chuck D: still it can rock bells
Ever forever, universal, it will sell,
Time for me to exit
Flavor Flav and Chuck D: Terminator X-it.

Chorus
Chuck D: Bring the noise.
Sample: Turn it up.
Flavor Flav (spoken): Yo, they should know by now that they can’t stop this bum rush. Word up, man. They keep telling me to turn it down, but yo, Flavor Flav ain’t going out like that.

Verse 4
Chuck D: From coast to coast,
So you stop being like a comatose.
‘stand, my man? The beat’s the same with a boast toast
Rock with some pizzazz, it will last. Why you ask?
Roll with the rock stars
Flavor Flav and Chuck D: still never get accepted as
Chuck D: We got to plead the Fifth, you can investigate
Don’t need to wait, get the record straight
Others: Hey
Chuck D: Posse’s in effect, got the Flavor,
Terminator X to sign checks

**Flavor Flav and Chuck D:** Play to get paid

**Chuck D:** We got to check it out down on the avenue

A magazine or two is dissing me and dissing you

Yeah, I’m telling you

**Flavor Flav** (spoken): Hey, yo Griff, get the S1W, we got to handle this. We ain’t going out like that, yo man, straight up on the Colombo tip. We can do this like Brutus, ’cause we always knew this, you know what I’m saying? There’s just one thing that puzzles me, my brother: what’s wrong with all these people around here, man? Is there clocking? Is there rocking? Is there shocking? (fade)
CHAPTER 4

PAUL’S BOUTIQUE AND FEAR OF A BLACK PLANET:
SAMPLING AND THE CREATION OF A UNIQUE MUSICAL STYLE

In a recent study on copyright law and digital sampling, Kembrew McLeod and Peter DiCola calculated how much it would cost today to license the samples in the Beastie Boys’ Paul’s Boutique (1989) and Public Enemy’s Fear of a Black Planet (1990). They concluded that Fear of a Black Planet would lose $4.47 for each album sold, and Paul’s Boutique would lose $7.78 per album.¹ It is not surprising that McLeod and DiCola chose to compare these two albums because Paul’s Boutique and Fear of a Black Planet not only contain over one hundred identified samples each, but they share several other characteristics. Both are critically recognized as masterpieces: they each appear in The Source’s 100 Best Rap Albums as well as Rolling Stone’s 500 greatest albums of all time in any genre.² In 2005, the Library of Congress selected Fear of a Black Planet as one of fifty recordings to be included in the National Recording Registry of albums that are “culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant.”³ The albums were released within one year of each other: Paul’s Boutique on July 25, 1989, and Fear of a Black Planet on April 10, 1990. Neither album was the group’s debut effort; rather, both groups had solidified elements of their musical styles and approaches to sampling.

Another characteristic the albums share is the lack of a language or terminology to describe their musical styles or quantify exactly how they differ. McLeod and DiCola devote an

¹ For McLeod and DiCola’s study, see Creative License, 203-12. McLeod and DiCola calculated a “cost matrix for sample licenses” in which they divided samples into two categories, the profile of the sampled work (low, medium, high, famous, and superstar) and the use in the sampling work (small, moderate, and extensive). Their cost matrix application for each album lists the title of the track and the number of “identifiable samples” in that track (see 206-7), but it does not name the sampled tracks or break down how each sample fits into the profile or use categories named. They assume a selling price of $18.98 per album when calculating the costs.

² “100 Best Rap Albums of All Time,” The Source 100 (January 1998); “500 Greatest Albums of All Time,” Rolling Stone <http://www.rollingstone.com/music/lists/500-greatest-albums-of-all-time-19691231>; Rolling Stone’s 2003 list ranks Paul’s Boutique at #156, and Fear of a Black Planet is ranked #300. Note that the Rolling Stone list includes all genres, artists, and time periods.

³ See http://www.loc.gov/today/pr/2005/05-087.html
entire chapter to the albums’ samples, but they focus entirely on the cost matrix; their treatment of sound and musical style throughout the book is vague at best. For instance, they mention that the Bomb Squad, Public Enemy’s production team, would “graft together dozens of fragmentary samples to create a single song collage” and that the Beastie Boys and production team the Dust Brothers created “densely layered collages” on *Paul’s Boutique*. Their terminology does little to convey exactly how the music on the albums sounds.

Other scholars’ descriptions of *Fear of a Black Planet* and *Paul’s Boutique* do not address the role of samples in the albums’ musical sounds or fail to describe sounds with much specificity. Dan LeRoy, author of the 33 1/3 volume on *Paul’s Boutique*, labels individual samples with words such as “bite,” “snippet,” and “chunk.” Although LeRoy’s terms are evocative, there is little unity in their application. Joseph Schloss notes that Public Enemy’s musical style consisted of “a blend of samples from diverse sources that emphasized chaos and noise” and that Public Enemy was one of the first groups to have a definable sample-based musical style. Apart from “chaos” and “noise,” though, Schloss does not particularize what makes Public Enemy’s sample-based style so definable. Public Enemy’s biographer Russell Myrie mentions only “collages” and “fragments” when describing the group’s music. In his seminal article on the music of Public Enemy, Robert Walser parsed the individual instrumental components of the groove in “Fight the Power,” going so far as the transcribe each sonic layer, but his descriptors for the sounds do not extend beyond “groove,” “vamp,” “voice,” “noise,” and “non-percussive sounds.” While not denying the validity or usefulness of Walser’s terms in the context of this particular article, questions arise about the specificity of these terms as well as their applicability to a variety of sample-based music.

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5 LeRoy, *Paul’s Boutique*. These terms primarily appear on pp. 82-105, although LeRoy uses them throughout the book.
7 Myrie, *Don’t Rhyme for the Sake of Riddlin’*, 103-4.
The typology is a way to describe qualitatively how both Public Enemy and the Beastie Boys sample.

Samples: Overview of Types

The Beastie Boys consist of rappers Mike D (Michael Diamond), Ad-Rock (Adam Horovitz), and MCA (Adam Yauch). *Paul’s Boutique* is their second studio album, a follow-up to their smash hit *Licensed to Ill*, released in 1986. *Licensed to Ill* was produced by Def Jam Records co-founder Rick Rubin, but *Paul’s Boutique* was produced by the Dust Brothers, whose members include Mike Simpson, John King, and occasionally, Matt Dike. The album contains a total of fifteen tracks, but the fifteenth track, “B-Boy Bouillabaisse,” is divided into several distinct sections, each with its own title. As a result, I am treating *Paul’s Boutique* as if it contains 24 total tracks, because each section of “B-Boy Bouillabaisse” can function independently.

*Fear of a Black Planet* is Public Enemy’s third studio album, following *Yo! Bum Rush the Show* (1987) and *It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back* (1989). Members of Public Enemy include frontman Chuck D, supporting rapper Flavor Flav, sideman Professor Griff, and DJ Terminator X. The Bomb Squad, Public Enemy’s production team, consists of Chuck D, Eric “Vietnam” Sadler, and brothers Hank and Keith Shocklee. The Bomb Squad is nearly as well-known as Public Enemy itself, having also produced tracks and albums for artists such as Ice Cube, 3rd Bass, and Run-D.M.C. *Fear of a Black Planet* has a total of 20 tracks.

In interviews, the producers of both albums have suggested approximate numbers of samples, but there are no official tallies. I have been able to identify a total of 105 samples in *Paul’s Boutique* and 132 samples in *Fear of a Black Planet*, but I am certain that each album contains many more samples than those I have identified.9

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9 Different analyses result in different numbers. For example, McLeod and DiCola identified 81 samples on *Fear of a Black Planet* and 125 samples on *Paul’s Boutique*. Here, I remind the reader that the number of samples on an album refers both to the sound sampled and to that sampled sound’s function in the new track. For example, a recurring lyric sample is counted as just one sample, because each time it is
By looking at the distribution of all sample types in both albums, we get a preliminary sense of how the two groups sample. Later, I will specify how each group uniquely approaches each of the three main sample types. As shown in Figure 4.1, the two groups distribute their samples very differently: Public Enemy uses roughly the same amounts of all three sample types, but the Beastie Boys clearly prefer structural sample types over both surface and lyric sample types. For ease of comparing the samples in these two albums, I have converted the numbers of sample types into percentages.

Figure 4.1 . Distribution of all sample types in the Beastie Boys’ *Paul’s Boutique* and Public Enemy’s *Fear of a Black Planet*

The most common sample types in *Fear of a Black Planet* are evenly split between surface samples and lyric samples; each type accounts for just over a third (36.4% each) of the total samples in the album. The most common sample type in *Paul’s Boutique*, however, is structural:

heard, it has the same function in the track. A few tracks include the same sampled sound in different functions, and in these cases, I count these as separate samples. For example, “I Like it Like That” by Salt ’n’ Pepa contains a sample of Chuck D’s word “bass” from Public Enemy’s “Bring the Noise.” This sampled “bass” is used both in the choruses of “I Like It Like That” and in a lyric substitution later in the track. In this case, I counted these as two separate samples.
nearly half (49.5%) of the album’s samples are structural sample types. Public Enemy included almost twice as many surface samples as did the Beastie Boys (35.6% compared to 19.0%). Both groups use roughly the same percentages of lyric sample types (just under a third for the Beastie Boys and just over a third for Public Enemy). These data alone, of course, do not reveal much about how the music on the albums sounds. Just by breaking down the albums’ samples according to the three main types, though, we can see that the Beastie Boys and Public Enemy chose contrasting proportions of samples for their music. They also treated those particular samples very differently when constructing their sample-based tracks.

Structural sample types

As described in chapter 1, there are four subtypes of structural samples: percussion-only (borrowing only drums or non-pitched rhythmic instruments from the source track); intact (borrowing drums and various combinations of bass, keyboard, or guitar, all of which sounded simultaneously in the source); non-percussion (borrowing original bass, keyboards, or other harmonic or melodic instruments, but lacking any sampled drum line); and aggregate (borrowing drums and various combinations of instruments, but each part is sampled from a distinct source). Both Public Enemy and the Beastie Boys prefer the aggregate structural type over the other three, but the two groups assemble their aggregate tracks very differently. In Public Enemy’s aggregate grooves, most or all of the component samples sound simultaneously. In the Beastie Boys’ grooves, on the other hand, the individual layers alternate rather than sound simultaneously. These specific approaches to structural samples contribute the sounds of each group’s unique musical style.

As noted above, nearly half of the total samples in Paul’s Boutique are structural types, but only about one-fourth of Fear of a Black Planet’s samples are structural types. Those numbers concern the individual samples on the albums but do not describe the makeup of
individual tracks. By looking at the construction of the individual tracks on each album, we can gain a clearer sense of how each of the two groups assembled a sample-based track’s structure.

First, which types of structural samples does each group prefer for its sample-based tracks? The following graph in Figures 4.2 includes the total number of tracks on each album, broken down by the type of sample-based structure of each track.
The Beastie Boys prefer percussion-only and aggregate structures equally (25% each), and nearly half of Public Enemy’s tracks contain aggregate grooves. In other words, both groups most commonly use aggregate structural types, but Public Enemy prefers primarily aggregate structures while the Beastie Boys employ aggregate structures equally as often as percussion-only structures.

It is not surprising that both groups favor the aggregate structural sample type. In interviews, members of both the Beastie Boys and Public Enemy have expressed disdain for artists who sample relatively large, unaltered sections of music from their source, that is, artists who primarily use intact samples of lengthy, easily recognizable source materials. Members of both groups often compare their own sample-based music to music of other artists that they perceive as being less artistic or creative. Hank Shocklee of the Bomb Squad explains that some artists simply “take a track, loop the entire thing, and then that becomes the basic track for the song. They just paperclip a backbeat to it. But we were taking a horn hit here, a guitar riff there,
we might take a little speech, a kicking snare from somewhere else. It was all bits and pieces.”

According to Shocklee, Public Enemy’s sound contains smaller fragments of sound. Similarly, MCA explains that the Beastie Boys’ method of sampling is very different from artists who are “taking a huge, obvious piece from some hit song that everyone knows and saying whatever you want to on top of that loop.” Both groups pride themselves on creating grooves that are more diverse than a single, lengthy intact structural sample looped throughout the track.

Neither group entirely dispenses with intact structures or with the practice of looping, despite what their comments might seem to indicate. “To All the Girls,” the first track on Paul’s Boutique, is based throughout on a lengthy intact sample of Idris Muhammad’s “Loran Dance,” and the later track “What Goes Around” uses an intact groove built with sampled material from Gene Harris’s “Put on Train.” Only a single track on Fear of a Black Planet has an intact groove. “Pollywanacraka” contains two intact samples: guitar and jingle-bell percussion from Average White Band’s “School Boy Crush” in the choruses, and drums, keyboard, and flute from Leon Haywood’s “I Want’a Do Something Freaky to You” in the verses. While both groups attempt to distance themselves from musicians who loop recognizable samples of intact material, neither avoids that technique entirely.

If both groups favor aggregate structural types, and if both groups prefer aggregate component sample types over any other subtype of structural sample, why do Public Enemy’s tracks sound so much chaotic than those of the Beastie Boys? The answer lies in how those aggregate structures are constructed. Public Enemy’s aggregate structures typically contain anywhere from two to six component samples that are heard simultaneously, and the Beastie Boys’ aggregate tracks rarely contain more than two component samples heard concurrently.

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Although the Beastie Boys’ aggregate grooves have just as many component samples as Public Enemy’s do, the Beastie Boys and the Dust Brothers alternate aggregate component samples rather than layering them.

Comparing one aggregate track by each group reveals how their uses of aggregate component samples result in very different sounds. The Beastie Boys’ “Johnny Ryall” and Public Enemy’s “911 is a Joke” are both aggregate structures with equal numbers of the same sample types: each track contains four aggregate component samples, and each track contains nine total samples.

As shown in the layering graph in Figure 4.3, during the verses of “911 is a Joke,” the aggregate structure includes all four component samples heard simultaneously.

Figure 4.3. Public Enemy, “911 is a Joke,” part of verse 2, mm. 37-44 (1:24-1:42); structural samples only

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lyn Collins, “Think”</td>
<td>Percussion</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilbur Bascomb, “Feel Like Dancing”</td>
<td>Bass</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Experience, “Devil with the Bust”</td>
<td>Guitar riff</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mico Wave, “Misunderstood”</td>
<td>Ascending minor third</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the choruses of “911 is a Joke” (see Figure 4.4), the Mico Wave ascending third figure drops out, but the remaining three samples continue. A three-note saxophone figure, a constituent sample from Parliament’s “Flash Light,” appears in every measure of the choruses. Because the rhythm of the Parliament sample is not continuous, the saxophone sample functions as a constituent surface sample rather than an aggregate component sample; regardless, the saxophone sample further contributes to the activity of the chorus.
The aggregate groove of “911 is a Joke” always contains at least three layered component samples. During the verses, all four component samples sound simultaneously, and during the choruses, three of the four component samples are combined with the constituent sample from “Flash Light,” which makes the track sound so noisy.

The density of Public Enemy’s grooves is not the sole reason they sound noisy. If, for example, each of the four aggregate component samples in “911 is a Joke” outlined the pitches of a tonic triad, then those component samples would combine to create a pleasantly homogenous aggregate groove. The four component samples, however, contain completely different pitch collections, rhythmic characters, timbres, and ranges, and the combination of these four layers is particularly aurally abrasive. As Robert Walser has noted in his study of Public Enemy’s music, “Noisiness is always relative to whatever articulates order in a discourse or culture, and the noisiness of hip hop contributes to its ability to express dissent and critique.”

In fact, the members of the Bomb Squad and Public Enemy would often begin producing a track by searching for particularly grating samples. According to DJ Bobcat, who was present during the

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12 “Ring, Ring (Ha Ha Hey)” by De La Soul is an example of an aggregate groove whose component samples are relatively homogenous. “Ring, Ring” contains four component samples, and the three pitched component samples (guitar from Lou Johnson’s “Beat,” a second guitar from the Whatnauts’ “Help is on the Way,” and bass from Fat Larry’s Band’s “Act Like You Know”) all oscillate around a pitch center of F, which lends this groove a greater sense of aural homogeneity than many of Public Enemy’s grooves.

production of several Public Enemy tracks but was not himself involved in the production, “They [the Bomb Squad] were looping [a sample of] something that you would hate. Bill Stephney [of the Bomb Squad] said, ‘Your brain has to process it and eventually love it after hearing it so many times, or you’ll go crazy.’ I don’t know if that has any real scientific significance, but that’s what he told me.”14 As Bobcat’s anecdote reveals, the producers often predicated their sample on their potential for aural distress; in fact, Bill Stepheny seems to hope for an auditory Stockholm syndrome in which the listener has no choice but to love the sound in order to cope with it. Yes, there are samples of drums, bass, guitar, and synthesizer in “911 is a Joke,” but the lack of harmonic, rhythmic, or timbral similarity among these four individual parts creates an aggregate groove that is dissonant on a variety of sonic levels.

The Beastie Boys’ “Johnny Ryall” also contains a total of four aggregate component samples, but the track sounds very different compared to Public Enemy’s “911 is a Joke.” As shown in the layering graph of the first twenty measures of “Johnny Ryall” in Figure 4.5, no more than two aggregate component samples ever occur simultaneously. In fact, in measures 8-9 and measure 12, only one of the four component samples is audible.

Figure 4.5. Beastie Boys, “Johnny Ryall,” intro and part of first verse, mm. 1-20 (0:00-0:48)

| Source                          | Sound  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
|---------------------------------|--------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Donny Hathaway, “Magnificent Sanctuary Band” | Percussion | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Paul McCartney, “Momma Miss America” | Percussion | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| David Bromberg, “Sharon” | Guitar | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

14 DJ Bobcat, telephone interview with the author, 24 August 2012.
“Johnny Ryall” is typical of many aggregate Beastie Boys tracks because multiple drum samples alternate, a phenomenon I termed “percussion exchange” in chapter 1. Although a Beastie Boys aggregate structure may contain just as many component samples as a Public Enemy aggregate structure, in a Beastie Boys aggregate structure, very rarely do more than two of those component samples sound simultaneously. For example, the aggregate structure of “Johnny Ryall” contains four component samples, three of which are drum samples; these three drum samples alternate throughout the track. As shown in Figure 4.6, the chorus further demonstrates this percussion exchange because a third drum sample is introduced and then alternated with the drums sampled from “Magnificent Sanctuary Band.”

Figure 4.6. Beastie Boys, “Johnny Ryall,” first chorus, mm. 25-30 (1:00-1:15)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>25 26 27 28 29 30</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donny Hathaway, “Magnificent Sanctuary Band”</td>
<td>Percussion</td>
<td>------ ------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandwizard Theodore and Kevie Kev Rockwell, “Military Cut-Scratch Mix”</td>
<td>Percussion</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Bromberg, “Sharon”</td>
<td>Guitar</td>
<td>----------------- ------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that in measure 28, the guitar sample drops out, leaving only the drum sample from “Military Cut-Scratch Mix.” Eliminating all melodic or harmonic samples for a measure or two and leaving just the drum line is also a stylistic characteristic of the Beastie Boys’ aggregate structures.

Even though both groups frequently create aggregate structures, both the number of component samples and the ways the producers layer those component samples dramatically affect the sonic character of each group’s aggregate grooves. The Beastie Boys’ aggregate structures sound sparser than those of Public Enemy because Public Enemy layers several component samples simultaneously and the Beastie Boys alternate component samples. As a result, Public Enemy’s aggregate structures sound denser than those of the Beastie Boys. Further,
Public Enemy and the Bomb Squad often choose structural samples based both on their individual sonic abrasiveness as well as how chaotic those samples sound when combined with each other.

Surface sample types

Surface samples decorate or punctuate a track’s groove without necessarily participating in the track’s primary loop. Surface samples do not contribute to the rhythmic or harmonic propulsion of the track, but they are extremely valuable samples for rhetorical emphasis, historical context, and formal articulation. *Fear of a Black Planet* contains nearly twice as many surface samples as *Paul’s Boutique*. Why does Public Enemy use so many more surface sample types than the Beastie Boys do? How does the producers’ inclusion of these surface samples affect the albums’ sounds?

Figures 4.7 compares the percentages of each subtype of surface sample on both albums. Surface sample subtypes include momentary (appearing a single time during a track), emphatic (beginning or ending a track or a section within a track), and constituent (occurring at regular intervals but without the same sense of continuity as a structural sample).

Figure 4.7. Surface sample distribution in the Beastie Boys’ *Paul's Boutique* and Public Enemy’s *Fear of a Black Planet*
The majority of Public Enemy’s surface samples are momentary surface samples, and the Beastie Boys’ music includes hardly any of these momentary surface samples. Public Enemy overwhelmingly favors momentary surface samples to all other subtypes of surface samples: just over 60% of the surface samples on *Fear of a Black Planet* are the momentary subtype. In fact, of the total number of samples on the album, over one-fifth of those samples are momentary surface samples. *Paul’s Boutique* contains only two momentary surface samples, which is less than two percent of the total number of samples on the album.

Momentary surface samples prevail on *Fear of a Black Planet* for two reasons: Public Enemy’s penchant for collages, and Public Enemy’s use of samples to frame or contextualize historical and cultural references in Chuck D’s rapped lyrics.

First, two tracks on *Fear of a Black Planet*, “Contract on the World Love Jam” and “Anti-Nigger Machine,” include either a collage or a quodlibet of momentary surface samples. These two tracks contain a total of 19 identified momentary surface samples, that is, two-thirds of the total number of momentary surface samples on the entire album *Fear of a Black Planet*. The first 21 seconds of “Anti-Nigger Machine” comprises at least 14 different momentary surface samples from various genres of African American music, as shown in Figure 4.8. This passage is a quodlibet rather than a collage because the fragments are not pasted to an underlying groove (see definition and discussion in chapter 2); the sample-based groove of “Anti-Nigger Machine” begins as soon as this opening quodlibet ends.

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15 I have only been able to identify five momentary surface samples in “Contract on the World Love Jam,” although it is clear from listening that there are many more than five samples present in this track. Chuck D claims that there are between forty-five and fifty voices in this track; although probably not all of those voices are samples, it seems highly likely that more than just five are samples. See *Lyrics of a Rap Revolutionary*, 105. Similarly, several fragments of “Anti-Nigger Machine” are samples whose sources have not yet been identified. These are labeled as “unidentified source” in the chart but were otherwise not included in total counts of samples in the albums.
This quodlibet juxtaposes samples from a number of genres of African American music: the record scratching of hip-hop DJing, the funky synthesized timbre of a Parliament groove, and the unmistakable voice of Motown singer Diana Ross. Even without recognizing the specific source of a particular sample, a listener can easily identify several of the styles or genres heard in the collage.

Of “Fight the Power,” which is the final track on *Fear of a Black Planet*, Chuck D has said, “That song contains a great deal of black music history from a twenty-five year period. You listen to it, and it’s like, ‘This twenty-five-year period of black music is brought to you by Public Enemy.’” The same sentiment certainly applies to this opening quodlibet of “Anti-Nigger Machine,” which contains samples of recordings spanning at least twenty years of black music: the earliest identified sample is of Diana Ross and the Supremes from 1968, and the latest sample is of the 45 King from 1988. Public Enemy and the Bomb Squad encapsulated two decades of black music in a twenty-second quodlibet.
This quodlibet of fragments from black popular music history precedes a track about the police’s mistreatment of and discrimination against blacks. In Chuck D’s estimation, the police “treat us [blacks] like niggers and they’re an anti-nigger machine.” As he raps in one phrase of “Anti-Nigger Machine” (2:32-2:41):

Instead of peace the police
Just want to wreck and flex
On the kid.
What I did was try to be the best
So they fingered the trigger.
Figured I was a bigger nigger
And they started to search me,
So I headed west.

Chuck D’s lyrics here and throughout the track highlight a major concern in the African American community, namely, the act of racial profiling by the police. Over 42% of African Americans believe that they have been stopped by the police simply because of their race, and over half of all Americans believe not only that the practice exists that but it is widespread. Racial profiling, in the words of political scientist William Rose, is “the use of race—particularly blackness—as a proxy for criminal dangerousness.” A similar and equally disturbing practice is “neighborhood profiling,” in which patrol officers are deployed to minority neighborhoods in much larger proportions than the basis of legitimate law enforcement objectives necessitates or warrants. As Chuck D raps, the perception in the black community is that the police would rather take away human rights than keep peace in black communities. “Anti-Nigger Machine”

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18 The numbers mentioned are from a 1999 Gallup poll, cited in Jeffrey Grogger and Greg Ridgeway, “Testing for Racial Profiling in Traffic Stops from Behind a Veil of Darkness,” *Journal of the American Statistical Association* 101 (September 2006): 878. Statisticians Grogger and Ridgeway found little evidence of racial profiling in their study conducted in Oakland, CA. Anecdotal evidence shared by my black friends and colleagues about their experiences in “routine” traffic stops, however, leaves little doubt in my mind that this practice exists, unscientific though my evidence may be.
19 William Rose, “Crimes of Color: Risk, Profiling, and the Contemporary Racialization of Social Control,” *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 16 (Winter 2002): 181. Note that Rose is writing in early 2002, just as the post-9/11 racial profiling among those perceived to be Islamic or Middle Eastern was rising, and before the racial profiling of Latinos by Arizona Sheriff Joe Arpaio was alleged and documented. Rose’s study focuses primarily on the racial profiling of blacks rather than any other group.
thus juxtaposes objects of African American pride (music) and anger or shame (unfair treatment by the police).

Second, momentary surface samples dominate *Fear of a Black Planet* because Public Enemy and the Bomb Squad frequently contextualize Chuck D’s rapped lyrics with them. Although these momentary surface samples may seem random upon first hearing, the Bomb Squad places brief guitar chords, cymbal crashes, or James Brown shouts to provide the listener with a flash of recognition, an aural point of emphasis, or a chronological context at a particular moment in the track. For example, of Public Enemy’s “Welcome to the Terrordome” (transcribed in chapter 1), poet and filmmaker Saul Williams has said:

> There's this part, my favorite part of the song, where Chuck [D] goes, “The shooting of Huey Newton / from the hand of a nigga pulled the trigger.” The thing is, hearing that guitar, you *know* that that guitar is a sample. You know it's not coming from someone in the studio with them now doing that. And you get the feeling that that guitar is related to the era when Huey Newton was shot.²¹

The guitar sample to which Williams refers is a momentary surface sample from James Brown’s “Get Up, Get into It, Get Involved” from 1970. Williams’s instinct about the chronology of the sample is correct: Black Panther Party leader Huey Newton was shot in 1967, convicted of manslaughter in 1968, and freed from prison in 1970, after the case was overturned. This anecdote from Williams reveals one way in which momentary surface samples in Public Enemy’s music affect the listener: a momentary surface sample is not simply a random sound clip because it enhances the meaning of a particular track. Public Enemy’s use of momentary surface samples for collages and for brief flashes of historical or rhetorical context, particularly those related to crucial figures and moments in black American history and identity, explains why this category of samples is more important to Public Enemy’s music than to the music of the Beastie Boys.

Although Public Enemy uses momentary surface samples in more historically conscious ways than do the Beastie Boys, both groups employ momentary surface samples for brief

²¹ Saul Williams, interviewed in McLeod and DiCola, *Creative License*, 100. Italics in original.
intertextual references or instances of textual modeling. The rappers and producers in both groups are sensitive to the content and context of momentary surface samples. In Public Enemy’s “Fear of a Black Planet,” for example, the Bomb Squad drops in a momentary surface sample of brass from Kool and the Gang’s “Spirit of the Boogie” during the third verse (2:03-2:05), and Chuck D’s lyric “Might be best to be black or just brown, countdown” matches the rhythm of the sample. Whether the Bomb Squad chose the sample first and Chuck D mapped his rhythm against it or whether Chuck D had already delivered the lyric and the Bomb Squad then added that particular sample during post-production because it complemented the rhythm so well, either approach reveals the musicians’ sensitivity to the relationship between lyrics and samples.

Although *Paul’s Boutique* only contains two momentary surface samples, those two samples play important rhetorical functions when they appear. For example, in “Car Thief,” the Dust Brothers add a brief drum line sample from Donovan’s “Hurdy Gurdy Man” against the rapped lyric “I’m a busted old bummy hurdy gurdy man” (2:27-2:30). Although it is not clear whether the sample or the lyric came first, the relationship between the drum sample’s source and the lyric under which it is heard creates a subtle reference that only the most devoted Donovan fans are likely to catch. Even if listeners do not recognize the source of the sample, the shift in sonic texture at that moment draws attention to the lyrics.

**Lyric sample types**

Like the structural samples described earlier, the Beastie Boys and the Dust Brothers interchange rapped lyrics and lyric samples, and Public Enemy and the Bomb Squad add lyric samples to the track’s existing sonic texture. The Beastie Boys alternate lyric samples with their rapped texts in the form of lyric substitutions, and Public Enemy treats lyric samples as an additional layer, scratching them in over the track’s sample-based groove or placing them against

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22 The Beastie Boys’ Ad-Rock was married to Ione Skye, Donovan’s daughter, from 1992 to 1999. If they were dating during the production of this track, that may also explain this particular reference.
the rapped lyrics in an adjunct function. Each group’s approach to the lyric sample types further contributes to their characteristic sounds: the Beastie Boys’ music is typically sparse, while Public Enemy’s is dense with multiple dissimilar layers.

Public Enemy and the Beastie Boys use roughly the same proportions of lyric samples in their music: lyric samples account for just under a third of the samples on *Paul’s Boutique* and just over a third of the samples on *Fear of a Black Planet*. Each group’s treatment of lyric samples creates audible differences in the albums. The two main differences are (1) the ways they integrate lyric samples into the sonic fabric of each track, and (2) the frequency with which each group samples its own lyrics.

First, the Beastie Boys tend to use lyric samples as lyric substitutions, but Public Enemy is much less consistent in its treatment of lyric samples. Nearly half of the lyric samples on *Paul’s Boutique* are lyric substitutions, and less than ten percent of the lyric samples on *Fear of a Black Planet* are lyric substitutions. In lyric substitutions (described in detail in chapters 1 and 2), a sampled word or phrase is substituted into a rapped lyric that complements the existing semantic meaning and rhyme scheme. For example, in the first verse of the Beastie Boys’ “Shake Your Rump” (0:16-0:25), the italicized lyric is a sample from Foxy’s “Get Off”:

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Got arrested at the Mardi Gras for jumping on a float
My man MCA’s got a beard like a billy goat.
Hoo-hoo is the disco call
MCA, huh, I’m getting rope, ya’ll.
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In this example, as in most lyric substitutions, the rapper could easily have delivered the sampled lyric’s text himself, but a sample serves the same function as italicizing the text: the sampled lyric is grammatically and semantically part of the rapped lyric but set apart through timbre, voice type, and sound quality. As noted in chapter 2, the Beastie Boys are particularly fond of lyric substitution samples because lyric substitutions complement their lyric delivery style. When rapping, the three Beastie Boys trade lines and phrases to create sonic contrast and emphasize end rhymes, an effect also achieved when substituting a lyric sample into a rapped line of text.
In several instances, the Beastie Boys’ lyric samples contain both the voice and the instruments from the source material. These elements signal the genre and context of the sample. On *Paul’s Boutique*, these sources include Johnny Cash, Motown singer Jean Knight, the Ramones, and reggae artist Pato Banton, as well as Public Enemy. “Hello Brooklyn” is the fifth section of “B-Boy Bouillabaisse,” and its final lines (7:53-8:02) contain a prominent lyric sample substitution from Johnny Cash’s “Folsom Prison Blues”:

I ride around town ’cause my car is fly,
I shot a man in Brooklyn just to watch him die

This sample features not only Cash’s voice and lyrics, but also the guitar, bass, and drum set that accompany Cash in this particular moment of “Folsom Prison Blues.” The five sampled words in Cash’s voice, plus the rockabilly guitar, walking bass, and shuffle-rhythm drums, signal the sample’s original context. Many listeners will recognize the sample as early country music, if not Cash’s “Folsom Prison Blues” specifically. Rather than disguising the sample’s original context or extracting only the lyrics from the original context, the producers leave the sample’s soundscape intact.

Although the entire soundscape of the sample is left intact in a sort of “lyric-plus” sample, the Johnny Cash sample replaces everything in “Hello Brooklyn,” including the groove and the rapped lyrics. Not only do the sampled lyrics replace or stand in for rapped lyrics in this particular example, but the underlying instrumentation of the sampled lyrics also stands in for the groove. Thus, the Beastie Boys and the Dust Brothers always maintain the same number of layers in the sonic texture of a track, because they replace their rapped lyrics and the track’s groove with Cash’s voice and its underlying instrumentation. The lyric sample in this case is not additive but rather substitutive.

This particular sample also emphasizes the rhetorical similarity between the source material and its appearance in the new context. In “Folsom Prison Blues,” Cash reflects on his imprisonment for cold-blooded murder: “I shot a man in Reno just to watch him die.” The Beastie
Boys therefore model their rapped lyrics on the text of the first half of Cash’s sung phrase and then sample Cash himself in the second half of the phrase. This lyric modeling and lyric sampling thus connects “Folsom Prison Blues” and “Hello Brooklyn” both in text and sentiment. “Hello Brooklyn” is a boastful track about dangerous, rude, and often violent behavior. Among the actions detailed in the lyrics of “Hello Brooklyn”: playing music too loudly, insulting the size of another man’s penis, carrying an unlicensed gun, grabbing a woman’s breast, building bombs, assaulting a former employer, and, as quoted above, shooting a man “just to watch him die.” Thus, the Cash sample that closes “Hello Brooklyn” further emphasizes the outlaw status portrayed in the Beastie Boys’ lyrics.

Although Public Enemy does not completely avoid lyric substitutions (“Welcome to the Terrordome,” “Anti-Nigger Machine,” and “Revolutionary Generation” all include lyric substitution samples), the vast majority of their lyric samples are recurring (heard in the choruses), framing (scratched in during introductions or interludes), or adjunct (placed against rapped lyrics). These particular kinds of lyric samples add a layer of sound to the existing groove or lyrics, because a recurring or framing sample is scratched atop the groove and an adjunct sample is heard concurrently with the rapped lyrics. Whereas the Beastie Boys’ lyric samples typically replace one layer of the sound (or multiple layers of sound, as in the “Hello Brooklyn” example above), Public Enemy’s lyric samples add an additional layer of sound, further adding to the noisiness of their musical style.

Thus, the groups’ treatment of lyric samples echoes their treatment of structural samples: the Beastie Boys prefer alternation and lean textures, and Public Enemy prefers layers and additive textures. This approach is the first way the groups approach lyric samples differently. The second major difference concerns the specific genres they sample, and, more specifically, how often they sample themselves. On the surface, the source materials of the Beastie Boys’ and Public Enemy’s lyric samples look very similar, as shown in Figure 4.9.
Despite the fact that Public Enemy and the Beastie Boys chose approximately the same ratios of genres—primarily hip-hop and funk with a bit of comedy or spoken-word—for their lyric samples, their choice of source materials within these specific genres sets them apart from each other.

Each group samples a significant number of hip-hop records for their lyric samples, but Public Enemy samples itself at an astonishing rate. *Fear of a Black Planet* contains twenty lyric samples from hip-hop source tracks, and ten of those twenty are samples of other Public Enemy tracks. The Beastie Boys only sample themselves twice in *Paul’s Boutique*. In fact, *Paul’s Boutique* includes two lyric samples of Public Enemy, meaning that the Beastie Boys samples Public Enemy’s music equally as often as they sample their own music.

As established in chapters 2 and 3, Public Enemy samples itself for many reasons, such as demonstrating pride in their recorded catalogue, aurally placing themselves among hip-hop’s
greats, representing particular sonic memories, and linking past and present tracks and albums. Recall from chapter 3 that the first strains of Chuck D’s and Flavor Flav’s voices heard on Fear of a Black Planet are, in fact, samples of their lyrics from previous Public Enemy albums. The first track on Fear of a Black Planet, “Brothers Gonna Work it Out,” juxtaposes lyric samples of Chuck D and Flavor Flav from three earlier Public Enemy tracks: “Rebel Without a Pause,” “Don’t Believe the Hype,” and “Bring the Noise.” These particular lyric samples are a review session for the devoted Public Enemy fan as well as an introduction for those new to Public Enemy’s music.

Public Enemy also creates dialogues between lyric samples and newly rapped lyrics. An example of this phenomenon is the outro of “Can’t Do Nuttin’ for Ya Man” (2:02-2:27), when three different samples of Flavor Flav’s voice engage in dialogue with each other and with new spoken (not rapped) text from the real Flavor Flav. The italicized portions are samples from different parts of Public Enemy’s “Terminator X Speaks with his Hands.”

Bass for your face / yo, man / bass for your face / I can’t do nuttin’ / bass for your face / nuttin’ for you / bass for your face / I tried to tell you

Rock that shit, homie / yo, G / rock that shit, homie / listen / rock that shit, homie / I ain’t trying to hear it / rock that shit, homie / I ain’t tryin to hear that

Get that shit / you on welfare / get that shit / your mother got gold nipples / get that shit / you got a rip in your couch / get that shit / wash your butt

The sampled and new materials in “Can’t Do Nuttin’ for Ya Man” overlap just briefly enough for the listener to realize that Flavor Flav could not humanly deliver all of these lines as quickly as they are heard. Further, a listener already familiar with Public Enemy’s music would recognize those samples from earlier Public Enemy recordings. Public Enemy uses lyric samples as the inspiration or main building blocks for larger sections of lyrics, such as the intro of “Brothers Gonna Work it Out” or the outro of “Can’t Do Nuttin’ for Ya Man.”

Public Enemy and the Beastie Boys sample approximately the same numbers of lyrics, and they prefer funk and hip-hop recordings as sources for those samples. However, the groups
treat the lyric samples in the new tracks differently: the Beastie Boys prefer lyric substitutions in which a layer of lyrics or an entire layer of sound is replaced with a different lyric or sound layer, and Public Enemy prefers adding a sonic layer to the existing sample-based structure. Further, Public Enemy generously samples its own recordings, suggesting that they view their recorded oeuvre as equal to the recordings of other canonic black musical artists and groups.

Summary

As we have seen, Public Enemy and the Beastie Boys, in collaboration with their production teams, each created an album that contained over 100 different samples. Each group has a specific approach to the particular sample types, and, notably, those approaches to their sample types echoes how they construct the rapped lyrics of their tracks.

Using the typology, we can describe a specific sample-based style for each album. Public Enemy favors an additive approach, deploying all aggregate component samples simultaneously, fleshing out the sonic texture with momentary surface samples that add chronological context, or scratching in an additional sonic layer using a lyric sample. The Beastie Boys retain a consistent number of samples and layers in each track, using techniques such as percussion exchange and lyric substitution samples. Both of those techniques replace one sonic layer with another. While the Beastie Boys and Public Enemy may have the same number of samples in a track, the Beastie Boys alternate and exchange samples while Public Enemy accretes samples.

This approach to sampling mirrors each group’s style of flow, or lyric delivery. As mentioned in chapter 2, the Beastie Boys alternate or interlock the words and phrases within a line of text. They will also double or triple up on significant words or end-rhymes. Their alternation of rappers echoes their alternation of samples. Further, even if multiple rappers deliver a word or phrase of text, those rappers declare the text in unison. The aural result is one of synthesis and cohesion. In comparison, Chuck D’s primary rapping for Public Enemy is augmented by Flavor Flav’s unpredictable chatter and banter. There is no regularity to Flavor
Flav’s interjections: he echoes words or phrases of text, interrupts rapped lines, delivers monologues between verses, and doubles Chuck D on certain words or phrases. Like the momentary surface samples and scratched lyric samples, Flavor Flav’s presence adds another layer of sound to Public Enemy’s music, and the lack of regularity of Flavor Flav’s contributions contribute to an aural atmosphere of chaos and noise. Thus, the groups not only sample consistently, but they also treat samples very much the same way that they deliver lyrics.

Genre, Race, and the Sample Canon

We have seen that the typology is a helpful tool for differentiating how the Beastie Boys and Public Enemy create sample-based tracks. We can further describe their musical styles by studying the specific musical genres they chose to sample. This is most apparent when regarding how they sample the music of white artists. As Figure 4.10 reveals, Public Enemy and the Beastie Boys show both startling similarities and differences in the genres they choose to sample.
Figure 4.10. Sources of all samples in the Beastie Boys’ *Paul’s Boutique* and Public Enemy’s *Fear of a Black Planet*, according to genre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Paul’s Boutique</th>
<th>Fear of Black Planet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Funk/soul</td>
<td>60.6%</td>
<td>41.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hip-hop</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rock</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jazz</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reggae</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R&amp;B</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Film/TV</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spoken-word</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unidentified</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Clearly, both Public Enemy and the Beastie Boys rely heavily on funk and soul recordings for their sample sources: both groups sample funk and soul recordings more than any other genre. Both groups also sample roughly the same percentage of hip-hop recordings (just under 20% for the Beastie Boys and just over 20% for Public Enemy).

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23 As mentioned earlier, I have not included unidentified samples in my number totals. The sole exception is a sample heard in the Beastie Boys’ “The Sounds of Science.” This sample sounds quite similar to the sound produced by the Country Moo Cow Can toy. According to producer Mike Simpson of the Dust Brothers, “I don't wanna say where it’s from, but it's basically a famous person's voice, that I tweaked in such a way that you would never know what the original source is. But it does sound exactly like a cow-in-a-can.” Based on this information, I can conclude that this sound is a sample whose source has yet to be identified. See LeRoy, *Paul’s Boutique*, 87, footnote 32.
Both groups prefer soul, funk, and hip-hop, but the predominance of soul, funk, and hip-hop in both groups’ music is their only similarity in their choices of source materials. As shown in Figure 4.11, after funk, soul, and hip-hop, the two groups obtain the rest of their samples from very different sources.

Figure 4.11. The five most-sampled genres on each album

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Beastie Boys, <em>Paul’s Boutique</em></th>
<th>Percentage of Total Samples</th>
<th>Public Enemy, <em>Fear of a Black Planet</em></th>
<th>Percentage of Total Samples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Funk / soul</td>
<td>41.9%</td>
<td>Funk / soul</td>
<td>60.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Rock</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
<td>Hip-hop</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Hip-hop</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
<td>Spoken-word</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Jazz</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>Rock (tie)</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Film / TV</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>R&amp;B (tie)</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After funk and soul, the Beastie Boys sample rock most frequently, but Public Enemy’s rock samples are scant. Combined, funk, soul, and hip-hop samples account for nearly 83% of the total samples on *Fear of a Black Planet*, while funk, soul, hip-hop, and rock account for about 82% of the total samples on *Paul’s Boutique*. In other words, the Beastie Boys sample funk, soul, hip-hop, and rock in approximately the same concentration as Public Enemy samples only funk, soul, and hip-hop.

Samples of white artists’ music make up just over 25% (25.7%) of the total number of samples on *Paul’s Boutique*, but samples of white artists on *Fear of a Black Planet* comprise well under ten percent (6.8%) of the album’s total samples. This is not surprising, given the prevalence of rock samples on *Paul’s Boutique* and the tendency of rock artists to be white. Although rock is an African American music in origin—it was developed in the 1950s by artists such as Chuck Berry, Bo Diddley, Fats Domino, and Little Richard—rock been dominated by white artists since
the late 1950s. By and large, to sample rock is to sample white artists such as the Beatles, the Eagles, and Led Zeppelin, and the rock samples that appear in these albums are no exception.

Although all rock groups sampled by the Beastie Boys and Public Enemy are white, not all white artists sampled on these albums are rock artists. Each group sampled music by white artists working in genres other than rock, as well. For example, Paul’s Boutique includes samples from Eric Weissberg’s “Shuckin’ the Corn,” a banjo piece from the soundtrack of the 1972 film Deliverance, and Fear of a Black Planet includes samples from the jazz keyboardist Bob James’s “Nautilus.” Although the majority of the sampled white artists are rock musicians, white artists from jazz, country, blues, film music, and hip-hop also appear in samples.

When sampling the music of white artists for their structural samples, both Public Enemy and the Beastie Boys typically include these samples as either an aggregate component sample or as a percussion-only structural sample. When sampling the music of white artists for lyric samples, however, the contrast between the two groups is striking. Fear of a Black Planet contains only a single lyric sample of a white artist or group: Double Dee and Steinski’s “Lesson 2 (James Brown Mix)” is sampled in Public Enemy’s “Revolutionary Generation.” Although the hip-hop DJs Double Dee and Steinski are both white, “Lesson 2” is itself a DJ track that contains samples from several different James Brown recordings. “Revolutionary Generation” includes a sample of the word “Brown” panned back and forth between audio channels. Although it is technically a sample of the Double Dee and Steinski track because their audio manipulations are left intact, the sampled material is just as easily heard as a sample of James Brown rather than of Double Dee and Steinski. In other words, the only lyric sample of a white artist’s music on Fear

24 In her work on the Black Rock Coalition, a group formed “with the purpose of independently producing, promoting, and distributing Black alternative music” (88), Maureen Mahon notes that, by the time the BRC was formed in 1985, whites had appropriated rock to the extent that the thought of blacks playing rock music was counterintuitive (148). Mahon also notes that the members of the BRC had to assert the black roots of rock music in order to justify the cultural and racial appropriateness of their music choices (93). See Right to Rock: The Black Rock Coalition and the Cultural Politics of Race (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004). I do refer to rock as a white-dominated music genre here, but I acknowledge rock’s black roots and the appropriation of rock music by white artists that occurred in the 1960s.
of a Black Planet is a sample of two white DJs who were themselves sampling a black artist’s music. There are no voices of white musicians, sampled or otherwise, on Fear of a Black Planet.

Whereas Public Enemy only samples the voices of black artists, the Beastie Boys sample both white and black artists’ voices. Lyric samples of white artists’ voices on Paul’s Boutique are plentiful and prominent. Lyric samples from recordings of Johnny Cash, Kenny Loggins and Jim Messina, Sweet, the Ramones, and the Beastie Boys themselves abound. Every lyric sample of a white artist contains at least two words, ranging from the Beastie Boys’ own “kick it” (sampled in “Johnny Ryall”) to the sung title line from the Ramones’ “Suzy is a Headbanger” (sampled in “High Plains Drifter”) to the lyric substitution “she thinks she’s the passionate one” from Sweet’s “Ballroom Bliss” (sampled in “Hey Ladies” and discussed in chapter 2). This is not to say that the Beastie Boys’ lyric samples consist exclusively of the voices of other white musicians. Instead, lyric samples from white artists are heard alongside lyric samples of black artists. For example, in “Hey Ladies,” the Sweet lyric sample appears with samples of black musicians including Afrika Bambaataa, Kurtis Blow, James Brown, Fab Five Freddy, and Kool and the Gang.

With the exception of their self-sampling and the sample of Johnny Cash mentioned earlier in this chapter, the structural, surface, and lyric samples of white artists included on Paul’s Boutique are drawn either from music of British or American rock groups, including Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin, and Alice Cooper, or from film music, including recognizable portions of film soundtracks by white composers such as John Williams and Bernard Hermann. The white artists sampled on Fear of a Black Planet, however, perform in traditionally African American musical genres, such as jazz, funk, and hip-hop: Average White Band (sampled in “Pollywanacraka”) is a Scottish funk band, Double Dee and Steinski are two white DJs who sample the voices of black artists such as James Brown and Syl Johnson, and Bob James (sampled in “Anti-Nigger Machine”) is a white jazz keyboardist.

One glaring exception to Public Enemy’s tendency to sample white artists working in traditionally black genres is their inclusion of a sample of “I Can’t Go for That (No Can Do)” by
the American rock duo Daryl Hall and John Oates. The drums in Public Enemy’s “Leave This Off Your Fuckin’ Charts” are sampled from Hall and Oates’s 1981 recording, which may seem a strange choice considering the kinds of white artists Public Enemy and the Bomb Squad typically sampled. In all likelihood, Public Enemy sampled Hall and Oates because they were emulating the hip-hop group De La Soul. De La Soul’s 1989 debut album 3 Feet High and Rising includes the track “Say No Go,” which producer Prince Paul built with multiple samples from the very same Hall and Oates track. The members of Public Enemy greatly admired De La Soul. During a 1987 Def Jam Tour, Public Enemy and Stetsasonic—another hip-hop group produced by Prince Paul—shared a tour bus, leading to a lasting relationship and professional respect between the members of the two groups. In fact, Chuck D credits that specific tour with the creation of three albums: Public Enemy’s It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back, Stetsasonic’s In Full Gear, and De La Soul’s 3 Feet High and Rising. The inclusion of the Hall and Oates sample in “Leave This Off Your Fuckin’ Charts” was probably not from the appeal of the Hall and Oates record itself, but the appeal by proxy because Prince Paul and De La Soul had also sampled it in “Say No Go.” As Vinroc explained to me, hip-hop producers will sometimes sample the same drums that another producer sampled to lend their track a “hip-hop feel” or a “throwback,” in other words, an air of authenticity or familiarity. Further, Public Enemy’s admiration for De La Soul and Prince Paul may also have influenced their decision to sample Double Dee and Steinski’s “Lesson Three,” since Prince Paul and De La Soul sampled the single word “three” from Double Dee and Steinski’s “Lesson Three” for their track “The Magic Number.”

This scarcity of samples of white artists on Fear of a Black Planet may be superficially explained by Public Enemy’s pro-black stance. The title track, as well as tracks such as “Who

25 For more on the 1987 Def Jam tour and the relationship between Stetsasonic and Public Enemy, see Myrie, Don’t Rhyme for the Sake of Riddlin’, 79-81.
26 For Schloss’s interview with Prince Paul regarding the Hall and Oates sample in De La Soul’s “Say No Go,” see Making Beats, 147-49.
27 Vinroc, telephone interview with the author, 10 August 2012.
Stole the Soul?” and “Fight the Power” make clear Public Enemy’s opposition to white cultural hegemony (actual or perceived), as this statement written by Chuck D reveals (note that “Black” is capitalized but “white” is not): “[Fear of a Black Planet] talked about the fear of a Black planet, but it already is a Black planet. Everything comes from Africa. White supremacy tries to prove otherwise by trying to devalue that truth. Everything comes from Black. In the song ['Fear of a Black Planet’] we say, ‘Black and white equals Black.’” Despite the group’s black-supremacy stance, however, they did not exclude all white artists from the album’s soundscape. Most of the white artists sampled in Fear of a Black Planet, however, either worked in traditionally black genres or were indirectly sanctioned because other respected hip-hop artists such as Prince Paul had also sampled them.

The near total absence of white musicians on Fear of a Black Planet and the prevalence of white musicians on Paul’s Boutique can be attributed to each ensemble’s race, yet this is not as simple as saying that Public Enemy samples black artists’ recordings because they are black and the Beastie Boys sample white artists’ recordings because they are white. Both Public Enemy and the Beastie Boys sample tremendous numbers of funk and soul recordings, which are predominantly and traditionally black genres of music. By sampling funk and soul recordings, these groups engage with the established tradition of sample-based hip-hop, since most sampling artists primarily draw their samples from funk and soul recordings. According to Joseph Schloss, most of the earliest sampling artists found their source materials in their parents’ record collections. As Schloss notes, producers finding records in their parents’ record collections led to a certain core of well-known records, generally those that were popular with urban African American listeners in the 1970s. . . . This is one material way in which African American culture has influenced the hip-hop aesthetic. The first and second generation of deejays were afforded access to and familiarity with the recordings of such artists as Bob James, Grover Washington, New Birth, and others whose original listenership was largely confined to urban African American communities.29

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28 Chuck D, Lyrics of a Rap Revolutionary, 147.
29 Schloss, Making Beats, 82.
The producers with whom I spoke confirmed Schloss’s assessment. Vinroc summarized the origins of hip-hop as follows: “You have the urge to create something, and that was the source material those kids had at the time. ‘I’ve got this cool sampler and my dad’s records, and I like this rap thing,’ and boom, you’ve got hip-hop.”\(^{30}\) For many of the earliest hip-hop producers, their source materials came from recordings that were readily available and easily accessible, which for most of them meant funk, soul, and jazz records from their parents’ collections.

After the first generation of sampling artists established funk and soul as the core of records, any aspiring hip-hop producer who was not already familiar with these recordings had to learn them. Most of the producers I interviewed had this experience, either because they were too young to have grown up listening to funk and soul or because their parents did not listen to those genres of music. For example, 9th Wonder’s parents listened exclusively to gospel music and did not allow secular music in their household, and Vinroc does not recall his parents listening to music during his childhood.\(^{31}\) Both of these producers told me that they had had to “catch up” and learn the canon of funk and soul recordings when they became hip-hop producers. As Apple Juice Kid explains, “I did not grow up on seventies funk, which is 90 percent of hip-hop. If you wanted to be a hip-hop producer, you needed to dig in the crates and find the coolest loops off seventies funk records.”\(^{32}\) Thus, artists such as the members of the Beastie Boys, who in all likelihood did not grow up listening to funk and soul records, still needed to learn funk and soul recordings in order to participate in hip-hop. Knowledge of those recordings is considered a prerequisite for most producers of sample-based hip-hop. To this day, it is extremely unusual for a hip-hop producer, regardless of his or her race, not to know this body of recordings. Funk and soul recordings of the 1970s form the foundation for much sample-based hip-hop.

\(^{30}\) Vinroc, telephone interview with the author, 10 August 2012.
\(^{31}\) 9th Wonder, telephone interview with the author, 8 August 2012; Vinroc, telephone interview with the author, 10 August 2012.
Although funk and soul had solidified into canonic materials for hip-hop producers, sampling artists were not limited to a specific set or group of funk or soul recordings to sample. In fact, for many musicians, one thrill of sampling came from exploring and seeking out other recordings other than those of the most famous musicians from the 1970s. In our conversation, 9th Wonder frequently referred to this process as a “wormhole,” implying that the number of recordings one can hear and then sample is infinite. Sampling artists read the credits on their favorite funk and soul albums and sought out other recordings by these groups or members of these groups. As 9th Wonder explains:

[The] credits are important. . . . Once I found out that I could actually read things about how a song was made, I thought that was crazy. And once I started to read credits, I started to learn about different artists that way, as well. Who are the Charmels, who are the Marvelettes, and who are the Originals, and who are these people? . . . Where does it come from? Do they have more music? Who are their producers? . . . There may be a horn player on a record that you sampled that may have three solo albums you don’t know about. That’s the kind of jigsaw puzzle that comes with record digging.33

For example, an artist drawn to one producer’s use of the drum break from Bob James’s “Nautilus” might then seek out other Bob James recordings to sample, such as “Storm King” or “El Verano.” Many hip-hop producers delight in falling down the rabbit hole of sample sources and following the trail of credits and musicians wherever they happen to lead.

Sampling artists not only draw on their extensive knowledge of recordings, but they also sample music from their own performance experiences. In the case of Public Enemy and the Bomb Squad, the members with instrumental music experience primarily played music from the same genres that were already in the sample canon, namely, funk and soul. Flavor Flav is a drummer, and in Public Enemy’s live shows, he occasionally still plays. Producer Bill Stephney played guitar. Eric “Vietnam” Sadler, a member of the Bomb Squad, played keyboards in funk and jazz bands.34 Thus, members of Public Enemy and the Bomb Squad knew funk, soul, and jazz from both listening to and performing it. Their experiences as funk and jazz musicians

33 9th Wonder, telephone interview with the author, 8 August 2012.
34 Myrie, *Don’t Rhyme for the Sake of Riddlin’*, 60-61.
further confirms the likelihood that they would draw on funk, soul, and jazz recordings—
predominantly black genres—when looking for source to sample because these were the genres
and recordings with which they were most familiar, both from performance and from familiarity
with hip-hop’s canon of samples.

In contrast, the three members of the Beastie Boys came from performance backgrounds
as rock musicians. Although they did learn the canon of funk and soul recordings and included
copious numbers of samples from those genres in the music of *Paul’s Boutique*, they also
sampled other genres with which they had performance and listening experience, especially rock.
As mentioned in earlier chapters, the Beastie Boys were a hardcore punk rock band in the early
1980s. The Beastie Boys’ lineup in 1981 and 1982 included Michael Diamond (Mike D) on
drums and Adam Yauch (MCA) on bass, along with John Berry and Kate Schellenbach. This
version of the group released the EP *Polly Wog Stew* in 1982, and the Beastie Boys still play the
album’s single “Egg Raid on the Mojo” in their live shows. In 1983, Berry and Schellenbach left
the group and were replaced by guitarist Adam Horovitz (Ad-Rock). This version of the Beastie
Boys made the transition from rock to hip-hop soon after Horovitz joined the group. Therefore,
the Beastie Boys sampled rock because knew rock recordings from their early careers as
performers.

Public Enemy’s and the Beastie Boys’ choices of source materials were influenced both
the recordings already in hip-hop’s sample canon and by their own performance and listening
experiences. Both Public Enemy and the Beastie Boys sample funk and soul recordings because
those recordings are a standard requirement for any sampling hip-hop artist. However, the ways
in which they approach sampling set them apart from each other in terms of musical style. Public
Enemy draws its samples almost exclusively from black music genres, and even the few white
artists they sample are working in traditionally black genres. The Beastie Boys sample not only
the canonic genres of funk and soul but also rock and other predominantly white genres such as
country and film music. Each group’s source materials reflect their listening and performance experiences as well as their familiarity with hip-hop’s sample canon.

Conclusions

Paul’s Boutique and Fear of a Black Planet are both sample-based albums that extensively sample funk, soul, and hip-hop recordings, but the two albums sound nothing alike. Both groups drew on the traditions of sampling, but the resulting albums are unique, both compared to each other and compared to the sample-based music of any other hip-hop artist. Public Enemy had a cacophonous style, built with multiple component samples in aggregate grooves, copious surface samples, and up to twenty different samples in the same track. The Beastie Boys not only had a sparse sample-based texture, alternating structural samples and placing lyric samples in lyric substitutions, but they also sampled recordings other than those of the funk and soul canon. Ultimately, these two albums set a precedent for sampling artists, opening the door for myriad production approaches and limitless sample sources. Producers still needed to master the prerequisites of funk and soul recordings, but they also needed to make their sample-based music stand out. These albums showed artists how to include hip-hop’s history and roots while also taking innovative approaches to sample-based music.

Each of the albums Paul’s Boutique and Fear of a Black Planet taken separately represents a landmark achievement in sample-based music. In Fear of a Black Planet, Public Enemy and the Bomb Squad continued to draw on the funk, soul, and jazz recordings that been the foundations for sampling artists for nearly a decade. Their approach to sampling differed from that of earlier artists, though: their multilayered tracks rarely contained fewer than five samples, and those samples were organized to create the most densely layered sonic effect possible. According to Mr. Len, Public Enemy’s production style is particularly admirable because “you can have all these sounds smashed together, and at one point, you’re going to hit a funky point. . .

You can hear the funk in the Bomb Squad.\textsuperscript{35} To this day, rap artists and hip-hop producers acknowledge Public Enemy’s and the Bomb Squad’s production style as a driving force both in their own music and in hip-hop in general.

On the other hand, the Beastie Boys and the Dust Brothers sampled a significant number of recordings from the canon of funk, soul, and jazz, but Paul’s Boutique is particularly notable because it draws heavily on recordings outside the hip-hop sample canon. Many hip-hop artists praised the Beastie Boys’ and the Dust Brothers’ ability to remain true to themselves and their experiences while simultaneously working within the genre of hip-hop. In fact, even Chuck D has claimed that the Beastie Boys’ approach to sampling and hip-hop conventions forever changed how many hip-hop groups, including Public Enemy, viewed themselves. In a 2012 speech, delivered when the Beastie Boys were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Chuck D said:

How could we NOT Learn from the way this group has CHALLENGED the conventions in the music business? How they made their OWN rules about what it meant to be world class hip hop cats. . . . But their second album, Paul’s Boutique broke the mold. With it, they accomplished EVERYTHING they’d hoped for. . . . It was that COURAGE and that SELF-RESPECT that Public Enemy learned from, and so like them, we made SURE NEVER to take the easy way out, never to compromise our faith in ourselves and in our ARTISTRY.\textsuperscript{36}

Rather than exiling the Beastie Boys as wannabes or imitators, the hip-hop community embraced the group for their vision and unique point of view.

The commercial and critical successes of Paul’s Boutique and Fear of a Black Planet encouraged subsequent generations of hip-hop artists to find their unique voices and production styles. The influences on hip-hop production from these two albums are notable in four specific parameters.

\textsuperscript{35} Mr. Len, telephone interview with the author, 23 August 2012.
First, a hip-hop producer must know and sample from the canon of funk and soul recordings, but he or she must sample from that canon in unique ways. Public Enemy and the Bomb Squad showed artists that they could sample the same body of funk and soul recordings yet create a totally new and unexpected sound. Most of the producers with whom I spoke were eager to explain how their production techniques are different from other people’s production techniques. Further, multiple producers told me how important it is to listen to music that other people have either dismissed or already sampled, because certain sounds will stand out to one producer that another producer missed entirely. As 9th Wonder explains, each time he hears a record, he may hear something new:

> Every record has a groove part in it which is a break part, no matter what record you pick up, it’s going to be a break you may be able to hear, and your contemporaries may not. Myself and Kanye West and Just Blaze can have the same sample, the same record, and you might hear it three different ways. It all depends on the ear of the sampler, which part of the song we want to take. And I may hear a part that Kanye and Just are like, man, I missed that part. Kanye may hear a part that I’m like, “Man, I missed that!” It’s weird. You hear different things on different days. I have a record that I’m listening to, and I’m like, “There’s nothing on this record,” and I’ll go back and listen to it again like, “How the hell did I miss this?”

Thus, even if a hip-hop producer is sampling the same genre, artist, or track as another producer, he or she must look for a unique passage within that canonic material to sample.

Second, whether a producer is sampling from the canon or from other recordings, he or she ought to sample music that he or she knows well. Apple Juice Kid explains that, when he began sampling, he was not familiar with the funk and soul music that other producers sampled, and as a result, his earliest experiments in sampling included recordings of hair metal, the Beatles, and Van Halen. He chose to sample these particular recordings since he knew them so well: “I

37 9th Wonder, telephone interview with the author, 8 August 2012. DJ Jazzy Joyce described nearly an identical process to me: “Sometimes it could be something as simple as you and I sitting here watching Netflix, and there’s a line in the movie that struck my mind differently than yours. We were watching the same movie, but later, I might go back to that movie and make a hit record out of a phrase. You’re watching the same movie, but you didn’t hear it. But I heard it.” Telephone interview with the author, 20 August 2012.
could totally do that because I’ve listened to [Van Halen’s] ‘Jump’ like a thousand times.”

Forest Factory often samples funk and soul music that he learned from hearing his father play those recordings all hours of the day and night, unintentionally forcing all of those recordings into Forest Factory’s memory. Producers claim to scour recordings for the best parts of a recording to sample; as Jazzy Joyce says, “Why wouldn’t I know how to cut out the fluff and get to the best of the best to present to you?” In order for a producer to find the “best of the best” of a record, he or she must know that recording inside and out, regardless of its genre.

Third, producers sample music that resonates with their experiences as performing musicians. Apple Juice Kid has played with West African percussion ensembles since childhood, and he is also a jazz drummer; those experiences have led him to sample recordings of those genres extensively. Forest Factory learned funk, soul, and gospel music, as well as the mechanics of successful ensemble playing, from drumming in various groups from his father: “Playing with my dad for so long and with the bass player, with the guitar player, we all pay attention to each other and draw off each other. Therefore I’ve learned what sounds natural and what sounds real.” Not all of the producers with whom I spoke play instruments, but all of those who have played instruments spoke about how that experience has shaped their work as producers. In fact, multiple producers said they are currently taking lessons on piano or guitar, which they hope will improve their musicianship.

Finally, producers can sample and make hip-hop records regardless of their race. The Beastie Boys proved that a hip-hop artist could succeed regardless of his or her race, production techniques, or source materials: what ultimately mattered was the quality of his or her music. As Vinroc says of the Beastie Boys, “You have these three white Jewish kids from New York doing

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38 Apple Juice Kid, telephone interview with the author, 25 August 2012.
39 Forest Factory, telephone interview with the author, 19 August 2012.
40 DJ Jazzy Joyce, telephone interview with the author, 20 August 2012.
41 Apple Juice Kid, telephone interview with the author, 25 August 2012.
42 Forest Factory, telephone interview with the author, 19 August 2012.
it, and it sounds good. It sounds really good!” Over and over, the producers with whom I spoke emphasized both hip-hop’s racial and ethnic diversity as well as its exclusive focus on the quality of the music. The two elements are closely connected for many producers; any producer I questioned about race immediately and almost automatically replied by addressing the music’s quality.

Vinroc: They [other producers] aren’t really looking at his skin color, just, he’s fresh, he’s dope. He’s making it.

Shane McConnell: The beauty of it is, it’s not about what race you are, it’s about the skill and knowledge of how to do it.

Apple Juice Kid: I’ve definitely been embraced [by the hip-hop community]. I think a lot of that [embrace] is purely due to the quality of my music.

Forest Factory: I think it has to do with who produces the music and where their creativity is.

MacGregor Leo: If I make music that’s characteristic to that genre, and it sounds good, there should be no discrepancy.

Shane McConnell: I’m no longer this white kid who makes beats. It’s like, “It’s this kid’s hood. He knows how to make a beat.”

Vinroc: He makes ill records, and I don’t see anyone complaining about his color. They just like his beats.

This close relationship of race, sample sources, and quality of production can all be tied back to the examples set by the Beastie Boys and Public Enemy who sampled copiously, produced quality music, and offered new and exciting perspectives for hip-hop’s listeners.

Ultimately, these two albums, as well as contemporary albums such as De La Soul’s 3 Feet High and Rising and a Tribe Called Quest’s People’s Instinctive Travels and the Paths of Rhythm, showed aspiring hip-hop producers how important it was to find their unique voices. As KLC explains, “A producer has to have his own sound. If a person comes to me, they know

43 Vinroc, telephone interview with the author, 10 August 2012.
44 Vinroc, telephone interview with the author, 10 August 2012; Shane McConnell, interview with the author, 13 September 2012; Apple Juice Kid, telephone interview with the author, 25 August 2012; Forest Factory, telephone interview with the author, 19 August 2012; MacGregor Leo, interview with the author, 7 September 2012.
exactly what they’re coming for. I have an identity. You have to build and create your own style to where they know they can only get it from you.” A producer can find this unique voice through production style, technique, and specific source materials.

The diversity of source materials and creativity of production styles were both hailed and emulated by hip-hop practitioners after the releases of these two albums, but hip-hop artists could not sample in the same quantities for much longer. In 1991, the face of sampling and sample-based hip-hop shifted because lawsuits and issues of copyright severely limited the amount of sampling and the prominence of samples in sample-based hip-hop. The next chapter focuses on how these limitations impacted sampling artists, including Public Enemy and the Beastie Boys, after 1991.

45 KLC, telephone interview with the author, 28 August 2012.
CHAPTER 5
COPYRIGHT AND ITS EFFECT ON THE MUSICAL STYLE OF SAMPLE-BASED HIP-HOP

Most scholars acknowledge that 1991 was a turning point in the history of sample-based hip-hop. After 1991, artists changed their approaches to sample-based hip-hop, often out of fear of copyright infringement lawsuits. Scholars such as Kembrew McLeod, Peter DiCola, Joanna Demers, and Siva Vaidhyanathan have highlighted the competing interests in sample licensing and the effects of those interests on creativity in sample-based musics.1 Legal scholar Olufunmilayo Arewa has critiqued the legal landscape of copyright law and its inappropriate and inconsistent application to sample-based music.2 These scholars lament the reduction in sample-based music, the consequences for sampling artists’ creative processes, and the unfair distribution of wealth and ownership involved in sampling lawsuits, but little scholarship discusses how this reduced amount of sampling affected the music’s style. While many scholars claim that the sample clearance system has only negative consequences for musicians, I would argue that these consequences are not necessarily positive or negative. In this chapter, I apply the typology to the music of several artists and concretize the ways in which they—both individually and as a collective—changed their approaches to sampling when samples became more difficult to license. Hip-hop artists adapted and modified their musical language, demonstrating their flexibility and willingness to work with alternative musical materials when samples became more difficult to access or distribute. Artists adapted their music to accommodate the availability of fewer samples, but by and large, the groups examined in this chapter did not lose critical acclaim or financial success solely on the basis of the observable changes in their sample-based music. In

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conclusion, I argue that although Public Enemy—the group most often cited as a victim of sample licensing and lawsuits—did become less popular during the 1990s, their reduced amount of sampling was not the primary contributing factor to this decline.

Legal Ramifications of Sampling

Two major problems plague sample-based hip-hop lawsuits. First, there is not a clear definition of “similarity” as it pertains to copyright infringement and musical borrowing. Cases of copyright infringement occur on the basis that the infringer either (1) copied a portion of the work, or (2) copied the work’s overall “structure” or “essence.” According to Arewa, all cases in sample-based hip-hop concern the first basis, copying of a portion of the work, or what is called “fragmented literal similarity,” rather than copying the general “structure” or “essence” of the work. She further notes that the legal standards for measuring two works’ similarities varies from case to case and there is little or no consistency for this measurement or for its application under the law.3

The second problem is the lack of standard legal precedent to guide the decisions of future musicians who wish to sample, because most sampling lawsuits are settled out of court. For example, the first lawsuit regarding sampling occurred in 1986 when Jimmy Castor sued the Beastie Boys and Def Jam Records after the Beastie Boys sampled Castor’s spoken phrase “Yo, Leroy!” from “The Return of Leroy, Part I” in their “Hold It, Now Hit It.”4 The Beastie Boys settled with Castor out of court. Similarly, De La Soul and Tommy Boy Records settled with the Turtles out of court in 1989 after the members of the Turtles sued De La Soul for unauthorized use of their “You Showed Me” in De La Soul’s track “Transmitting Live from Mars.”

3 The information in this paragraph is paraphrased from Arewa, “From J. C. Bach to Hip Hop,” 569-71.
4 See McLeod and DiCola, Creative License, 131.
reportedly received close to two million dollars in the settlement, although McLeod and DiCola’s informants claim that number is exaggerated.\textsuperscript{5}

Because the Beastie Boys, De La Soul, and other artists settled their sampling lawsuits out of court, there existed no legal precedent for sampling until the December 17, 1991 decision in the copyright-infringement case Grand Upright Music Ltd. v. Warner Brothers Records.\textsuperscript{6} This case regarded Biz Markie’s track “Alone Again,” which included a twenty-second sample of the piano accompaniment from Gilbert O’Sullivan’s “Alone Again (Naturally).” The sample from “Alone Again (Naturally)” functioned as a non-percussion structural sample type because it was looped throughout the new track. Biz Markie and his label had requested O’Sullivan’s permission to use the sample, going so far as to mail him a tape, but O’Sullivan never replied to their request.

Judge Kevin Thomas Duffy not only found the defendants guilty of copyright infringement but also advocated criminal prosecution for the theft of the music. As he noted, the fact that Biz Markie mailed the tape to O’Sullivan clearly indicated that knew O’Sullivan was the copyright holder. In his opinion, Duffy invoked the Old Testament:

“Thou shalt not steal” has been an admonition followed since the dawn of civilization. Unfortunately, in the modern world of business this admonition is not always followed. Indeed, the defendants in this action for copyright infringement would have this court believe that stealing is rampant in the music business and, for that reason, their conduct here should be excused. The conduct of the defendants herein, however, violates not only the Seventh Commandment, but also the copyright laws of this country.\textsuperscript{7}

Duffy’s decision reveals that the defendants may have made their case for the ubiquity of sampling and other kinds of musical borrowing, but ultimately the legal landscape was not yet ready to accept these kinds of musical borrowing as anything other than outright theft.\textsuperscript{8}

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\textsuperscript{5} See ibid., 131-32.
\textsuperscript{8} For more information on how court cases and legal commentary tend to misunderstand or misconstrue aesthetic issues unique to African American music, see Arewa, “From J. C. Bach to Hip-Hop,” 624-28 and Vaidhyanathan, \textit{Copyrights and Copywrongs}, 144-48. Vaidhyanathan suggests that Markie’s
Another sampling lawsuit decided in court during the 1990s was the unanimous 1994 Supreme Court decision in Campbell v. Acuff-Rose Music, Inc., which involved 2 Live Crew’s crass parody of Roy Orbison’s “Pretty Woman.” In 2 Live Crew’s track of the same name, the group sampled the guitar riff from Orbison’s track and looped it in the introduction as well as in between verses of the new track; a drum machine supplies the drum line. 2 Live Crew’s rapped lyrics then parody Orbison’s; instead of “pretty woman stop awhile, pretty woman talk awhile, pretty woman give your smile to me,” the members of 2 Live Crew rap “big hairy woman, come on in, and don’t forget your bald-headed friend, hey pretty woman, let the boys jump in.” In this case, the Court found in favor of 2 Live Crew, ruling that parodies were covered under fair use. In other words, the samples in 2 Live Crew’s “Pretty Woman” were not considered copyright infringement because the lyrics of their track parodied those of the source track. The precedent set in this case, then, was that samples were fair use if and only if they were joined by additional musical or textual borrowing in the form of parody or satire.

Both Grand Upright Music Ltd. v. Warner Brothers and Campbell v. Acuff-Rose Music, Inc. address structural sample types, and it is these two lawsuits that are generally regarded as having set the precedent for common sampling practice. However, there is a third, lesser-known legal decision from the 1990s that addressed lyric or surface sample types: Jarvis v. A&M Records (decided 1993), in which the court found that The Crew (who also record under the moniker C&C Music Factory) infringed copyright when they sampled lyrics from Boyd Jarvis’s “The Music’s Got Me” in their track “Get Dumb! (Free Your Body).” The court found that the sampled words “ooh,” “moves,” and “free your body” were copyrightable expressions and that attorneys could have—but did not—argue that the sampling was fair use. He notes, “They could have argued that only a small section of O’Sullivan’s song contributed to a vastly different composition that did not compete with the original song in the marketplace.” See Copyrights and Copywrongs, 142.

9 On the 2 Live Crew lawsuit and the roles of parody and satire in cover songs, see Demers, Steal this Music, 54-59.
10 McLeod, Freedom of Expression®, 83.
11 See Demers, Steal this Music, 94 and McLeod and DiCola, Creative License, 134-35.
the defendants had appropriated original elements of the source when they sampled those
eexpressions. Indeed, the court in this case cited the Grand Upright case as legal precedent,
meaning that samples of any type or of any sound—instrumental or vocal—were copyrightable.

These lawsuits instilled fear in artists and in record labels about copyright infringement
and the potential losses of millions of dollars per lawsuit. As McLeod notes, “The assumption is
that any sampled sound of any length in any context is without doubt copyright infringement,
unless it’s a parody.” Between the out-of-court settlements and the courts’ tendencies to rule in
favor of the sampled plaintiff—except in the case of parodies—hip-hop artists suddenly found
themselves accused of theft and vulnerable to six-figure lawsuits. In response, hip-hop artists and
labels began licensing all sampled sounds that appeared in new tracks. According to McLeod and
DiCola, sample licensing has become the enforced norm for hip-hop artists and labels, even if
copyright law does not necessarily require it. In fact, sampling lawsuits have continued well
into the twenty-first century: Newton v. Diamond, in which the Beastie Boys were sued by jazz
flutist James Newton, and Bridgeport Music v. Dimension Films, in which N.W.A. was sued for
sampling Funkadelic’s “Get Off Your Ass and Jam” in their “100 Miles and Runnin’,” were
decided in 2003 and 2005 respectively. Public Enemy’s 2007 track “Black is Back” originally
contained samples from AC/DC’s “Back in Black,” but the threat of lawsuits forced the group to
reconceive the track without sampling the sounds of “Back in Black.” On May 8, 2012, one day
before the untimely death of the Beastie Boys’ MCA, the Beastie Boys were sued by the label Tuf

12 Thomas Schumacher, “‘This is a Sampling Sport’: Digital Sampling, Rap Music, and the Law in
Cultural Production,” in Murray Forman and Mark Anthony Neal, That’s the Joint!: The Hip-Hop Studies
Reader (New York: Routledge, 2004), 514.
http://cip.law.ucla.edu/cases/1990-1999/Pages/jarvisamrecords.aspx#top
14 McLeod, Freedom of Expression ®, 83.
15 McLeod and DiCola, Creative License, 187.
16 On both of these cases, see McLeod and DiCola, Creative License, 136-47. On Newton v.
Diamond, see also Arewa, “From J. C. Bach to Hip Hop,” 570-71.
America for sampling tracks by funk band Trouble Funk in “Hold It, Now Hit It,” “The New Style,” and “Car Thief,” all of which were released in the 1980s.18

Hip-hop artists and their record labels are constantly on the lookout for lawsuits from “sample trolls,” one-person corporations such as Bridgeport Music that have acquired hundreds of copyrights and subsequently file hundreds of copyright-infringement lawsuits.19 Although she did not name a specific company, DJ Jazzy Joyce told me that certain record companies never respond to licensing requests “on purpose so that they can build up a legal case and come back and have the lawsuit.”20 Thus, some companies ignore requests for licensing and wait to see if the artist releases the track without permission, thus setting a lawsuit into motion. Clearly, fears of lawsuits were not specific to the early 1990s; they remain a threat to this day, particularly because some settlements involve millions of dollars and decades-old music.21

In addition to sampling less, producers have taken other steps to avoid costly sample licensing fees. First, many producers, most notably Dr. Dre, hire studio musicians to replay selected passages of music or they replay passages of music themselves.22 After recording the studio musicians’ performance, they then sample their own recording of the replayed material. By using studio musicians, producers only have to pay publishing—songwriting—fees for the music.

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19 Bridgeport is a one-man corporation that has filed nearly 500 counts of copyright infringement against more than 800 different artists and labels. Although most of the cases have been dismissals and settlements, the Bridgeport v. Dimension Films case described above resulted in a handsome settlement, as did Bridgeport v. Combs, in which Bridgeport was awarded over $4 million for samples of the Ohio Players’ “Singing in the Morning” that P. Diddy (Sean Combs) included in the Notorious B.I.G.’s track “Ready to Die.” See Tim Wu, “Jay-Z Versus the Sample Troll: The Shady One-Man Corporation That's Destroying Hip-Hop,” Slate.com 16 November 2006.
20 DJ Jazzy Joyce, telephone interview with the author, 20 August 2012.
21 McLeod and DiCola devote an entire chapter of Creative License to a navigation of the sample clearance system and an analysis of the various competing interests in sample licensing. See chapter 5, “The Sample Clearance System: How It Works (and How It Breaks Down).” For their “cost matrix,” a formula they developed to estimate the cost of licensing various types of samples, see Creative License, 204-9.
22 For an overview of Dr. Dre’s production style, see Williams, “Musical Borrowing and Hip Hop Music,” 157-64.
In comparison, musicians who sample an existing recording have to pay both publishing fees as well as mechanical—recording—fees, and the mechanical fees tend to be much more expensive. According the KLC, “You don’t have to pay a fee for the master recording. You just have to pay the publishing. You have to pay the label a fee to sample the song off the actual master recording.” Recording studio musicians and then sampling that recording allows producers to sample a version of a particular track for less than half the cost of sampling the original recording. Also, these producers are still sampling, in a sense, although they are sampling new recordings that they have made themselves rather than sampling the original recordings.

According to Schloss, hip-hop producers consider this use of live instrumentation legitimate if producers are familiar with the sample-based aesthetic and use live instruments to emulate musical characteristics that are present in samples. Several producers I interviewed agreed that, although replaying the material is a less-costly alternative to sampling, they would not replay material if they could sample without legal consequences. Forest Factory, who replays nearly all of his music himself, explains succinctly, “If copyright wasn’t a problem, I would sample.”

A second approach taken by hip-hop producers is to “chop” or “flip” a sample. As 9th Wonder explains, there are certain records where the following rule applies: “You’d better flip the shit out of this song, man, if you want to sample it.” These practices involve manipulating sampled material beyond recognition in order to avoid having to pay licensing fees for it. According to DJ Jazzy Joyce, producers flip samples both to avoid licensing fees and to impress each other with their production skills:

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23 McLeod, Freedom of Expression®, 87.
24 KLC, telephone interview with the author, 28 August 2012.
25 Schloss, Making Beats, 69. According to Schloss, “The use of live instrumentation is considered legitimate by producers only when three conditions are met: when the live musician understands (or at least capitulates to) a putative ‘hip-hop aesthetic,’ when the instruments are used to support musical themes that are already apparent in samples, and when they have the ‘right’ timbre or ambience. The subjective nature of all three of these criteria means that they all must be negotiated in each case. It is also an open question whether the fulfillment of any one criterion is sufficient or whether all three must be met for the use to be legitimate.”
26 Forest Factory, telephone interview with the author, 19 August 2012.
27 9th Wonder, telephone interview with the author, 8 August 2012.
I can disguise the shit out of something where you wouldn’t even know I just raped and robbed you. Some of the best producers can do that, and that’s just a fact. You’d be surprised where certain elements come from and how the manipulation of sound can disguise you out of even having to acknowledge certain people.  

As Vinroc explained, if a producer wants to sample a famous recording, he or she must “completely chop it to pieces so it’s unrecognizable.”

A third tactic of producers is to avoid sampling the music of entire catalogues, record labels, or artists. These artists are to be avoided for two reasons. First, certain artists always refuse any requests for licensing, such as Anita Baker, the Beatles, the Eagles, Led Zeppelin, Pink Floyd, and Prince. 9th Wonder speculates that Prince refuses requests because he (a) does not need the money, and (b) does not believe that hip-hop and sampling are legitimate musicianship. Second, the licensing fees for certain artists are often sky-high. Producer Apple Juice Kid told me, “You stay away from stuff that you know is too expensive. Like, I would never expect to sell a beat with a Van Halen sample in it, or someone really huge.” For example, after their disastrous lawsuit by the Turtles, De La Soul’s record company Tommy Boy gave the group a list of artists that they could not sample under any conditions. As mentioned above, the sample troll company Bridgeport owns the copyrights for nearly all of George Clinton’s music, which makes it virtually impossible for artists to sample Clinton’s music without risking a lawsuit from Bridgeport or else paying tremendous licensing fees. Other record companies such as Polygram require lyric sheets to accompany any requests for sample clearance, and the company then reserves the right to deny clearance if the sample might be unflattering to the original artist. DJ Bobcat had a similar experience when a record company turned down his

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28 DJ Jazzy Joyce, telephone interview with the author, 20 August 2012.
29 Vinroc, telephone interview with the author, 10 August 2012.
30 On the “sample-resistant catalogues” of specific artists, see Demers, Steal this Music, 117; McLeod and DiCola, Creative License, 211; and Vaidhyathan, Copyrights and Copywrongs, 143.
31 9th Wonder, telephone interview with the author, 8 August 2012.
32 Apple Juice Kid, telephone interview with the author, 25 August 2012.
33 On Tommy Boy’s “do not touch” list, see McLeod and DiCola, Creative License, 202.
34 Demers, Steal This Music, 117; Vaidhyathan, Copyrights and Copywrongs, 143.
request to sample because the track in which the sample would have appeared contained profanity.\textsuperscript{35}

Yet another way in which producers sample without fear of lawsuits is to release free music online; these are often called “mixtapes.” According to DJ Jazzy Joyce, if she is unable to obtain sample clearance for a track, she will release it for free online: “Sometimes a song is so exciting and so dope that once it comes out into that universe, the internet, there’s nothing you can do.”\textsuperscript{36} In other words, the success of a track or an album depends on more factors than just its sales; a free album distributed online can still reach many listeners. Apple Juice Kid told me that each time he embarks on a new project, he has to decide whether the project will be free or for sale, and “your choice of samples has to be really minimal if you want to release the album for money.”\textsuperscript{37} If producers do not sell their music, then they cannot be sued for a portion of its profits. Particularly in the twenty-first century, producers release music for free online without worrying about sample clearance. As Forest Factory said of a sample-based track he produced and released for free online, “I ain’t selling it. If I put a price tag on it, they can come after me then.”\textsuperscript{38}

Yet another way in which artists avoid costly licensing fees is to work closely with other artists and those artists’ record labels in order to secure reasonable fees. As Apple Juice Kid explains, when his friends in the band Delta Rae signed a record contract with Warner, he knew that they would help him in his dealings with the record label:

I was friends with them before all this [i.e., signing with Warner] happened, so I’m sampling some of their music because I know they’re friends of mine [and] they’ll trust my taste and help the process along. They’ve already contacted their label and said we think this will be a good thing that he [Apple Juice Kid] is sampling our music. . . . So for me to sample Delta Rae, the price they [Warner] will give someone is going to be like, give them a cool price. Like, don’t try to go crazy on them. Some people it would be like

\textsuperscript{35} DJ Bobcat, telephone interview with the author, 24 August 2012.
\textsuperscript{36} DJ Jazzy Joyce, telephone interview with the author, 20 August 2012.
\textsuperscript{37} Apple Juice Kid, telephone interview with the author, 25 August 2012.
\textsuperscript{38} Forest Factory, telephone interview with the author, 19 August 2012.
five thousand or something for the sample, but for a random person they’ll be like, okay, twenty thousand.\textsuperscript{39}

Apple Juice Kid reveals that licensing a sample is not always an impersonal process run solely by faceless corporations. His personal connections with the musicians he wants to sample will help expedite his ability to license those samples, and he also assumes he will pay a lower fee or “cooler price” than another sampling artist with no personal connection to the band. Thus, the sampling artists’ materials may also be limited by who they know and what connections they have.

Finally, some producers simply abandon a track if they cannot clear the samples it contains, often because that particular sample is irreplaceable. According to Mr. Len, “You are moved by this particular song. You’re moved by a feeling that probably doesn’t have anything to do with the actual content of that song. Its groove made you want to do this, so you do it. If people don’t approve of your groove, there’s nothing you can do about it. You apologize and move on.”\textsuperscript{40} In some cases, if they cannot clear one specific sample, the producer will try to rework the track with different samples. The end product, though, is very different from the first version; as DJ Bobcat explains, “I ended up creating something that worked, but it really turned into another song. Whether lyrics are there or not, it turns into another song.”\textsuperscript{41} One wonders how many sample-based tracks have never been released or completed because sample clearance halted the production.

Mr. Len told me about his attempts to license a sample for “Taco Day,” a track with lyrics performed by rapper Jean Grae. “Taco Day” is a tale of the revenge a sexually abused teenage girl takes on those who harmed her, and it was the nine-minute long pièce de resistance on Mr. Len’s 2001 album \textit{Pity the Fool}. He found the perfect material to sample for that track: a recording of the piece “F-104: Epilogue from Sun and Steel,” an excerpt from Philip Glass’s

\textsuperscript{39} Apple Juice Kid, telephone interview with the author, 25 August 2012.
\textsuperscript{40} Mr. Len, telephone interview with the author, 23 August 2012.
\textsuperscript{41} DJ Bobcat, telephone interview with the author, 24 August 2012.
soundtrack to the 1985 film *Mishima: A Life in Four Chapters*.\(^{42}\) Although Mr. Len’s label Matador was surprised at his choice, they nonetheless approached Glass’s label about licensing the sample. According to Mr. Len, Glass’s record label wanted at least twelve thousand dollars for the sample, which Matador could not afford to pay:

In my head, I was like, “Philip Glass is cool.” He is! That style of minimalism was perfect for the *Pity the Fool* album because I wanted to be minimalist existentialist, and I found nothing more right than sampling Philip Glass. [“Taco Day”] is the biggest song on the record, like nine minutes long. It was a statement record. You can show how much you can do with so little. His whole thing was, “Pay me.” I don’t think anyone there took the time to actually see what I was trying to do. It was like, “You’re using it. Pay us.”\(^{43}\)

Because Matador could not afford the amount of money Glass’s record label demanded, Mr. Len was forced to leave out the samples.\(^{44}\) Instead, Mr. Len and Jean Grae recorded a different version of “Taco Day” for *Pity the Fool*, but it is undoubtedly a completely different track from what he had envisioned. He told me that he plans to release a free version online that includes the Philip Glass sample, but for now, that version has been discarded. This story of “Taco Day” demonstrates several of the problems with sample licensing: artists limited by financial constraints, people other than the artists involved in the decision-making processes, and producers having to change their music because they cannot afford or acquire clearance for the samples they want.

Stylistic Ramifications of Sample Licensing

With the imposition of so many limitations, not to mention the fine line between creativity and a lawsuit, sample-based hip-hop artists have adapted their production approaches in many ways. Now, I examine the music of sample-based hip-hop artists the Beastie Boys, De La Soul, Public Enemy, Salt ’n’ Pepa, and A Tribe Called Quest over approximately a ten-year span.

\(^{42}\) Mr. Len, email message to the author, 4 September 2012.
\(^{43}\) Mr. Len, telephone interview with the author, 23 August 2012.
\(^{44}\) I contacted Philip Glass’s publisher, Dunvagen, for additional information and was told, “Unfortunately, we don’t have any further information to provide.” Email message to the author, 18 September 2012. My email messages to Glass’s record company, Orange Mountain Studios, have gone unanswered.
Applying the analytical methods of the typology to these artists’ music reveals that they not only sampled less often but included different types of samples in their music to accommodate the smaller total number of samples available. By changing the types of samples and their techniques of sampling, each group modified certain elements of their musical styles without necessarily abandoning every defining feature of their sample-based musical styles.

I selected these five groups for this study for several reasons. First, all five are rap ensembles with multiple members, and the lead rappers in the groups remained consistent across the various albums examined. Second, all of these groups are relatively well-known and have had a reasonable amount of commercial success—all five have had at least one platinum record as certified by the Recording Industry Association of America. Third, the groups used a variety of producers and production teams, and the members of each group did some producing on most of the albums, regardless of which production team was involved in the particular album. Fourth, all of these groups released at least two albums before the December 17, 1991 Grand Upright decision and at least two albums after the Grand Upright decision. By using 1991 as the turning point, it becomes clear how the groups’ musical styles changed.

Figure 5.1 lists every album studied in this chapter. These albums are commercial studio albums released by the groups, and they do not include compilations, bootlegs, live albums, collaborations, greatest hits, or Greatest Misses, a 1992 compilation album by Public Enemy. These albums include the last two albums each group released before the Grand Upright decision and the first two albums each group released following the Grand Upright decision.45

45 For this reason, Public Enemy’s sample-heavy 1988 album It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back is not included in this chapter. Although the music in this album is consistent with my findings and with Public Enemy’s pre-1991 style of sampling, it was released outside the chronological parameters of this study. The comparisons I make are within the specified data set.
Figure 5.1. Albums studied in chapter 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Album</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Label</th>
<th>Primary production team</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Beastie Boys</td>
<td>Licensed to Ill</td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
<td>Rick Rubin</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Paul’s Boutique</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
<td>The Dust Brothers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Check Your Head</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
<td>Mario Caldato, Jr.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ill Communication</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Capitol</td>
<td>Mario Caldato, Jr.; the Beastie Boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De La Soul</td>
<td>3 Feet High and Rising</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Tommy Boy</td>
<td>Prince Paul</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>De La Soul is Dead</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Tommy Boy</td>
<td>Prince Paul</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Buckoone Mindstate</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Tommy Boy</td>
<td>Prince Paul</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Stakes is High</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Tommy Boy</td>
<td>De La Soul</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Enemy</td>
<td>Fear of a Black Planet</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
<td>The Bomb Squad</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Apocalypse ’91… The Enemy Strikes Black</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
<td>The Bomb Squad; the Imperial Grand Ministers of Funk</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Muse-Sick-N-Hour-Mess-Age</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
<td>The Bomb Squad</td>
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<td></td>
<td>He Got Game</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Def Jam</td>
<td>The Bomb Squad</td>
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<tr>
<td>Salt ’n’ Pepa</td>
<td>A Salt with a Deadly Pepa</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>Hurby Luv Bug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blacks’ Magic</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>Hurby Luv Bug, Spinderella</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very Necessary</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>Hurby Luv Bug; Salt ’n’ Pepa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brand New</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Island Black</td>
<td>Salt ’n’ Pepa, Esmail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Tribe Called Quest</td>
<td>People’s Instinctive Travels and the Paths of Rhythm</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Jive</td>
<td>A Tribe Called Quest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Low End Theory</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Jive</td>
<td>A Tribe Called Quest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Midnight Marauders</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Jive</td>
<td>A Tribe Called Quest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beats, Rhymes, and Life</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Jive</td>
<td>A Tribe Called Quest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Throughout this chapter, I refer to each group’s album 1, album 2, album 3, and album 4. This is shorthand for the albums studied, not the albums the group has released over its entire career: a group’s album 1 means the first of the four studied, not the first album the group ever released. In other words, a group’s album 1 was released prior to 1991. A group’s album 2 was released either prior to or during 1991; albums released during 1991 were still released prior to the Grand Upright decision, however. Albums 3 and 4 were released after 1991. In the cases of the Beastie Boys, De La Soul, and A Tribe Called Quest, what I term album 1 in this chapter is
actually the group’s debut album, but Public Enemy and Salt ’n’ Pepa each released albums prior to their album 1 in this study.

I analyzed every track on these twenty albums—328 tracks in total—according to the types in the typology. Using these data from my typological analyses, I then determined how the groups’ sample types changed over time, both in the music of the individual groups and in the music of all of the groups combined. Every group sampled much less frequently after 1991, but each group’s music changed notably as they adapted to new sampling techniques or approaches.

Not surprisingly, the sheer number of samples each group used begins to drop in 1991 (see Figure 5.2). Although some groups such as Public Enemy and the Beastie Boys released albums before 1991 that contained over 100 different samples, most groups’ post-1991 albums contain fewer than 30 samples, and sometimes as few as five samples, in the case of Brand New; Salt ’n’ Pepa’s 1997 album. For ease of comparison, I refer to the average number of samples per track (rounded to the nearest tenth) rather than the average number of samples per album. For example, De La Soul’s Buhloone Mindstate contains 37 total samples and 15 separate tracks, which means the album contains an average of 2.5 samples per track. The following graph charts the average number of samples per track per year of all twenty albums combined. Note that there is no data for 1987 and 1995 since none of the five groups released an album in those years. For years when more than one group released an album (1989, 1990, 1991, 1993, 1994, and 1996), I also averaged the groups’ average number of samples per track.

The number of samples on an album refers both to the sound sampled and to that sampled sound’s function in the new track. For example, a recurring lyric sample is counted as just one sample, because each time it is heard, it has the same function in the track. A few tracks include the same sampled sound in different functions, and in these cases, I count these as separate samples. For example, “I Like it Like That” by Salt ’n’ Pepa contains a sample of Chuck D’s word “bass” from Public Enemy’s “Bring the Noise.” This sampled “bass” is used both in the choruses of “I Like It Like That” and in a lyric substitution later in the track. In this case, I counted these as two separate samples.
Figure 5.2. Average number of samples per track by year in selected albums released by the Beastie Boys, De La Soul, Public Enemy, Salt ’n’ Pepa, and a Tribe Called Quest

Note that the average number of samples per track peaks during 1989 and 1990, when tracks contain an average of at least four samples. The average number of samples per track begins to decrease in 1991, and then it falls sharply after 1991. By 1993, most tracks, on average, contain fewer than two samples and sometimes even less than one, meaning that the album has fewer total samples than it has tracks.

Another way to consider the decline in number of samples is to look at the average number of samples in albums 1, 2, 3, and 4 (see Figure 5.3). Each data point then has the same number of albums to average, unlike the above figure in which some years have one album while other years have three albums to average.47

47 For example, the above graph implies that samples drop between 1986 and 1988, but the data on this graph represents a single album released in 1988, Salt ’n’ Pepa’s A Salt With a Deadly Pepa, which has 1.7 samples per track. On average, Salt ’n’ Pepa’s music contains the fewest samples of the five groups. As mentioned above, Public Enemy’s 1988 album It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back falls outside the chronological parameters of this study, but it contains an average of 5.8 samples per track. Thus, A Salt With a Deadly Pepa and It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back contain an average of 3.8 samples per track, which is probably a more accurate representation of general sampling practice in 1988 than the 1.7 samples per track represented by the single Salt ’n’ Pepa album from 1988.
Figure 5.3. Average samples per track in albums 1, 2, 3, and 4 by the Beastie Boys, De La Soul, Public Enemy, Salt 'n' Pepa, and A Tribe Called Quest

The average number of samples per track begins to decline after album 1, but the steepest drop is between albums 2 and 3, when the average drops by an entire sample per track. By album 4, artists included half the number of samples that they had in albums 1 or 2.

Although Grand Upright was decided in December of 1991, the graphs in Figures 5.2 and 5.3 reveal that artists were already sampling less by 1991. Average numbers of samples per track dropped between 1990 and 1991 as well as between albums 1 and 2 (album 1 was released before 1991, and album 2 was released either before or during 1991). While the most drastic decreases in sampling occurred after 1991 or between albums 2 and 3, many artists were already sampling less by 1991. In fact, De La Soul, Public Enemy, and A Tribe Called Quest, all of whom released albums during 1991, all sampled less in their 1991 albums than they had in their earlier album. 1991 was the first year in which numbers of samples began to fall. If the Grand Upright decision and the attendant fear of lawsuits was the sole reason artists sampled less, then the change in numbers of samples would not have occurred until after 1991 or until album 3.

In the next sections, I refer to the distributions of various sample types across the albums studied. It is important to keep in mind that these distributions may look similar in percentages.
but that later albums have fewer samples in total. Thus, the distribution percentages appear comparable, but recall that the later albums typically have fewer total samples than do the earlier albums. For example, the distributions of lyric sample types on the Public Enemy albums *Fear of a Black Planet* (1990) and *He Got Game* (1997) are nearly identical—37.1% of the samples on *Fear of a Black Planet* are lyric types and 35.7% of the samples on *He Got Game* are lyric types—but the actual numbers of lyric sample types on the albums are drastically different—lyric samples comprise 49 out of 132 total samples on *Fear of a Black Planet*, and lyric samples comprise five out of only 14 total samples on *He Got Game*.

Not only do groups include fewer samples in their later albums, but they also include different types of samples. Figure 5.4 is a graph of the distribution of the three main sample types across the groups’ four albums. In calculating these numbers, I first determined the distribution of sample types in each album as a percentage, rounded to the nearest tenth of a percent. For example, Salt ’n’ Pepa’s album *A Salt with a Deadly Pepa* has 20 total samples, 11 of which are structural sample types (55.0%), three of which are surface sample types (15.0%), and six of which are lyric sample types (30.0%). Next, I averaged the percentages for each group’s albums 1, 2, 3, and 4, determining the average distribution of sample types per period.
Figure 5.4. Average percentage of sample types in albums 1, 2, 3, and 4 by the Beastie Boys, De La Soul, Public Enemy, Salt 'n' Pepa, and A Tribe Called Quest

As the graph shows, the percentage of structural sample types spikes in album 2, which was released before or during 1991. Structural sample types do decline slightly in the groups’ albums 3 and 4, but they continue to account for approximately half of all samples each album contains. In contrast, surface sample types plummet: in album 1, between one-fourth and one-third of the samples were surface types, but by album 4, surface sample types account for less than ten percent of all samples. On the other hand, lyric sample types increased dramatically, nearly doubling in proportion between albums 1 and 4. From these data alone, it is clear that artists continued to use about half of their available samples for structural sample types, but in albums 3 and 4, the proportion of lyric samples increased significantly while the proportion of surface sample types decreased significantly. Further, sampling artists approached each of the three sample types differently over time, as described in the following sections.

Structural sample types

All five groups treated structural sample types differently in their later albums. Although structural sample types continue to constitute about half of all sample types on the albums, groups
had fewer samples total with which to construct their grooves. As a result, the aggregate structural sample type—in which the drums, bass, horns, or other parts of the groove are each sampled from a different source—almost entirely disappears. Of the five groups surveyed, only the Beastie Boys, Public Enemy, and A Tribe Called Quest included any aggregate tracks on album 4, and each of those three albums contains just a single aggregate track. All three groups had overwhelmingly favored aggregate sample types in their albums 1 and 2: aggregate grooves comprise at least one-fourth of the total tracks on each of albums 1 and 2, and A Tribe Called Quest’s *The Low End Theory* (1991) contained a whopping 78.6% aggregate types (11 of 14 total tracks on the album are aggregate types). De La Soul’s and Salt ’n’ Pepa’s albums 4 contain no aggregate tracks, also a striking contrast to the choice of structural types in their albums 1 and 2. Clearly all five groups avoided aggregate sample types and aggregate grooves, but what did they use instead?

First, groups began using more intact grooves than aggregate. In an intact groove, the producer samples all sounding layers from the source track together, rather than sampling individual layers separately from different sources for an aggregate groove. Although this practice of using intact grooves reduces the number of distinct layers to sample and thus the number of samples to clear, it also reduces the uniqueness of a sample-based groove. For example, De La Soul’s “Ghetto Thang” from *3 Feet High and Rising* (1989) is an aggregate structure that contains three component samples: drums from James Brown’s “Funky President,” an ascending synthesizer pattern from the Blackbyrds’ “Rock Creek Park,” and synthesized percussion sounds from Kraftwerk’s “Trans-Europe Express.” The combination of these three component layers into an aggregate groove is much more distinct and less recognizable than an intact groove in which every layer comes from the same source track. The addition of two component samples also differentiates the groove of “Ghetto Thang” from that of other sample-based tracks whose grooves are also built on the drum line sampled from “Funky President,” such as Salt ’n’ Pepa’s “Shake Your Thang” or A Tribe Called Quest’s “Show Business.”
To combat the easy recognition that can come with sampling a groove intact from the source track, producers sought out even more obscure materials to sample. For instance, Salt ’n’ Pepa’s “Say Ooh” includes an intact sample from “Turn off the Lights” by Larry Young’s Fuel, a track which other artists have sampled fewer than five times, and Salt ’n’ Pepa’s “R U Ready” includes an intact sample from Brass Construction’s “Watch Out,” which, to my knowledge, is the only time this particular Brass Construction track has been sampled. Salt, who co-produced both of these tracks, attempted to combat the easy recognizability of an intact groove by sampling nearly unknown source tracks for those intact grooves. Thus, in albums 3 and 4, producers approached their sample-based grooves according to the same aesthetic principles that they had used in albums 1 and 2, that is, by sampling a groove intact and then looping it, but in albums 3 and 4, they chose different source materials for those grooves to make them unique.

Some artists, although not necessarily those studied in this chapter, took the opposite approach, sampling top ten hits from multiplatinum tracks, virtually guaranteeing that listeners would recognize the source material. An oft-cited example of this type of sampling is Sean Combs (also known over the last fifteen years as Puff Daddy, P. Diddy, and Diddy) and his intact structural sample of “Every Breath You Take” by the Police, which appeared in his 1997’s homage to the Notorious B.I.G., “I’ll Be Missing You.” Combs allegedly paid a seven-figure amount to license this sample, and Demers suggests that sampling such recognizable (and expensive) sounds is a method of displaying one’s wealth. The prominent use of such a familiar sample is certainly a nod to one’s ability to afford its attendant licensing fees, but I would argue that musicians also sample famous or recognizable source tracks because, if they have to pay an exorbitant sum to sample the music, they might as well sample material that listeners are going to recognize. This approach has become most prominent in the twenty-first century, as every other

48 Demers suggests that artists have also tapped into non-Western source materials to sample in order to find new and unique sources. See Steal This Music, 98-105.
49 Ibid., 90.
top 40 hit seems to have a recognizable sample in it: Rihanna’s 2006 hit “SOS” sampled Soft Cell’s 1981 synth-pop smash “Tainted Love,” and Nicki Minaj and will.i.am’s 2010 “Check It Out” sampled the Buggles’ 1979 “Video Killed the Radio Star.” Of course, sampling multiplatinum hits requires more up-front capital to license the samples, making this type of sampling off-limits to all but the wealthiest of hip-hop artists.

Most of the hip-hop producers with whom I spoke scoffed at the idea of producers who sample expensive and famous music. According to 9th Wonder, sampling a top-ten hit is a sure sign of an artist who is not a part of the true hip-hop aesthetic:

We [producers] have our own formula, but at the same time, when you’re sampling Soft Cell or you’re sampling “Video Killed that Radio Star,” that’s not it. That’s not it. [laughter] The people that make these records, they know it. If you ever ask them, if you ever have a chance to interview any of these producers that make these type of beats, ask them who their favorite hip-hop producer, they will probably tell you people that’s not on the radio. So, they know that they’re doing. They know that’s not the real, so to speak. And usually sometimes we as producers, hip-hop producers, we don’t even pay attention to that stuff.\(^{50}\)

As hip-hop became more commercial and more mainstream in the late twentieth century, some artists, such as Sean Combs, will.i.am, and Kanye West sampled multiplatinum-selling tracks. According to 9th Wonder, though, these artists know that they are producing commercial, crossover music, not “real” hip-hop. As he said, “Hip-hop left the radio a long time ago.”\(^{51}\)

A second way in which sampling artists changed their approach to structural sample types was to rely on non-percussion grooves instead of aggregate grooves. Unlike an aggregate groove, in which the drums and at least one other layer are each sampled from a different source, a non-percussion groove includes only the “other” layer—bass, horns, synthesizer—and the drums are created by a drum machine, a live drummer, or sampled fragments too small to identify the individual sources. As such, non-percussion grooves are a reasonable substitute for aggregate grooves when the total number of samples in a track or an album must be limited. Producers are

\(^{50}\) 9th Wonder, telephone interview with the author, 8 August 2012.

\(^{51}\) Ibid.
still combining layers from different sources and creating a new groove, although in the case of the non-percussion groove, the drums can come from any number of sources, rather than just from a sampled and looped drum break.

A Tribe Called Quest’s music demonstrates this shift from aggregate to non-percussion grooves. Their albums 1 and 2 contained many aggregate grooves and no non-percussion grooves, and their albums 3 and 4 contain more non-percussion tracks than any other structural sample type. They continued to sample recordings by 1960s- and 1970s-era jazz and funk artists such as Steve Arrington, George Duke, and Howard Roberts, but A Tribe Called Quest (they are credited collectively as producers on both albums) created the drum lines in these tracks using different means than in their earlier two albums. However, the underlying aesthetic of a non-percussion groove is quite similar to that of an aggregate groove.

Although the source materials for sample-based hip-hop grooves changed, the fundamental aesthetic of looping did not fall off. Producers continued to loop, but the source materials used to create those loops changed. In this sense, hip-hop producers created loops according to what Amiri Baraka (LeRoi Jones) called “the changing same,” that is, the constituent materials of post-1991 hip-hop grooves differ but the resulting aesthetic and effect are similar to those produced prior to 1991. As Baraka wrote of African American music in 1966:

> Form and content are both mutually expressive of the whole. And they are both equally expressive, each have an identifying motif and function. In Black music, both identify place and direction. We want different contents and different forms because we have different feelings. We are different peoples.52

If, as Baraka claims, form and content in African American music play equal roles in expression, then the change in content in sample-based music (from more to fewer samples) can be balanced by retaining the form of sample-based music (looping). Producers had to make allowances in certain cases for the availability of fewer samples, sometimes relying on non-percussion or intact

grooves rather than aggregate grooves, but the overall result for the listener is roughly the same. Thus, the content of later based hip-hop grooves included fewer samples, but producers retained the majority of the earlier aesthetic tenets of hip-hop grooves, such as looping and repetition.

Surface sample types

As mentioned above, producers very rarely include surface sample types after 1991. Albums 1 and 2 contained a total of 138 surface sample types, and albums 3 and 4 contained only eleven total surface samples—92% fewer samples. Of these eleven surface samples, eight are the constituent type (only a beat long and appearing at regular intervals in a track on top of the groove), two are emphatic (appearing at the beginning or end of a track), and only one is a momentary surface sample (appearing only once in a track but in an unpredictable place). Thus, producers who opted to include surface samples in albums 3 and 4 overwhelmingly preferred the constituent surface sample type. This is not surprising given the role of a constituent surface sample type and its integration into a sample-based groove. Because constituent surface sample types are layered atop the groove without necessarily participating in the fundamental structure of the groove itself, constituent surface sample types participate in the aesthetic of looping. Additionally, adding a constituent surface sample type to an intact groove is another way a producer can give that groove a unique sonic identity.

Lyric sample types

Of the three sample types, lyric sample types are the only kind to grow in popularity, although this growth is in proportion only rather than actual numbers. As noted in chapter 3, by the mid-1990s, hip-hop producers frequently included lyric samples of either the framing or recurring variety. It is quite common for lyric samples to appear either in the chorus of a new track or scratched in during the intro, the outro, or an interlude of a sample-based track. De La Soul’s *Stakes is High* (1996) includes fifteen lyric samples, only two of which are lyric substitutions. The remaining thirteen either recur in the choruses of the new track or are scratched
in as framing samples. This penchant for lyric samples featured prominently in a new track’s form reflects the combined desire to prominently feature a sampled text as well as an increasing awareness of hip-hop history and the connections of lyric samples with that hip-hop history. For example, every lyric sample on Public Enemy’s 1998 album *He Got Game* comes from a hip-hop source track.

It is not a coincidence that most lyric samples in albums 3 and 4 come from other hip-hop recordings. In addition to showing off their knowledge of history and of aligning themselves with hip-hop giants, many producers sample lyrics from hip-hop because it is extremely unusual for one hip-hop artist to sue another. In the rare instances when one hip-hop artist does sue another, these lawsuits, without exception, regard re-performances rather than samples. There seems to be an unspoken agreement among hip-hop artists not to sue each other over lyric sampling. For example, the Beastie Boys’ albums 3 and 4 contain samples from hip-hop artists such as Big Daddy Kane, Kurtis Blow, EPMD, Fab Five Freddy, Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five, Run-D.M.C., and Slick Rick, none of whom seem to have raised any legal or financial concerns.

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53 A rare exception is Marley Marl’s 2001 suit against Snoop Dogg, in which Marley Marl alleged that Snoop Dogg had replayed portions of “The Symphony” without permission. However, Snoop Dogg shot back, arguing that “The Symphony” contained unlicensed samples from Otis Redding’s “Hard to Handle” In other words, Marley Marl did not have a valid copyright in the first place and thus could not sue. See McLeod and DiCola, *Creative License*, 136. However, because Snoop Dogg’s track borrowed and replayed the material from Marley Marl, the case is not one of a hip-hop musician suing another over sampling.

54 For example, in Positive Black Talk v. Cash Money Records (decided 2005), Jubilee alleged that Juvenile’s “Back that Azz Up” infringed the copyright of his own “Back that Ass Up.” Similarly, in BMS Entertainment v. Bridges (decided 2005), rap group I. O. F. alleged that Ludacris’s “Stand Up” infringed the copyright of their “Straight Like That.” Both of these cases concerned reperformance rather than sampling, and in both cases, the court decided in favor of the defendant. See [http://cip.law.ucla.edu/cases/2000-2009/Pages/bmsbridges.aspx](http://cip.law.ucla.edu/cases/2000-2009/Pages/bmsbridges.aspx) and [http://cip.law.ucla.edu/cases/2000-2009/Pages/positiveblacktalk.aspx](http://cip.law.ucla.edu/cases/2000-2009/Pages/positiveblacktalk.aspx).

about those samples. Hip-hop artists sampling each other seem to fall under the umbrella of what Apple Juice Kid calls “relationship-based sampling” in which musicians who know each other—either directly or indirectly—often have an easier time licensing or clearing samples.

Nor do hip-hop artists do not sue themselves or their own record labels over lyric sampling. As mentioned in earlier chapters, Public Enemy frequently samples itself. In addition to the aesthetic and historical reasons for sampling one’s own recordings, it also makes financial sense: the only copyright they infringe, if any, is their own. A copyright holder—usually a record label—owns exclusive rights to reproduce the copyrighted work or to create a derivative from that copyrighted work. Not surprisingly, nearly every album studied in this chapter contains samples from other hip-hop recordings, and each of the five groups sampled itself at least once. A Tribe Called Quest’s *Beats, Rhymes, and Life* contains 37 total samples, and 17 of these samples are of earlier recordings by A Tribe Called Quest. In other words, nearly half of all samples in the album are of the group itself. Moreover, 15 of these 17 self-samples appear in a single track, “The Pressure.” A transcription of the lyric samples from “The Pressure” appears in chapter 2 in a discussion of lyric sample collages. Thus, the practice of including lyric samples, particularly self-samples, remains prevalent in sample-based hip-hop.

This foregrounding of lyric samples in albums 3 and 4 strikingly contrasts how producers treated the other sample types. Whereas producers chose increasingly obscure source materials for their structural sample types or chopped or flipped their source materials beyond recognition, producers who sampled lyrics brought those samples to the forefront of the sonic texture. Producers count on listeners to recognize lyric samples because sampling another hip-hop artist’s voice is an act of homage. The prominence of the lyric sample and aural presence of a DJ

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56 Nor does it appear that any of these samples were licensed. According to the liner notes for both *Check Your Head* and *Ill Communication*, the group licensed a number of samples on each album, but no credit or permission is listed for any of the hip-hop artists sampled.
57 Apple Juice Kid, telephone interview with the author, 25 August 2012.
scratching draws attention both to the sample and to the act of sampling. Lyric samples are the one sample type in which producers are not subtle.

In the preceding section, I addressed general trends in sampling, such as which sample types became less popular and just how few samples artists included in albums 3 and 4. Now, it is worth addressing how each group individually responded to the new limitations imposed by a fear of copyright infringement. How do the musical styles and sampling procedures of these artists change when they have fewer samples at their disposal?

The Beastie Boys

As noted in chapter 4, the Beastie Boys frequently alternate drum samples in their percussion-only or aggregate grooves. In these instances of percussion exchange, a drum line is heard continuously throughout the track, but the sources of those sampled drums change during the line. For example, their track “Shadrach” from Paul’s Boutique (1989) alternates two primary drum samples, one from Black Oak Arkansas’s “Hot and Nasty” and the other from Rose Royce’s “Do Your Dance.” This exchange can happen on a large scale—one drum sample in the verses and another drum sample in the choruses—or a small scale—individual measures in the track alternate various drum samples. “Shadrach” and four other tracks on Paul’s Boutique include percussion exchange among the structural samples. In order for a track to have percussion exchange, however, there must be multiple available drum samples to alternate. With the reduced availability of samples, it is not surprising that the Beastie Boys very rarely produced tracks after 1991 with percussion exchange since their tracks contained so few samples in the first place. Check Your Head (1992) only contains one track with percussion exchange, and Ill Communication (1994) has no tracks with percussion exchange. The Beastie Boys had to leave out this kind of sample-based groove because they simply did not have enough available samples to create tracks with percussion exchange.
Additionally, the three Beastie Boys returned to their instrumental roots in their post-1991 albums. As mentioned in earlier chapters, the Beastie Boys began as a punk rock group before transitioning to hip-hop in the early 1980s. Many of the tracks on both *Check Your Head* and *Ill Communication* include them playing their instruments: MCA on bass, Ad-Rock on guitar, and Mike D on drums. As MCA noted, “I guess the hectic sampling laws are a bit of deterrent from sampling, so sometimes it’s easier to just make up something new.”\(^{59}\) The limits on sampling are not solely responsible for the Beastie Boys’ increased use of their own instruments in later albums: they also played their own instruments in albums 1 and 2, albeit on fewer tracks than in albums 3 and 4.

**De La Soul**

De La Soul responded to the limitations on sampling by combining sampled material with music played by live musicians, but they did not invite just any live studio musicians to perform with them. Multiple tracks on the De La Soul’s 1993 album *Buhloone Mindstate* feature new music performed by the legendary funk musicians Maceo Parker, Fred Wesley, and Pee Wee Ellis. Saxophonist Maceo Parker performed with James Brown, Parliament, and Bootsy Collins, and he also led his own bands. Trombonist Fred Wesley played with James Brown as well as the JB’s, a band that backed artists such as Lyn Collins and Bobby Byrd. Pee Wee Ellis was a saxophonist in James Brown’s band. As musicians who played in scores of funk recordings from the 1960s and 1970s, these artists’ performances have been sampled in hip-hop tracks by hundreds of artists ranging from Run-D.M.C. to MC Lyte to Cypress Hill to Makaveli (Tupac Shakur’s alter ego). However, these tracks on *Buhloone Mindstate* do not sample recordings of these musicians; instead, they feature the musicians performing new material. For example, “I Am I Be” is an aggregate structure because it includes samples of piano and tambourine from Lou Rawls’s “You’ve Made Me So Very Happy” and a Hammond organ melody from Jefferson

\(^{59}\) MCA, interviewed in McLeod and DiCola, *Creative License*, 191.
Starship’s “Miracles.” In addition to this sample-based aggregate structure, Ellis, Parker, and Wesley play new material on their instruments. “I Am I Be” and other tracks on *Buhloone Mindstate* such as “I Be Blowin’” and “Patti Dooke” juxtapose past and present by including new material played by oft-sampled performers. Rather than sampling existing recordings by these musicians, the members of De La Soul went straight to the sources, inviting the musicians themselves to perform new material on *Buhloone Mindstate*.

**Public Enemy**

Of the five groups, Public Enemy’s average number of samples per track declined the most dramatically in the 1990s. Public Enemy’s sampling style began to change following the 1990 release of *Fear of a Black Planet*. As Chuck D explains, the aesthetic changes on their next album, 1991’s *Apocalypse ’91 . . . The Enemy Strikes Black* may be attributed to a number of factors:

> There really wasn’t any grandiose plan for this album [1991’s *Apocalypse ’91 . . . The Enemy Strikes Black*], sorta written, recorded, and done on the run. *Fear of a Black Planet* [1990] had burned my brains out. Not so much the recording process, but the preparation beforehand. More than a hundred tapes of speeches, music bits, as well as research books, and the arrangement of pages and pages of lyrics on *Fear* fried me by the time of the mix. Thus the transition of Gary G-Wiz working with Hank Shocklee replaced the Bomb Squad and thus my studio role was both shrunken while yet expanded. . . . Gary G-Wiz brought a stripped down bare beat to the process. Less on the melody of sample, but a crushing beat of it.\(^{60}\)

First, Chuck D and Public Enemy’s production team were exhausted after producing two enormous sample-based albums, 1988’s *It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back* and 1990’s *Fear of a Black Planet*. For their next album, they chose an approach which required less preparation and gathering of materials to sample. Second, the production team for *Apocalypse ’91* changed significantly from the earlier albums. The Bomb Squad produced Public Enemy’s earlier albums, but by 1991, Hank Shocklee was the only remaining member of the original Bomb

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\(^{60}\) Chuck D, *Lyrics of a Rap Revolutionary*, 170.
Squad. Producer Gary G-Wiz joined the production team, but his production style differs significantly from that of the Bomb Squad’s earlier members.61

Of course, the unstated aesthetic change in all of Chuck D’s observations is the use of fewer samples. Although some tracks on the later albums have samples, none come close to the cacophony of densely-layered tracks that appeared on Fear of a Black Planet, such as “Welcome to the Terrordome” (16 samples), “Fight the Power” (17 samples), or “Anti-Nigger Machine” (18 samples). As Chuck D notes, by 1994 “it had become so difficult to the point where it was impossible to do any of the type of records we did in the late 1980s, because every second of sound had to be cleared.”62

However, Public Enemy was already using fewer samples in 1991 during the production of Apocalypse ’91. Their decrease in sampling had already begun in 1991, before the Grand Upright decision. In other words, the legal ramifications of sampling had not yet taken full effect by the production of Apocalypse ’91, but Public Enemy was already including fewer samples for the reasons described above. It is unclear if Public Enemy viewed Apocalypse ’91 as a rest period and would have then resumed their same earlier sample-heavy style were it not for the legal restrictions placed on sampling. By 1994’s Muse-Sick-N-Hour-Mess-Age, Public Enemy could not sample copiously for legal and financial reasons, but it seems that in 1991’s Apocalypse ’91, they sampled less by choice, not necessity.

Unlike their pre-1991 tracks that typically consisted of aggregate sample-based grooves with several surface sample types, Public Enemy’s post-1991 tracks typically contain intact structural samples and very few surface sample types. These intact samples contain drums and guitar or bass, but unlike other artists’ intact samples, Public Enemy’s usually also include voices. Thus, rather than sampling voices separately and incorporating them as constituent surface samples or lyric samples, Public Enemy instead chose intact structural samples that contained the

61 Ibid.
62 Chuck D, interviewed in McLeod and DiCola, Creative License, 27.
same kinds of sounds that they would have sampled separately before. Tracks such as “1 Million Bottlebags,” “By the Time I Get to Arizona,” “Get the Fuck Out of Dodge,” and “Nighttrain” all contain intact grooves whose structural sample includes short vocal or instrumental utterances. While this type of intact structural sample does not have the exact same sonic effect as lyric and constituent surface samples atop an aggregate structure, it represents Public Enemy’s attempt to recreate a sense of their earlier noisiness but with fewer samples. Now, all of the sounds come from the same source track rather than combining several different sounds from a variety of sources.

Salt ’n’ Pepa

In their pre-1991 albums, both Salt and Pepa engage textually with the samples in their music, drawing attention to the individual samples and to the act of sampling more generally. In their track “Expression,” for example, a sample of a treble-range keyboard melody from Bob James’s “Take Me to the Mardi Gras” appears as a momentary surface sample at the end of the second chorus and in the first few rapped lines of the second verse (1:18-1:39). Pepa refers to the source of this sample in her rapped line:

Yes, I’m Pep, and there ain’t nobody like my body
Yes, I’m somebody, no, I’m sorry
I’m a rock this Mardi Gras until the party ends, friends.

Similarly, “Do You Want Me” is built on an intact structural sample of guitar, bass, and the drums from James Brown’s “Say it Loud, I’m Black and I’m Proud.” The first rapped line of the track (0:23-0:27) is “you said it loud and I heard you, never tried to hurt you,” thus transforming the title of the James Brown track into an entirely different context.

The two rappers also engage more generally with the act of production and sampling in “I Like It Like That.” During a scratching interlude of several lyric samples (3:03-3:24), producer Hurby “Luv Bug” Azor drops the underlying groove, leaving only the scratched lyric samples. In response, Salt says, “Yo, what are you doing? Put the beat back on. Come on, stop playing
around, Hurb.” By speaking directly to Azor, she draws attention to the producer’s presence and to the type of music he is making—scratching sampled material.

These textual references in Salt ’n’ Pepa’s lyrics stop almost entirely after 1991, most likely because their post-1991 contain vanishingly few samples for them to make reference. Only a single post-1991 track contains any textual references either to specific sampled material or to the act of sampling in general. Their 1997 album Brand New only contains five samples in total, the smallest total number of samples and the smallest number of samples per track of all twenty albums in this chapter. Although several post-1991 tracks contain borrowed material replayed by studio musicians—such as “Gitty Up,” Heaven or Hell,” and “Brand New”—none of these tracks with replayed music contain textual references to the musical borrowing. The rappers’ textual references seem to be limited to samples rather than replayed material.

A Tribe Called Quest

As mentioned in chapter 1, many tracks on A Tribe Called Quest’s 1991 People’s Instinctive Travels and the Paths of Rhythm are united with the same sampled material from Eugene McDaniels’s “Jagger the Dagger.” This stepwise guitar figure appears as an emphatic sample at the end of five different tracks on the album, thus creating an aural sense of continuity in the album. In their post-1991 albums, A Tribe Called Quest also unifies the tracks and the albums with sonic material, but their choices of sonic material after 1991 are not sampled. For example, 1993’s Midnight Marauders contains a “tour guide,” a mechanized-sounding female voice who in the first track (0:11-0:24) announces that she “will be enhancing your cassettes and CDs with certain facts that you may find beneficial.” The tour guide reappears at the ends of seven different tracks on the album, offering such information as “A Tribe Called Quest consists of four members: Phife Dawg, Ali Shaheed Mohammad, Q-Tip, and Jarobi. A, E, I, O, U, and sometimes Y” (“We Can Get Down,” 3:57-4:19) or “You’re not any less of a man if you don’t pull the trigger; you’re not necessarily a man if you do” (“Sucka Nigga,” 3:55-4:06). The tracks
on 1996’s *Beats, Rhymes, and Life* are unified with spoken passages recorded from various conversations among and between the members of the group. For example, “Jam” concludes with an intoxicated-sounding Q-Tip slurring his speech and complaining about needing to find something “new.” Similar aesthetics govern these three albums because all include a unifying type of sonic material throughout the album, but with the availability of fewer samples after 1991, the members of A Tribe Called Quest unified the tracks with material that was not sampled.

Copyright, Sampling, and Reception

If we accept these five groups as a representative sample of hip-hop artists from the late 1980s and 1990s, then it is clear that both the numbers of samples in and the distribution of sample types in their music dramatically changed in the early 1990s. Not only do groups include fewer samples in their tracks, but they also altered their approaches to their music to accommodate the lack of samples. Some groups had to eliminate certain elements of their music, such as the Beastie Boys’ percussion exchange and Salt ’n’ Pepa’s textual references to sampled material, but by and large, the groups worked creatively to maintain sonic consistency and continuity among their albums, regardless of how many samples those albums contained. Many hip-hop groups adapted their sampling techniques to provide their listeners with a hip-hop version of Baraka’s “changing same”: the sound sources were different but the aural effects were largely unchanged. With a typological methodology, we can see specifically how artists rechanneled their creative impulses when they were no longer able to sample as much as they once had.

My analytical approach to this repertory is an attempt to maneuver the current scholarly conversation away from its present state, which is dominated by a good-versus-evil rhetoric in which the producers of sample-based hip-hop are David to the Goliaths of major record labels, disingenuous copyright holders, and sample troll companies such as Bridgeport. Demers concludes her book by asking the reader, “What kind of musical culture to we want in the future?” She suggests that outdated laws, lack of support from major record labels, and the right
of the copyright holder to determine how or if at all their music is sampled reflect “the potential of IP [intellectual property] law to silence and deaden our future musical culture.” McLeod rails against what he calls the “shell game” of sample licensing: “In the end, everyone loses: the samplers, the samples, the uncredited musicians, and the public, which has been denied the opportunity to hear the full creative potential that digital sampling once promised.” By these scholars’ estimations, the inability to sample is equivalent to the destruction of an entire musical genre. According to Vaidhyanathan, “The death of tricky, playful, transgressive sampling occurred because courts and the industry misapplied stale, blunt, ethnocentric, and simplistic standards to fresh new methods of expression.”

Further, most scholarship praises what Demers calls “outlaw” sampling artists such as Danger Mouse (Brian Burton) or Girl Talk (Gregg Gillis)—two twenty-first-century producers whose music is almost entirely sample-based—but fails to acknowledge artists such as those discussed in this chapter who adapted their sample-based musical language in the 1990s. Vaidhyanathan criticizes the music of artists who continued to sample, claiming that most sampling in the late 1990s was “too often clumsy and obvious.” Indeed, McLeod and DiCola seem reluctant to allow these artists much recognition at all:

Just because licensing requirements spurred creative workarounds doesn’t necessarily mean that limiting creative options was a good or a necessary thing. It just means that hip-hop survived in one form or another. Making the effort to hide samples or steering away from sampling toward other techniques may have either negative creative effects or serendipitous ones—it’s hard to generalize.

McLeod and DiCola suggest that any artists who adapted their music production were either affected negatively or else were only successful as a result of luck or serendipity.

63 See Steal this Music, 144-46.
64 McLeod, Freedom of Expression®, 104-5.
65 Vaidhyanathan, Copyrights and Copywrongs, 144.
66 Ibid., 143.
67 McLeod and DiCola, Creative License, 192.
Further, present scholarship on this music is mired in nostalgia. Many scholars and critics, including these and others, either lament the loss of the sample-based music style of the late 1980s or else suggest revisions to copyright law and licensing fees that would make it possible for artists to make that kind of music again.\textsuperscript{68} The group whose sample-based musical style they most often lament the loss of and long for its return is Public Enemy.

Scholars and critics frequently cite Public Enemy as the prime example of a hip-hop group whose music was ruined by the restrictions placed on sampling. McLeod and DiCola argue that releasing a \textit{Fear of a Black Planet} album today would be financially untenable.\textsuperscript{69} Demers claims that Public Enemy is “unwilling to sample music anymore,” but this is not entirely true.\textsuperscript{70} As shown above, Public Enemy continues to sample, albeit less often and using different techniques. Further, they had already begun sampling less in 1991’s \textit{Apocalypse ’91}, an artistic choice they made, not one dictated by sample licensing fees or their record label. Both Demers and McLeod, as well as some critics, argue that the changes in Public Enemy’s sample-based style irreparably damaged the group’s music and that the lack of samples is primarily to blame for the group’s decline in popularity and influence after 1991. For example, in 2006, \textit{Pitchfork} reviewer Sean Fennessey wrote, “Public Enemy’s post-\textit{Apocalypse ’91} output has been scattershot to say the least, and though Chuck D’s preacher-cum-prophet perspective began to wear on listeners, the noticeable dip in beat quality played a huge role in the group’s decreasing importance.”\textsuperscript{71}

When \textit{Muse-Sick-N-Hour-Mess-Age} was released in 1994, however, contemporary critics were evenly divided between generous praise and complaints that Public Enemy simply did not

\textsuperscript{68} For suggested revisions to existing copyright structures, see Arewa, “From J. C. Bach to Hip Hop,” 629-30 and 641-45; Demers, \textit{Steal this Music}, 142-44; and McLeod and DiCola, \textit{Creative License}, chapter 7, “Proposals for Reform.”
\textsuperscript{69} McLeod and DiCola, \textit{Creative License}, 213.
\textsuperscript{70} Demers, \textit{Steal this Music}, 10.
have the same effect on the listener that it once did. Most of the negative reviews criticized Chuck D’s lyrics and style of lyric delivery, not the group’s “beats,” “hooks,” or “music”—all are terms critics used to describe grooves. According to Jon Pareles of the New York Times, Chuck D was “starting to sound like a street-corner demagogue, preaching to the wind.”

Critics complained that Chuck D’s lyrics, once electrifying, had grown wearisome, both in content and in style of delivery. Rolling Stone’s Touré claimed Muse-Sick was “plagued by Chuck’s uninventive cadences, unimaginative lyrics, and rhyming that never swings enough to qualify as flow.” The problems with Public Enemy’s post-1991 output were clearly not the lack of samples.

This is not to say, of course, that the changes in Public Enemy’s production techniques went completely unnoticed by critics in the 1990s. Some critics did observe that the music of Muse-Sick sounded less dense than that of earlier Public Enemy albums. For instance, Danyel Smith of Rolling Stone praised the “less dense, more melodic” style of Muse-Sick, and Pareles lamented that the album “loses momentum about halfway through. The music thins out; self-righteousness takes over.”

Pareles’s critique emphasizes the “self-righteousness” of the lyrics, though, not the “thinness” of the grooves. Other critics mention nothing of a different sound, continuing to praise the same qualities that defined the music of Public Enemy’s earlier albums. The sources of the grooves may have changed, but Public Enemy’s grooves continued to achieve effects similar to its earlier output, a point confirmed by reviews such as Christopher Jon Farley’s observation that “the songs are relentless, pummeling, chaotic,” and Paul Verna’s praise of the “unadorned fervor and kinetic force” of a few “chaotic but truly candid” tracks.

The tendency of twenty-first century scholarship to blame sampling lawsuits and corporations behind them for single-handedly ruining Public Enemy’s musical style fails to take additional musical, political, and social factors into account. Public Enemy’s sample-based music did change after *Fear of a Black Planet*, but this change is not the reason their musical style was received differently. They had already begun sampling less often in 1991’s *Apocalypse ’91*, which was their own choice rather than a legal imposition. If anything, it was Public Enemy’s inability or unwillingness to change their message or style that contributed to their decreased popularity. The group’s politically-charged message of “fight the power” was no longer as shocking or relevant as it had been in the late 1980s. Rapper Flavor Flav publicly and embarrassingly struggled with the law and with addiction. Perhaps most significantly, gangsta rap exploded in popularity in the early 1990s, and many listeners simply wanted to hear a different style and message in hip-hop than what Public Enemy had to offer. By the mid-1990s, listeners were less interested in what Guthrie P. Ramsey, Jr. has called “the political insurgency of Public Enemy’s lyrics [that were] encouraging listeners to stand up to hegemonic forces in society.” Instead, Public Enemy and hip-hop had become “hegemonic forces in society,” leaving little for the listeners to “stand up to.” The reduced sampling and the corresponding changes in Public Enemy’s style had very little to do with the group’s declining popularity. Although several critics and scholars in the twenty-first century claim that Public Enemy’s new approach to sample-based music irreparably damaged their music and popularity, according to contemporary reviewers, it was, perhaps ironically, the group’s failure to adapt their lyrical messages and lyric delivery style that negatively affected them more significantly than did their new manner of sampling.

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76 Contemporary reviewers noted these influences and factors as well. See, for example, Pareles, “Public Enemy Tries to Get its Message Across” and Touré, “Bust This.” For an overview of gangsta rap (also called “reality rap”) as a genre, see Krims, *Rap Music and the Poetics of Identity*, 70-80.

All five of the groups studied in this chapter sampled differently after 1991. Every group sampled fewer recordings, and every group created fewer sample-based grooves. As frustrating as the limitations placed on sampling are, they also offer musicians opportunities to learn new production techniques and approaches. The Beastie Boys returned to their instrumental origins and inspired a new popular music genre, the rap-punk hybrid.\(^{78}\) De La Soul invited guest musicians to perform on their albums, thus introducing a generation of listeners to legendary funk musicians who otherwise might have gone unrecognized. Salt and Pepa either produced or co-produced all of the tracks on their 1997 album *Brand New*, a first for the two of them. As Salt told an interviewer, “We’re proud of this album because it was controlled totally by Salt ’n’ Pepa.”\(^{79}\)

Even today, it is very unusual for women to be involved in hip-hop production.

Sample-based music’s reception is based on many factors, not just the number of samples it contains. As frustrating as the limitations placed on sampling can seem, these limitations have encouraged musicians to learn new techniques for making hip-hop. Focusing entirely on these limitations traps the discussion in the past, and this kind of critical nostalgia only addresses the fact that sample-based hip-hop is different than it used to be, rather than discovering and exploring the specific ways artists changed their approaches to hip-hop after the Grand Upright decision. A typological study of this music is one methodological means of reorienting the discussion toward the creative processes of sampling. Rather than spending our scholarly energy lamenting the loss of the sample-based music of the past, it is far more productive to evaluate and specify the changes that occurred. By focusing our attention on what music and techniques have emerged as artists have responded to various challenges, we can have far more productive scholarly conversations about sample-based hip-hop.


THE VALUE OF THE TYPOLOGY FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

I began this dissertation identifying a problem: no unified language existed for classifying and labeling samples. As a solution to this problem, I created a typology for categorizing the various types of samples. Hip-hop producers sample sounds in several distinguishable and concrete ways, which I named and classified in the typology. But that was only the beginning. Labeling sample types is only the first stage of this particular inquiry. Once we have broken samples down into various types, then we can begin to differentiate elements of sample-based music’s style. The typology is a tool for talking about sample-based hip-hop, and in each chapter of this dissertation, I offered a case study demonstrating how the typology helps us address and understand specific issues in the music: an in-depth investigation of the lyric sample type; a study of the sampling traditions surrounding a single track, Public Enemy’s “Bring the Noise”; a comparison of the musical styles of two sample-based albums, the Beastie Boys’ Paul’s Boutique and Public Enemy’s Fear of a Black Planet; and an analysis of five hip-hop groups and how copyright restrictions affected their sample-based musical styles. In each subsequent chapter, I increased the scope of the investigation, expanding my inquiry from a single type to a single track to two albums to over a decade of music.

With the typology, we can specify aspects of sample-based hip-hop that might have otherwise gone unnoticed. Now we can quantify how Public Enemy’s and the Beastie Boys’ sample-based musical styles differ and explain the specific ways artists treat lyric samples. Moreover, rather than simply stating that artists sampled less after 1991, we can describe how they adapted to the availability of fewer samples by using different sample types. Returning to the passage from Theodore Gracyk quoted in the introduction, we can now speak of sample-based hip-hop’s “antique rubies” and “holly reds,” not just its light and dark reds.
As we have seen, producers can use the same technique—sampling—for many purposes and to create very different-sounding musical products. Similarly, we can use the same analytical tool—the typology—to discuss various aspects of sample-based hip-hop. The typology grounds discussions of this repertory in a shared language. To close the present stage of my research, I will suggest a few other ways the typology can help us talk about sample-based hip-hop. Note that in most of these cases, the typology is a small but vital part of the discussion because it enables us to speak uniformly of sampling.

Analyzing the music is just one facet of the study of any repertory. In this dissertation, I focused largely on analyzing the musical style of sample-based hip-hop to demonstrate the efficacy of this typology. In the case studies in chapters 2-5, I studied the music’s sound and style, and then I used those observations to frame issues such as traditions of sampling, changes in musical styles over time, and how producers choose their source materials. In conversations with hip-hop producers, I confirmed my findings and deepened my understanding of other issues, such as why a producer would choose to sample the voice of a specific rapper. The typology can enrich our understanding of sample-based hip-hop because it offers us a way to talk about the music’s construction and how its construction contributes to and affects its style.

Of course, the music’s sound is only one element of an inquiry of any given repertory—a crucial element, but a singular element nonetheless. To close this dissertation, I suggest additional paths of study for sample-based hip-hop that arose during this study, particularly in my conversations with hip-hop producers. While these are ideas for future projects, they also remind us that musical style is just one aspect of a thorough understanding of music’s style, culture, history, and participants.

Many questions remain for us to answer about sample-based hip-hop. How do different types of musical knowledge intersect for hip-hop producers? How does a person’s experience playing a musical instrument affect their approach to production? Many of the producers with whom I spoke are drummers, including Forest Factory, Shane McConnell, Apple Juice Kid,
MacGregor Leo, KLC, and Mr. Len. All of them told me that their experiences as instrumental musicians shaped how they understand music and influenced their production techniques and styles. How do their sampling practices compare to those of musicians who are not instrumental musicians, such as DJ Bobcat, Witchypoo, or DJ Jazzy Joyce? In particular, the typology can help us quantify what kinds of sounds producers sampled to create their drum lines. Is there a correlation between producers who are drummers and the types of drum lines they create in their music? Do drummer and non-drummer producers each tend toward a particular structural sample type? How do drummer and non-drummer producers create the drum line in tracks with non-percussion structures?

Changes in technology since the early 1990s have affected nearly every aspect of sampling.\(^1\) Chapter 2 describes how time-consuming and labor-intensive early sampling was, often because samplers and drum machines had very limited data storage capacities. As KLC recalls, in the 1980s, “you were lucky if you could find a [sampling] machine that would give you eight seconds of sound.”\(^2\) Early hip-hop producers needed shelves, crates, or entire rooms to store their physical records, but now, most producers have converted most or all of their vinyl to digital. Sampling artists can increase the size of their libraries digitally rather than by keeping physical records in their homes or studios.\(^3\) As Vinroc told me, “Instead of taking up 1500 square feet in a place I probably can’t afford living in, I probably have a 500 gigabyte hard drive. I no longer need four copies of a Foxy Brown record from 1997, you know?”\(^4\) Ironically, as samples

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\(^2\) KLC, telephone interview with the author, 28 August 2012.

\(^3\) On the website cratekings.com, producers will record video or photo tours of their studios, which gives us a sense of just how many physical records they can store. See, for example, the photo gallery tour of DJ Spinna’s collection at http://www.cratekings.com/inside-dj-spinnas-home-studio/ or the video tour of J. Rocc’s collection at <http://www.cratekings.com/chasing-the-dragon-j-rocc-record-room-tour/>.

\(^4\) Vinroc, telephone interview with the author, 10 August 2012.
became more difficult to clear and to license during the 1990s, the means of storing recorded music and creating sample-based tracks became more available and affordable for producers.

How an increased ability to store music affect how producers create their tracks? If producers can have store more music in less space and no longer worry about only being able to sample 2.5 seconds of music at a time, then have their sampling practices grown increasingly diverse and fragmented? Or, has the increased availability of data storage space had the opposite effect, driving producers to sample the same materials over and over? Consider the surface sample type: as shown in chapter 5, surface sample types—that is, samples that take up the least amount of digital storage space on a sampler—plummet in popularity in the 1990s, just as music data storage increases. Do producers move away from the smallest of sample types because they have an increased amount of data and can therefore create larger swaths of sound, or does this shift away from the surface sample type reflect more about licensing fees instead?

Digital technology allows producers to store and transport their music painlessly, but it also facilitates how producers acquire music production software. According to my consultants, some producers do not pay for their software; instead, they acquire “cracked” versions of software and samples—that is, versions of the software with the copy protection, serial numbers, or hardware keys removed. As one producer who asked not to be identified explains, aspiring producers are often “smart with computers, and they know their loopholes about getting digitalized media and digitalized software for free off the internet.” The tools for producing hip-hop are much easier to acquire now than they were in the early days of hip-hop production, when a producer needed a sampler or drum machine such as the Akai MPC60 or E-mu SP-1200, not to mention dozens of vinyl records from which to sample.

This easy music storage and ready availability of production technology has been both a blessing and a curse for hip-hop production. According to KLC, many of today’s younger producers who assemble their beats using software fail to understand how their music relates to the larger picture of recording technology and audio fidelity:
I started in an era where you had to know how to record. Now you look at Pro Tools, and they have all these things that enhance you. While you’re using Pro Tools, everything is going to sound the same. If you take Michael Jackson’s “Thriller” and put it next to a song that was recorded on Pro Tools, you will hear a difference. By me being a producer and engineer, I can hear that. Today’s producers would never hear it. They would hear that it sounds the same, but they won’t hear the difference between recording on a two-inch reel and Pro Tools. I can hear the difference.\(^5\)

Are there differences in the mechanism of programs that prevent certain combinations of sounds, or is this aesthetic based entirely on one’s own experience and understanding of the music? Using the typology, we can quantify how producers combine various sampled sounds and search for various nuances, interactions, and subtleties. Do these details decrease in prevalence with later producers, or have the details simply changed in style?

This ready availability of technology has also affected how producers learn their craft. As I argued in chapter 4, producers formed a canon of music to sample, mostly drawn from 1960s and 1970s funk and soul recordings. Nearly all producers learn this canon of music. Producers born in the 1960s and early 1970s know this music because they grew up listening to it, but producers born in the mid- or late 1970s and early 1980s came to know these recordings from listening to hip-hop recordings that sampled funk and soul, and then by studying the source materials of their favorite hip-hop producers. 9th Wonder (b. 1975) told me that his initial exposure to funk and soul music was not through listening to the music of artists such as James Brown, Ronnie Laws, or Cameo, but through listening to the hip-hop that sampled those funk and soul artists, including Biz Markie, Slick Rick, and Public Enemy. Only when he went to college did he learn that the rap artists he loved were backed not by live musicians but by samples of earlier recorded music, which led him to seek out the music catalogues of those sampled artists.\(^6\)

Vinroc (b. 1977) relayed a similar experience:

I first started listening to hip-hop when I was seven or eight. I thought these were bands playing this music. I was like, “This is great music.” Because I was so young, I just thought they were bands. As I got older, I realized, hey, these are not bands, these are

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\(^5\) KLC, telephone interview with the author, 28 August 2012.

\(^6\) 9th Wonder, telephone interview with the author, 8 August 2012.
loops from old records. Then I would slowly discover them. One of my favorite groups growing up was Gang Starr, and DJ Premier, and I would slowly discover where he was finding these sounds, and that’s how I got exposed to these funk and soul and jazz records: listening to hip-hop.  

For producers whose parents did not listen to funk and soul during their childhoods, their primary exposure to funk and soul came through the mediation of other hip-hop artists’ samples. Thus, we can separate hip-hop producers into generations. The first generation, born before 1970, sampled funk and soul records because they had heard them growing up. The second generation, born in the 1970s and early 1980s, sampled funk and soul records because they heard them through the funk and soul older hip-hop producers had sampled.

That brings us to the current generation of producers, which includes anyone born after approximately 1980. This line is blurred around 1980: Forest Factory (b. 1980) is part of the second generation while Apple Juice Kid (b. 1976) is part of the third generation. The third generation of producers sample whatever recordings they want, not just funk and soul. In fact, many of them do not sample funk and soul at all because they do not even know this canon of records that were so valuable to earlier generations of producers.

I asked all of the third-generation producers about various funk and soul artists and recordings, and not a single person named a specific funk artist; in contrast, producers from the first and second generations spoke at length about the various funk and soul artists whose music they sampled. By tracing these three generations of hip-hop producers, it seems that the first generation sampled funk and soul recordings they knew from home, the second generation sampled funk and soul recordings they knew from the first generation’s samples, and producers from the third generation sample whatever they want because they know sampling as a technique rather than as a repertoire of specific samples or sampled genres.

How might a producer’s knowledge of funk and soul recordings translate into his or her creation of a hip-hop groove? If we apply the typology to the grooves of each generation of

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7 Vinroc, telephone interview with the author, 10 August 2012.
producers, we might find that each generation prefers a subtype of groove that is influenced by 
their listening habits. For example, first-generation producers probably sample each layer of an 
aggregate groove from a different funk recording, while third-generation producers likely use 
more non-percussion grooves, creating their own drum lines from their libraries of sound 
fragments.

The producers with whom I spoke produce with a variety of software, including Ableton 
Live 8, Audacity, Cubase 5, FL Studio, Logic, Mixmeister Studio, Pro Tools, and Reason 5. Most 
of the older producers learned how to produce using samplers such as the MPC and then 
eventually switched over to computer software, but the majority of the younger producers learned 
how to produce using software. For example, MacGregor Leo (b. 1988) learned how to produce 
using computer programs such as Logic and Pro Tools; after a few years, he purchased and 
learned how to use an “old-school” MPC sampler. His trajectory is exactly the opposite of 
producers ten and twenty years his senior who learned how to produce using the MPC because it 
was the only technology available, and then switched over to other programs as they became 
available. How do these technologies affect how producers create sample-based tracks? In 
particular, does one program more easily facilitate the creation of certain sample types compared 
to another? Are their typological similarities between artists who use the same technologies to 
create their music?

The changing production technology also affects the social and educational aspects of 
sample-based hip-hop production. Most of the first- and second-generation producers I 
interviewed told me that they learned to DJ and produce through the guidance of an older or more 
knowledgeable friend, relative, or neighbor. The third generation of producers does not require 
the same kind of mentoring because they are their own teachers. Both MacGregor Leo and 

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8 On the relationship of domestic spaces and the recording studio, see Paul Harkins, 
“Appropriation, Additive Approaches and Accidents: The Sampler as Compositional Tool and Recording 
Dislocation,” *Journal of the International Association for the Study of Popular Music* 1, no. 2 (2010): 11- 
13.
Witchypoo (b. 1981) told me that they taught themselves how to produce without much help from anyone else. Hip-hop production has shifted from a community orientation to a largely self-taught practice.

When third-generation producers do seek help or advice, they do so via online resources such as message boards and YouTube tutorials. As Shane McConnell (b. 1994) explains:

I ended up just going to YouTube and finding different tutorials based on what I was trying to learn at that particular time. I would usually come across a problem that I was having in making a song sound the way I wanted to, and I would just go to YouTube and type in “how to do this.” I’d look at the video—I’d have to watch it a few times now and again—and nine out of ten times, it solved my problem and I was able to move forward in my music. The awesome part is that I never forget those skills. Once I use it once, it just sticks with me. I don’t forget it, and I use it in every production I make after it. It continually builds upon my base of knowledge—all those little YouTube videos.9

Many third generation producers solve their problems with a Google search. How are these online communities and inquiries different from the in-person communities of earlier generations? Does this autodidactic group of producers create music with more or fewer samples or sample types?

The internet has also affected how the current generation of producers interacts with rappers. Producers from the first and second generations collaborated with rappers at every stage of the project, both physically and aesthetically. DJ Bobcat (b. 1967), who has produced for rappers such as Eazy-E, LL Cool J, 2Pac, and MC Ren, related several anecdotes about times spent in the studio with those rappers and others; in fact, he told me that LL Cool J’s legendary spoken line “come on, man” at the beginning of “Mama Said Knock You Out” was actually directed at Bobcat. The two were arguing because when they began recording the track in the studio, LL Cool J “was rapping differently than the way we had rehearsed it at his house.” The two men first rehearsed the track at LL Cool J’s home, and then they moved to the studio to record it. Bobcat also says that, during the 1980s and early 1990s, producers and rappers would “ear-hustle” each other, that is, they would frequently drop in on each other’s recording sessions.

9 Shane McConnell, interview with the author, 13 September 2012.
even if they were not involved in the recording session themselves.\textsuperscript{10} In other words, producers from the first and second generations work closely with the rappers for whom they are producing, and they most often share the production space with each other.

In the current generation of hip-hop production, though, some producers never actually meet the rappers for whom they are making beats. For example, Apple Juice Kid produced the track “Rockin’ with the Best” for rapper MC Lyte, and while he did speak to her on the phone, they never met in person. He produced the track’s beat, emailed it to her, and she recorded her lyrics over the groove he had created.\textsuperscript{11} This is relatively common for the current generation of hip-hop producers because their beats are created using computers and then disseminated online. One need only peruse the Twitter followers of any major hip-hop producer to find dozens of aspiring producers, all of whom sell their beats on their websites or via hosting sites such as SoundClick, SoundCloud, and Reverb Nation. Shane McConnell has sold a few of his beats using these hosting sites, but “with almost any website, there is a way to rip the music off that website. Someone’s made a program where you can get that music without paying for it or without a download link.”\textsuperscript{12} Thus, the internet facilitates rapper-producer collaborations, but the internet also makes it easy for aspiring rappers to steal producers’ beats from hosting sites. This is not to say that all collaborations take place online: third-generation producers MacGregor Leo and Shane McConnell have both sold beats online and worked with rappers in person.

Just since the 1980s, the face of hip-hop production has changed dramatically. Once, producers needed thousands of LPs and samplers that had tiny memory capacities, and they worked in close physical and artistic proximity with the rappers for whom they were producing. Now, producers have digital music libraries on a single hard drive and a variety of software options for their production, some of which they do not even necessarily have to purchase. They

\textsuperscript{10} DJ Bobcat, telephone interview with the author, 24 August 2012.
\textsuperscript{11} Apple Juice Kid, telephone interview with the author, 25 August 2012.
\textsuperscript{12} Shane McConnell, interview with the author, 13 September 2012.
teach themselves how to use the software and rely on online tutorials when they run into problems. They produce beats for artists whom they have never met. All of these factors point to hip-hop production’s shift from an interactive process to an increasingly solitary pursuit.

This autodidactic tendency and availability of technology of the current generation of hip-hop producers may potentially affect the male domination of the genre. Female hip-hop producers were and have always been few and far between because it was extremely difficult for women to enter the predominantly male circle around hip-hop production and DJing, as Tricia Rose noted in her groundbreaking 1994 study:

Young women were not especially welcome in male social spaces where technological knowledge is shared. Today’s studios are extremely male-dominated spaces where technological discourse merges with a culture of male bonding that inordinately problematizes female apprenticeship. Both of these factors have had a serious impact on the contributions of women in contemporary rap music production.13

I shared the above passage with DJ Jazzy Joyce, the only female hip-hop producer I interviewed, and she said her experience echoes Rose’s description. Growing up, Jazzy Joyce spent her weekends at the home of a male cousin who owned turntables and DJ equipment, but she did not have unlimited access; instead, she had to wait until her cousin and his friends left the house before she could use the turntables. As she explains, “Every Saturday, all of his friends would come over and they would stay there and just make the tapes: DJing, rapping, practicing. I used to have to wait all damn Saturday until they finished to get a turn, to get to touch a turntable.”14 Not only did she have to wait for her cousin and his friends to finish before she could practice DJing, but she also found it difficult to ask for help or advice about DJing. Most men she asked for help required sex in exchange: “They would say, ‘Okay, let me get some of that you-know-what, and I’ll show you how to do this.’ You have say, ‘This shit again? Let me on the tables. Fuck you. I’ve got to figure out how to learn this.’” So it was covert. Pay attention, practice, take every little

13 Rose, Black Noise, 58.
14 DJ Jazzy Joyce, telephone interview with the author, 20 August 2012.
tidbit of information that you could.”\textsuperscript{15} Help was available, but at a price Jazzy Joyce was unwilling to pay. She had to navigate a male-dominated world on several levels to learn how to DJ and produce hip-hop. Clearly, Jazzy Joyce faced numerous obstacles that were non-issues for her male counterparts, and it is extremely unlikely that her story is unique. Certainly, not all male producers are sexual predators, but it is clear that women are not always comfortable or welcome in hip-hop’s male-dominated spaces. I cannot substantiate Jazzy Joyce’s claim largely because there are so few female producers her age that I have not been able to consult any other women about their experiences.

Hip-hop production has moved away from the communal and social context where it was conceived toward a self- or internet-taught practice and a solitary working environment. The sense of community that enriched the experience of the first generations of male producers also alienated or threatened many women who wanted to produce hip-hop. If a producer does not even need to meet the person who is teaching them to produce or the rapper for whom he or she is producing beats, then female producers may find a less-threatening space for creating music since they never have to enter the physical space occupied by male artists. Has the decreased need for in-person tutorials created safer spaces for aspiring female producers? If so, how many women and girls are taking advantage of these safer spaces? Or, has hip-hop production become cemented as a male-dominated practice, regardless of the directions technology or tutelage may take?

By evaluating the social, educational, and technological spaces where hip-hop is conceived, we can also consider whether there are tangible differences in the sounds and styles of producers who operate in these contrasting spaces. Here, the typology allows us to quantify differences in producers’ musical styles, and then we may evaluate the correlation—maybe even causation—of various factors. For example, how does the production style of Shane McConnell, 

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.
an eighteen-year-old who learned to produce using YouTube tutorials and has never lived in a world without Pro Tools or MP3s, compare to that of DJ Jazzy Joyce, who was born in 1967 and taught herself to DJ and produce hip-hop when the boys weren’t looking? Or has sample-based hip-hop changed so much since its inception that we would be comparing apples to Macintoshes?

Sample-based hip-hop raises a wide range of musical, social, cultural, political, linguistic, historical, and geographical issues. The typology is a language with which we can discuss the music. I hope that by codifying a language to describe the sampling techniques, I have established the groundwork for a discourse. The typology has proven its usefulness in answering several questions about how hip-hop musicians borrow, and it awaits application to help solve further problems and investigate additional inquiries. Now we have a unified vocabulary for describing sampling, which will facilitate many more fruitful analyses of this music and the people who create it.
Books and articles


———. “‘People’s Instinctive Assumptions and the Paths of Narrative’: A Response to Justin Williams.” *Music Theory Online* 15, no. 2 (2009).


Farley, Christopher John. “‘Which Side You On?’ Public Enemy, which performs what might be called classic rap, returns with a new target for its anger—gangsta rappers.” Time 144, no. 12 (19 September 1993): 76


Plumley, Yolanda. “Citation and Allusion in the Late Ars Nova: The Case of *Experance* and the *En attendant* Songs.” *Early Music History* 18 (October 1999): 287-363.

———. “Playing the Citation Game in the Late 14th-Century Chanson.” *Early Music* 31 (February 2003): 20-40.


Interviews and personal communications

9th Wonder [Patrick Douthit]. Telephone interview with the author. 8 August 2012.

Apple Juice Kid [Stephen Levitin]. Telephone interview with the author. 25 August 2012.

———. Email message to the author. 15 September 2012.

DJ Bobcat [Bobby Ervin]. Telephone interview with the author. 24 August 2012.

———. Text messages to the author. 22 September 2012.

DJ Jazzy Joyce [Joyce Spencer]. Telephone interview with the author. 20 August 2012.

DJ Rap [Charissa Saverio]. Telephone interview with the author. 14 August 2012.

Factory, Forest. Telephone interview with the author. 19 August 2012.

KLC [Craig Lawson]. Telephone interview with the author. 28 August 2012.

Leo, MacGregor. Interview with the author. Bloomington, IN. 7 September 2012.

———. Text messages to the author. 9 September 2012.


———. Text messages to the author. 14 September 2012.

Mr. Len [Leonard Smythe]. Telephone interview with the author. 23 August 2012.

———. Email message to the author. 3 September 2012.

Vinroc [Vincent Punsalan]. Telephone interview with the author. 10 August 2012.

Witchypoo [Christopher Vallez]. Email message to the author. 7 September 2012.
EDUCATION

2013    Ph.D. in Musicology, Indiana University
        Dissertation: “A Typology of Sampling in Hip-Hop”
        Advisor: J. Peter Burkholder
        Committee: Phil Ford, Daniel R. Melamed, Kyle Adams

2006    Master of Music in Music History, Bowling Green State University
        Advisor: Carol A. Hess

2004    Bachelor of Arts in Music, Butler University
        Magna cum laude

AREAS OF INTEREST
Sample-based hip-hop; musical borrowing; late eighteenth-century opera; music history pedagogy; American music; African American music

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Spring 2013    Adjunct instructor, University of Redlands
        MUS 301: Music history sequence for music majors, 1750-present
        MUS 233: American music for music majors and non-majors

2011-2012    Visiting lecturer, Indiana University
        M542: Graduate music history review, 1750-present
        M402: Music history sequence for music majors, 1750-present
        Z260: American music for non-music majors

2009-2011    Indiana University
        Associate instructor (teaching assistant)
        M401 and M402: music history sequence for music majors
        Course professors: J. Peter Burkholder, Phil Ford, Massimo Ossi, and Nik Taylor

Student accomplishments:
Katelyn Paradise, 2010 Austin B. Caswell award for best pre-1750 undergraduate research paper
Danny Xie Zhizhong, 2011 Austin B. Caswell award for best pre-1750 undergraduate research paper
2006-2007 Adjunct instructor, BGSU Firelands

MUCT 101: Music appreciation
MUCT 110: World music
MUCT 237: Jazz history

2004-2006 Teaching assistant, Bowling Green State University

MUCT 101: Music appreciation
MUCT 350: Music history sequence for music majors, 1900-present

Course professors: Katherine Brucher, Steven Cornelius, and Carol Hess

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS
Under contract “Nerdcore Hip-Hop”
In Cambridge Companion to Hip-Hop, ed. Justin Williams
(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming)

Forthcoming “Paul’s Boutique and Fear of a Black Planet: Sampling and the Creation of a Unique Musical Style”
Journal of the Society for American Music 7, no. 4 (October 2013)

Forthcoming “The Sampling Network of Public Enemy’s ‘Bring the Noise’”
Echo: A Music-Centered Journal 11, no. 1 (Spring 2013)

INTERVIEWS, PROGRAM NOTES, AND REVIEWS
http://iaspm-us.net/iaspm-us-2013-conference-reflections-amanda-sewell-on-hip-hop/

2012 “Program Notes: Mozart’s Don Giovanni”
Indiana University Opera Theater

2012 “Interview: Shane McConnell”
Transcript available: http://soundcloud.com/mixfactoryusa

2011 Live blog
Indiana University Opera Theater
During the production of W. A. Mozart’s Cosi fan tutte, provided a running commentary of historical and musical information to accompany the live stream of the opera
2010  “Program Notes: Puccini’s La Rondine”
Indiana University Opera Theater

2009  “Review: The Recession by Young Jeezy”
Black Grooves, February 2009 issue
Available http://blackgrooves.org/?p=939

2008  “Review: I Got the Feelin’: James Brown in the ’60s”
Black Grooves, December 2008 issue
Available http://blackgrooves.org/?p=842

2008  “Review: The Humdinger by Nappy Roots”
Black Grooves, November 2008 issue
Available http://blackgrooves.org/?p=816

2008  “Review: Raw Footage by Ice Cube”
Black Grooves, October 2008 issue
Available http://blackgrooves.org/?p=778

PAPERS PRESENTED
2013  “On ‘Collage’ as Term and Concept in Sample-Based Hip-Hop”
To be presented at the American Musicological Society Annual
Meeting, Pittsburgh, PA, 7-10 November 2013

2013  “I Can’t Believe You’re a Female Producer’: Female Hip-Hop
Producers, Technological Opportunities, and Gender
Stereotypes”
Presented at the International Association for the Study of Popular
Music, U.S. Branch (IASPM-US) Annual Meeting, The
University of Texas, Austin, 2 March 2013

2012  “The Sampling Network of Public Enemy’s ‘Bring the Noise’”
Presented at the Sixth Annual Echo Conference, University of
California, Los Angeles, 20 October 2012

2012  “The Sample-Based Musical Styles of Public Enemy and the
Beastie Boys”
Presented at the Fourth Biennial Student Conference of the
University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music’s
Music Theory and Musicology Society, Cincinnati, OH, 21
April, 2012

2009  “Hone Thy Geekishness’: Toward a Theoretical Perspective
of Nerdcore Hip-Hop”
Presented at the International Association for the Study of Popular

2006  “‘Just Another Repeating Sound in the Mix’: Moby’s *Play* on Alan Lomax”
 Presented at the annual Music of the South Symposium, University of Mississippi, 2 June 2006

2006  “Quotation, Dehumanization, and Familiarization: The Case of Moby and Alan Lomax”
 Presented at “Music, Memory, and Migrancy,” the Midwest Chapter meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology (MIDSEM), The Ohio State University, 30 April 2006

DEPARTMENTAL PRESENTATIONS

2012  “Copyright and its Effect on the Musical Style of Sample-Based Hip-Hop”
 Presented at the Indiana University Musicology Colloquium Series, 30 November 2012

2011  “Leda and the Swan and Arcadelt’s *Il bianco e dolce cigno*”
 Presented at the Indiana University Musicology Colloquium Series, 2 December 2011

2011  “On ‘Sampling’ As Term and Concept in Popular Music”
 Presented at the Indiana University Musicology Colloquium Series, 22 April 2011

2004  “Self-Perception and Public Reception in the Music of Charles Ives”
 Presented at the Butler University Undergraduate Research Conference, Indianapolis, IN, 16 April 2004.

INVITED LECTURES

2012  “Surviving Musicology Conferences” (panel participant)
 Indiana University Musicology Colloquium Series, 26 October 2012

2012  “Successfully Proposing a Conference Paper” (panel participant)
 Indiana University Musicology Colloquium Series, 10 February 2012

2008  “Musicology in the Age of Facebook” (panel participant)
 Indiana University Musicology Colloquium Series, 7 October 2012
2006  “Scare Quotes and Academic Colons: Finding a Teaching Job in the ‘Real World’” (guest lecture)
Bowling Green State University, 5 April 2006

2006  “New Music at Bowling Green State University” (guest lecture)
Bowling Green State University, 3 February 2006

SERVICE TO SCHOLARLY ORGANIZATIONS
2013  Program committee member, Popular Music Study Group of the American Musicological Society

2012-present  Social media manager, Popular Music Study Group of the American Musicological Society

2012  Program committee member, Graduate Theory and Musicology Annual Symposium
Indiana University

UNIVERSITY OR DEPARTMENTAL SERVICE
2010-11  President, Graduate Musicology Association
Indiana University

2007  Vice President, Graduate Musicology Association
Indiana University

2005-2006  Vice-President, Praecepta (student chapter of the Society of Composers, Inc.)
Bowling Green State University

COMMUNITY SERVICE
2011-present  Volunteer, Mother Hubbard’s Cupboard
Bloomington, IN

GRANTS
2013  Indiana University Musicology Department Travel Fund travel grant to IASPM-US Conference, Austin, TX

2012  Indiana University Musicology Department Travel Fund travel grant to UCLA Echo Conference, Los Angeles, CA

2012  Indiana University Jacobs School of Music Student Travel Committee travel grant to UCLA Echo Conference, Los Angeles, CA
2006 Bowling Green State University chapter of Pro Musica travel grant to Music of the South Symposium in Oxford, MS

MEMBERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
American Musicological Society

American Musicological Society: Midwest Chapter

American Musicological Society Pedagogy Study Group

American Musicological Society Popular Music Study Group

International Association for the Study of Popular Music

Society for American Music

College Music Society

LANGUAGES
English: native
French: speaking and writing, basic; reading, fluent
German: reading, fluent

REFERENCES
J. Peter Burkholder, Distinguished Professor of Music, Indiana University
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   Phone: (812) 855-7097

Phil Ford, Assistant Professor of Music, Indiana University
   Email: fordp@indiana.edu
   Phone: (812) 855-6985

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   Email: dmelamed@indiana.edu
   Phone: (812) 855-8252