**Rhythmical Characteristics of Rap Music on the Material of Works by Modern Russian and American Rappers**

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# Introduction

# Origins of rap music

Rap Music, a genre of R&B that includes rhythmic poetry put over a musical background. The background consists of beats combined with digitally isolated sound bites from other recordings. The first recording of rap was made in 1979 and the genre began to take notice in the U.S. in the mid-1980s. Though the name rap is often used back and forth with hip hop. The name hip-hop comes from one of the earliest phrases used in rap on the song “Rapper’s Delight” by Sugarhill Gang. “I said a hip hop, hippie to the hippie, the hip, hip a hop, and you don't stop, a rock it to the bang bang boogie, say, up jump the boogie, to the rhythm of the boogie, the beat.”. In addition to rap music, the hip-hop subculture also formed other methods of expression like break dancing, graffiti art, a unique slang vocabulary, and fashion sense.

Rap started in the mid-1970s in the South Bronx area of New York City. The birth of rap is, in many ways, like the birth of rock and roll. Both originated in the African American community and both were first recorded by small, independent record labels and marketed towards, mostly to a black audience. And in both cases, the new style soon attracted white musicians that began performing it. For rock and roll it was a white American from Mississippi, Elvis Presley. For rap it was a young white group from New York, the Beastie Boys. Their release “(You Gotta) Fight for Your Right (To Party!)” (1986) was one of the first two rap records to reach the Billboard top-ten. Another early rap song to reach the top ten, “Walk This Way” (1986), was a collaboration of Run-DMC and Aerosmith. Soon after 1986, the use of samples was influenced in the music of both black and white performers, changing past thoughts of what make up a “valid” song.

Rap music was first a cross-cultural product. Most of its important early practitioners, Kool Herc, DJ Hollywood, and Afrika Bambaataa, were either first- or second-generation Americans of Caribbean background. Kool Herc and DJ Hollywood are given credit for introducing the Jamaican style of cutting and mixing into the musical culture of the South Bronx. Herc was the first DJ to buy two copies of the same record for just a 15-second break (instrumental segment) in the middle. By mixing back and forth between the two copies he was able to double, triple, or endlessly extend the break. By doing this, Herc made the turntable a musical instrument.

While he was mixing with two turntables, Herc would also perform with the microphone in Jamaican style—joking, boasting, and using all around group references. Herc’s parties soon gained notice and were recorded on cassette tapes. Copies of the tapes quickly made their way through the Bronx, Brooklyn, and uptown Manhattan, creating a number of similar DJ acts. Among the new DJs was Afrika Bambaataa, the first Black Muslim in rap. Bambaataa often waged in sound-system battles with Herc. The sound system competitions were held in city parks, where hot-wired street lamps supplied electricity, or at local clubs. Bambaataa would sometimes mix sounds from rock-music and television shows into the standard funk and disco advance that Herc and most of his followers relied on. By the 1990s any sound source was considered useable and rap artists borrowed sounds from such disparate sources as Israeli folk music, bebop jazz records, and television news broadcasts.

In 1976 Grandmaster Flash introduced the technique of quick mixing, in which sound bites as short as one or two seconds are combined for a unique effect. Shortly after Flash introduced quick mixing, his partner Grandmaster Melle Mel composed the first extended stories in rap. Up to this point, most of the words heard over the work of disc jockeys had been improvised phrases and expressions. In 1978 DJ Grand Wizard Theodore introduced scratching of records to produce rhythmic patterns.

In 1979 the first two rap records appeared: “King Tim III” by the Fatback Band, and “Rapper’s Delight,” by Sugarhill Gang. A series of verses by the three members of Sugarhill Gang, “Rapper’s Delight” became a national hit, reaching number 36 on the Billboard magazine popular music charts. The spoken content, mostly bragging spiced with fantasy, came largely from material used by the earlier rappers. The background for “Rapper’s Delight” was supplied by studio musicians, who copied the basic groove of the hit song “Good Times” (1979) by a disco group Chic.

Sampling brought into question the ownership of the new sound. Some artists claimed that by sampling recordings of black artist they were challenging white corporate America and the recording industry’s right to own black cultural expression. Rap artists were also challenging other musicians’ right to own, control, and be given credit for the use of their creations. By the early most artists requested permission for the use of samples. Some commonly sampled released CDs containing dozens of sound bites specifically for sampling. One effect of sampling was the sense of musical history among black youth. Earlier artists were celebrated as cultural heroes and their older recordings were reissued and repopularized.

During the mid-1980s, rap moved from the verges of hip-hop culture to the mainstream of the American music industry as white musicians began to accept the new style. In 1986 a rap record reached the top ten on the Billboard pop charts with “(You Gotta) Fight for Your Right (To Party!)” by the Beastie Boys and “Walk This Way” by Run-DMC and Aerosmith. Known for combine rock music into its raps, Run-DMC became one of the first rap groups to be featured regularly on MTV. Also during the mid-1980s, the first female rap group, Salt-N-Pepa, released the singles “The Show Stoppa” (1985) and “Push It” (1987). “Push It” reached the top 20 on Billboard’s pop charts.

In the late 1980s rap became highly politicized, resulting in the most mediated social agenda in popular music. The groups Public Enemy and Boogie Down Productions condensed this political style of rap. Public Enemy became noticed with their second album, “It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back” (1988), and the theme song “Fight the Power” from the motion picture “Do the Right Thing” (1989), by filmmaker Spike Lee. Stating the importance of rap in black culture, Chuck D., of Public Enemy, referred to it as the African American CNN.

Next to the rise of political rap came gangsta rap, which attempts to state an outlaw lifestyle of sex, drugs, and violence in the city. In 1988 the first major album of gangsta rap was released, “Straight Outta Compton” by the rap group NWA (Niggaz With Attitude). Songs from the album created an extraordinary amount of bickering for their violent attitudes and hatred towards a number of organizations, including the FBI. However, attempts to censor gangsta rap only served to publicize the music and make it more attractive to both black and white youths.

Since the mid-1980s rap music has influenced both black and white culture in America. Much of the slang of hip-hop, like dis, fly, def, chill, and wack, have become standard parts of vocabulary for a number of young people of various backgrounds. Many rap enthusiasts claim that rap is used as a voice for a people without access to the mainstream media. According to supporters, rap serves to provoke self-pride, self-help, and self-improvement, passing on a positive and fulfilling sense of black history that is missing from other American institutions. Gangsta rap has been severely criticized for lyrics that many people interpret as praising the most violent and misogynistic (woman-hating) views in the history of popular music. Defenders of gangsta rap argue that no matter who is listening to the music, the raps are good because they precisely show life in inner-city America.

# History of Russian rap

The history of Russian music can be dated back to Soviet Union. The first attempts of rapping in the Soviet Union took place in 1984 in Samara, when the group "Час Пик" (Peak-Hours), led by Aleksandr Astrahov recorded 25 minutes-lenght gramophone record "Rap". It was recorded under the influence of Grandmaster Flash and Captain Sensible. But these experiments were not generally recognized at that time, and until the beginning of the 90's there were no rap artist in Russia and Soviet Union.

“Russian rap” is a young phenomenon compared, for instance, to the Russian rock. However, as Russian rock, Russian rap has one huge problem – imitation. Many people do not accept Russian rap as they think it is an imitation of Western culture, including the style of “black brothers”.

However, Russian rap has its own style and it is very unique. Sometimes Russian rappers try to stay close to the origins, style and manners of the American rap which leads to unnatural style of rapping. On the other hand Russian tries to stay close to the Russian reality and does not imitate the Western style.

The main problem of Russian rap is that there are a lot of prejudices connected to Russian rap and the latter cannot prosper in such conditions. It is interesting that if rap was originated as a subculture of black population both in the US and France, in Russia rap was composed dominantly by the white population and it cannot be considered as a creation of a subculture.

The pioneers of Russian rap were Malchishnik (Мальчи́шник, Russian for "bachelor party", rap group from Moscow), Bogdan Titomir, Mister Maloy, but the recognition of the rap genre came with the rise of Bad Balance and their album Naletchiki Bad B. released in 1994. Russian hip hop, just like Canadian hip hop is inspired by Rastafari music, which hit an upswing during the fall of the Soviet Union.

Some Russian rap artists have achieved commercial success, including Detsl, Bad Balance, Timati, Centr, Kasta, and Belarusian artist Seryoga, who combined original rap with the native Russian satiric song genre chastushka.

At the early-2000's the most popular performers were Kasta, Detsl, Bad Balance.

At the mid-2000's underground bands began to appear and became popular in Moscow (like Money Makaz, Supreme Playaz, Underwhat, Ddrop, Kazhe Oboima). Also, at the same time in Russia and Ukraine new R&B performers appeared (Maks Lorens, Bianca, Satsura, Band'Eros).

In 2007 CENTR became increasingly popular, partially due to aggressive promotion on the internet, at 2008 they won the MTV Russia Music Awards.

At the same time german russian-speaking rapper ST1M received scandalous popularity after production of his single "Я Рэп" (I'm Rap), featuring Seryoga, in which he was dissing nearly all the notable Russian rappers.

In 2008 on Russian musical channel Muz-TV started a hip-hop show Battle for Respect, which led the winner Ant (Zasada Production) to become highly popular.

In the last years the most commercially successful Russian rapper was Timati, who was recording singles in English featuring American rappers like Snoop Dogg, Timbaland, Xzibit, P.Diddy, Busta Rhymes, Craig David, Fat Joe, Mario Winans and DJ's (Laurent Wolf, DJ Antoine) on his first album on English (SWAGG).

# The analysis and representation of rap music

How can we talk about a rapper's use of rhythm? First we have to decide what kind of scope we want to have. Are we talking about a section of 8 beats, a verse, a song, an album, or the rapper's work in general? Clearly the wider in scope we get, the shakier our conclusions must be, since exceptions to our claims are bound to appear. This shakiness should not dissuade us from going for the general conclusions: ultimately we would like to say what makes one rapper's use of rhythm different from another rapper's. If we were even more ambitious, we would try to identify what makes one rapper not only different but also better than another rapper. "Better" could be defined in a number of ways: for example, according to the judgment of the rhythmic analyst or according to popularity in record sales.

Use of rhythm is an important basis upon which listeners judge and describe a rapper's style. An important criteria is whether a rapper can "flow" or not. Though the term "flow" is not well-defined, it is clear that it is a positive quality for a rapper to possess. Roughly speaking, it refers to the use of rhythm to create a sense of continuity and forward-moving direction in a rap. Some raps intentionally break up the flow through the use of a halting, stuttering or choppy rhythmic style. This may be valued as a style in its own right, but in any case it is a difference in use of rhythm to which listeners are well attuned. Listeners are also sensitive to a formulaic, trite, or square rhythmic style and have a negative evaluation of raps that fall into this category.

An important goal in the rhythmic analysis of rap is to try to formalize these categories to which listeners are sensitive as well as extend beyond them to a more detailed rhythmic characterization of raps, perhaps characterizing the styles of individual rappers. With these goals in mind, I have written a computer program, *beatnik*, that assists in the rhythmic analysis of rap. This paper will describe *beatnik* and give some examples of its application.

# Description of *beatnik*

*Beatnik* takes a base representation of a rap's rhythm and produces others from it. The base representation is typed into a file by the user, and this file is then "fed" to *beatnik*. The representations produced by *beatnik* are useful for analysis but would be tedious to create by hand. In addition, if multiple representations were made by hand, any change to the rap's transcription would have to be made in more than one place. Using *beatnik*, there is one base file that represents the rap, so a single change to it will be reflected in all other representations once the base file is run through *beatnik* to perform the update.

What are these output representations that I believe are useful for analysis, and what is the input representation used in the base file? To answer these questions, I will first describe the base file format, and then the output representations. Before getting into the specifics of the base file format, it is necessary to understand what information it is designed to contain.

The base file was designed to contain the text of a rap broken up into syllables, and the rhythm in which those syllables are rapped. The rhythm information is similar to that contained in traditional musical notation. Like traditional notation, beats are subdivided into a number of units (this can vary from beat to beat), but unlike traditional notation, there is no notion of a measure. Every unit of a beat (called a syllable) is either empty or has a syllable associated with it. Due to the abstract nature of this rhythmic information, *beatnik* is not equipped to study rhythmic nuances such as placement of syllables slightly before or after beats or the exact performance of dotted rhythms. There is no duration information in the file, i.e. every syllable is represented as if it lasted one unit. The base file was also designed to contain information about how the lyrics should be printed "just for the words," i.e. without rhythmic information. It can also contain information about syllables that the transcriber subjectively evaluates to be "stressed," whatever meaning is assigned to that word.

An example is probably the best way to understand the specific manner in which I chose to represent this information, i.e. the file format itself. To represent the following line of traditional notation,



the user would write:

big-+ \_ butt \_ wo+ men in \_

ti+ ny bi+ ki+ \_ nis \_ \_

The fact that each measure appears on a separate line is for convenience only and means nothing to *beatnik*, although *beatnik* does require that lines not be broken in the middle of a beat, since where this occurs is usually an indication of a typo. Note that plusses are used instead of hyphens to indicate syllable breaks. This is so a hyphen that is part of a hyphenated word like "big-butt" can be distinguished from the character that merely indicates a syllable break. Underscore characters indicate an empty syllable.

Within a line, syllables are separated by any number of tab or space characters. Tab characters are the most useful since they allow alignment of syllables from one line to the next. Lines may follow each other directly or contain any number of blank lines in between. Any line beginning with a number sign (#) is interpreted as a comment and ignored.

The number of syllables per beat (spb) is assumed to be two unless explicitly set to another number. Once it is set to another number, the setting "sticks." For instance, it is not necessary to keep on specifying triplets for each beat in a series of triplets. spb is set using the percent sign followed by a positive integer. For example, to represent the following line of traditional notation,



the user would write:

big-+ \_ butt \_ wo+ men in \_

%3ti+ ny bi+ %2ki+ \_ nis \_ \_ \_

I have used spaces rather than tabs to separate the syllables "ti," "ny", and "bi" so that the alignment of syllables can be preserved starting on "ki." This is for convenience only, and does not mean anything to *beatnik*. spb can only be specified for the first syllable of a beat.

A syllable may be preceded by any number of dollar signs. When the lyrics are printed just for the words, a line break will be inserted for every dollar sign encountered. For example, if the correct printing were

Big-butt women
In tiny

Bikinis

the user would write

Big-+ \_ butt \_ wo+ men $In \_

ti+ ny $$Bi+ ki+ \_ nis \_ \_

Finally, an "at" symbol (@) may be placed before a syllable to indicate that the syllable is subjectively deemed "stressed." The special codes that may precede a syllable have to appear in the order I have described them: spb change, dollar signs, and then "at" sign. So, roughly speaking, a syllable takes the following form:

[**%*integer***] **$**\* [**@**] ( **\_** | ***text***) [**+**]

where items in square brackets are optional, "**$**\*" indicates any number of dollar signs including none, and "( **\_** | ***text***)" indicates that either underscore or some text must be present in this location.

The simplest form of output is the lyrics. This representation is not particularly useful for rhythm analysis but it is of course the preferred form for a semantic analysis of the rap and having it as an output of *beatnik* allows the base file to be the single canonical copy of not only the rhythm but also the words. My experience transcribing the lyrics of a number of rap songs has shown me that small tweaks to the transcription are commonly needed after the bulk of the transcription is done, and it would be annoying to have separate rhythm and lyrics files that could get out of sync.

The output types other than lyrics all represent rhythmic information. Although the largest rhythmic structure recorded in the input is a beat, the rhythmic outputs impose something like a measure structure on the rhythm by considering beats to be grouped into uniformly sized groups represented as separate lines. For example, here is one of *beatnik*'s representations of the sample phrase I have been using:

0 2 456 | big-+ \_ butt \_ wo+ men in \_

0123 5 | ti+ ny bi+ ki+ \_ nis \_ \_

In the example above, *beatnik* was told to use four beats per line. *Beatnik* can produce two other versions of this representation, but I find the one above to be the most useful. The two others are:

\* \* \*\*\* | big-+ \_ butt \_ wo+ men in \_

\*\*\*\* \* | ti+ ny bi+ ki+ \_ nis \_ \_

which can be useful to give a sense of syllable density without the confusing clutter of numbers, and

0 0 010 | big-+ \_ butt \_ wo+ men in \_

0101 1 | ti+ ny bi+ ki+ \_ nis \_ \_

which can be useful to get a sense of on beat/off beat syllable placement. The above representations notate all non-empty syllables. *beatnik* can also output representations that notate only stressed syllables, i.e. those marked with '@'.

*beatnik* can also output a bar graph of the number of non-empty or stressed syllables on each beat and its "and." This is only applicable to raps notated with two syllables per beat. For raps containing triplets, *beatnik* can, if instructed, ignore the triplets and treat the rap as all two syllables per beat. This feature was very useful for a rap I analyzed in which there was only one triplet, since one triplet is not very significant when collecting an overall statistic or looking for overall patterns.

# Example Use of *beatnik*

Now let's look at how *beatnik*'s representation can aid in the analysis of a rap. Below is a representation of Ice Cube's first rap in the song "Gangsta Gangsta" from *Straight Outta Compton*. Rhymes have been underlined by hand: for certain technical reasons, *beatnik* cannot underline. If the syllables preceding a rhyming syllable align rhythmically with the rhyme below, I consider the whole collection to be a rhyme though of course only the last syllables actually rhyme. The first example of this below is "would like to say" rhyming with "around the way."

Line 1 starts on the downbeat with a long string of syllables that breaks up and gains space with "like me." Line 2 again starts on the downbeat with a string of syllables, but this time they gain a little space with "been \_ let out \_ " and then continues on with "the penitentiary." The same amount of space is left after "ry" as "me," leaving the downbeat of line 3 empty. Up to the pickup to line 4 ("That I'm a"), line 3 is quite spread out, providing a contrast to the density of lines 1, 2, and 4.

Line 4 is similar to line 1, and is in fact followed on line 5 by the same 01234 pattern of line 2, though immediately afterwards line 5 broadens out. Line 6 starts similarly to line 3 but ends up in a long syllable string. The large space between "youth" and "I" on line 5 and the spaced-out nature of "weed out / Now" contrast with the density of the subsequent string ("I'm the motherfucka that you read about").

The first and second halves of line 7 are rhythmically identical, and they rhyme. Note that lines 7-12 alternate between having a down beat and starting on the syllable after the downbeat. The beginnings of lines 7-8 and 9-10 are parallel in structure. The pattern is

0123 ...

12 4?670...

The '?' indicates a slight divergence on the 5th syllable. The reason the divergence is only slight is that I have chosen to consider "Dre'll" as two syllables, though it could have been transcribed as one.

The very long pause "gang...and" contrasts with the almost continuous string "My man Dre'll fuck you up in a minute with a" that follows. The "0357" rhythm of line 11 is the most strikingly syncopated moment of the rap, and it is followed by the very on-the-beat "you're toothless." Line 2 has a syncopated string "And then you say," followed by the most strikingly on-the-beat moment of the rap, "God damn they ruthless." Its on-the-beat feeling is heightened by its rhyme alignment with "you're toothless" above. Much in the same way that strings of syllables are counterbalanced by pauses and/or more widely spaced syllables, the syncopated and non-syncopated rhythms here serve to counterbalance each other.

Lines 14 and 15 start with the same 1234601 rhythm, which shares the 123460 rhythm with the beginning of line 12 (which has the text "And then you" in common with line 15). The pattern of "01356" is present in the second half of line 15 and the first half of line 16. Lines 17 and 18 are similar except the dense middle of 18 contrasts with the pauses of 17 by "filling in" 6,7, and 1.

The famous line 20 is very on-the-beat, giving it a very declamatory feeling. The last 2 couplets obey the general pattern

01234??'''2'''6'

0'2'''67012'''''

where " '" indicates an area of low density. The string on the downbeat (01234??) is a pattern seen also in lines 2, 5, 7, and 9.

The distance between rhymes in this rap is usually 8 beats but occasionally extends to 8.5 or 9 beats.

What does it mean to go through a rap as I have, and point out similarities & difference in rhythms? Does it mean anything? Certainly there is a danger that analysis can turn into an elaborate mind game. Once we abstract music into some notation, how can we be sure that the patterns we point out in the "score" have anything to do with aural reality? The answer is quite simple: we should use notation not on its own, but as a tool to help us listen better. For example, while analyzing the rap above, I made a conscious effort to "perform" every rhythm to myself with the words as I worked with it, not allowing myself to become lost in the pretty abstraction of numbers neatly laid out in a grid. The notation I have developed is an aid to memory and its abstraction from time (on a recording) to 2-dimensional space (on the page) makes seeing patterns easy. But it is not the object of analysis itself: the recording is.

With rap I think it is important to realize that the rhythms arise not out of some purely rhythmic intent of the rapper but also out of constraints due to a need to fit the words he wants to use to the rhythm. For example, patterns may reappear in slightly altered form not out of an intent to vary the pattern, but out of an inability to fit a given line to the pattern or find a new line that does. It is not as if the rapper first writes down some rhythm for the rap and then fits words to it. So we cannot look at the rhythmic intent of a rapper in the same way that we could look at the rhythmic intent of a composer writing a percussion piece. Research (most probably in the form of interviews) needs to be done to understand the answer to the perennial question, "Did you write the music [here rhythm] or the words first?" I think that the answer will not be one or the other; rather, I suspect that both rhythm and words are composed at the same time, though if any notation is made, I'm almost certain it is of words only.

# Example Use of *beatnik* on a larger scale

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| At the beginning of this paper I mentioned that a desirable goal is to perform an analysis of sufficient scope so as to characterize the rhythmic style of a rapper. I have not done this; the purpose of this paper was to present*beatnik* and give examples of how its representation of a rap can be useful in pursuit of this goal. I did, however, perform transcriptions of five other raps from *Straight Outta Compton*, and derived some more general conclusions from these. These transcriptions are listed at the end of the paper. This data allowed me to form a tentative hypothesis about Ice Cube's rapping style. He tends to distribute his syllables onto beats rather than their "ands." This is particularly true of beats 1 and 2 (I number beats from zero). The bar graphs below illustrate this phenomenon. Syllables are labeled by their beat number followed by a zero for "on the beat" and a one for the "and." So, for example, 41 means the "and" of beat 4. The next number is a count of the number of syllables that occur at this rhythmic location in the whole rap. The bar is simply a graphical representation of the number that precedes it. |  |

Compare these to the following bar graphs for MC Ren and Eazy E's raps:

I would like to reiterate that this is a *tentative* hypothesis: many more transcriptions of the three rappers need to be made to seriously assert it. I mention this hypothesis here even though it is tentative since my purpose is mainly to suggest the possibilities for analysis using *beatnik*.

There are some conclusions that can be drawn from the six transcriptions I have made, treating N.W.A. as a whole. The raps are structured around 16-beat couplets with end rhymes that are normally 8 beats apart but frequently extend a beat or so beyond that. Exceptions to this pattern are rare (about one per rap). 4 of the six raps contain a line that rhymes internally, and is divided up into two rhythmically identical or very similar parts. Each rap contains 12-16 couplets. Speaking on a more vague level, the raps have what I would call a well-variegated rhythmic structure. Similarities between patterns abound, but extensive use of contrast is present as well (syncopated/on-the-beat, dense/sparse). Maybe this is a statement so vague that it could be made of any rapper. Only further transcriptions could tell.

*beatnik* has several representation of raps that I mentioned early on in this paper but did not use in analysis. As I mentioned earlier, the representations using only '\*' or just '0' and '1' for rhythm are not as useful as the one which uses the numbers 0...7. The main reason for this is that using 0...7, when you look at a syllable, you know not only if it is empty or not but also exactly where it is located. I only used the criteria of empty/not-empty rather than stressed/not-stressed because going through and evaluating which syllables you deem to be "stressed" is not only subjective but also hard to decide.

More transcriptions of raps need to be made, and more able rhythmic analysts than I need to address the issue of rhythmic style in rap. A tool like *beatnik* might be useful in analysis since it produces multiple representations of raps (lyrics, bar graphs, full scores of rhythm and words) from a single base input file. At the very least, I feel that the notation I have invented for the full score, whether it is created by *beatnik* or by hand, is compact and illustrative. Unlike traditional musical notation, it is easy to generate using a word processor.

# Extensions / Technical Details

At present it is a bit inconvenient to generate output representations since you have to select an input file, type the name of an output file, and then open the output file. Ideally, one should be able to switch from the input to an output representation with one keystroke. This would be similar to switching on and off the "Reveal Codes" option of WordPerfect or the "Show" option of Microsoft Word. Unfortunately, this would make the program massively more complicated.

*beatnik* is written in C++ and was developed on a Macintosh. There is no Macintosh-specific code in the program, though, so it could easily be used on a variety of platforms including DOS, Windows, and UNIX.

 Warning: lots of problems with the alignment of the numbers below due to bad Word to HTML conversion.

Ice Cube's second rap from "Gangsta Gangsta"

01 7 \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ When

02 012 4 6 0 234 me and my \_ pos+ \_ se \_ stepped \_ in the house \_ \_ \_

03 234 6 012 456 \_ \_ All the punk-+ \_ ass \_ nig+ gas start \_ brea+ kin' out. \_

04 234 701 3 \_ \_ 'Cause you know, \_ \_ they know what's \_ up \_ \_ \_ \_

05 012 456701234 6 So we start \_ look+ in' for the bi+ tches with the big \_ butts \_

06 1 4 012 45 \_ Like \_ \_ her, \_ \_ \_ but she keep \_ cry+ in' \_ \_

07 1234 6 0 2 45 \_ "I got a boy+ \_ friend." \_ Bitch, \_ stop \_ ly+ in'. \_ \_

08 0 2 456 01234 Dumb-+ \_ ass \_ hoo+ ker ain't \_ no+ thin' but a dyke. \_ \_ \_

09 01234 701234 6 Sud+ den+ ly I see, \_ \_ some nig+ gas that I don't \_ like. \_

10 0 2345 701 3 56 Walked \_ o+ ver to 'em, \_ and said, "What's \_ up?" \_ The first \_

11 01234 01234 nig+ ga that I saw, \_ \_ \_ hit 'im in the jaw \_ \_ \_

12 0 2 456701 3 Ren \_ starts \_ stom+ pin' em, and so did \_ E \_ \_ \_ \_

13 12 4 6 0 23456 \_ By that \_ time, \_ got \_ rushed \_ by se+ cu+ ri+ ty \_

14 0 23 701 3 Out \_ the door, \_ \_ \_ but we don't \_ quit \_ \_ \_ \_

15 2 4 70 23 567 \_ \_ Ren \_ said, \_ \_ <"Let's start \_ some shit!"> \_ I got a

16 0 2 70 23 shot+ \_ gun, \_ \_ \_ \_ and here's \_ the plot \_ \_ \_ \_

17 01234 67012 4 6 Ta+ kin' nig+ gas out \_ with a flur+ ry of \_ buck+ \_ shots. \_

18 0 2 4 7 12 45 Boom \_ boom \_ boom, \_ \_ yeah, \_ I was \_ gun+ nin' \_ \_

19 1234 67012345 7 \_ And then you look, \_ all you see is nig+ gas run+ nin' \_ And

20 01234567012345 fal+ lin' and yel+ lin' and pu+ shin and screa+ min' and cus+ sin', \_ \_

21 12 4 70 2 4 6 \_ I stepped \_ back, \_ \_ and I \_ kept \_ bu+ \_ stin'. \_

22 1234 670 23 56 \_ And then I rea+ \_ lized it's time \_ for me \_ to go \_

23 234 7 1 3456 \_ \_ So I stopped, \_ \_ jumped \_ in \_ the ve+ hi+ cle \_

24 12 4 7012 4 6 \_ It's like \_ this, \_ \_ be+ cause of that \_ who-+ \_ ride \_

25 1234 6 01234567 \_ N dou+ ble U \_ A's \_ wan+ ted for a ho+ mi+ cide 'Cause

26 0123456 0 23 67 I'm the type o' nig+ ga that's \_ built \_ to last \_ \_ If you

27 0 23 5670123 6 fuck \_ with me \_ I'll put a foot in your ass \_ \_ See, \_

28 01234 67 2 4 6 I don't give a fuck \_ 'cause I \_ \_ keep \_ bel+ \_ lin' \_

29 0 2 4 67012 45 <bel+ \_ lin'> \_ Yo, \_ what the fuck are they \_ yel+ lin'? \_ \_

Ice Cube's third rap from "Gangsta Gangsta"

01 012 456 0 2 4 6 Ho+ mies all \_ stan+ din' a+ \_ round, \_ just \_ han+ \_ gin' \_

02 2 4 67 2 4 67 \_ \_ Some \_ dope-+ \_ dea+ lin', \_ \_ some \_ gang-+ \_ ban+ gin'.

03 234 67 12 4 \_ \_ We de+ cide \_ to roll \_ and we \_ deep \_ \_ \_

04 23456 01234 \_ \_ See a nig+ ga on \_ Day+ ton's and we creep \_ \_ \_

05 2 4 01234 \_ \_ Real \_ slow, \_ \_ \_ and be+ fore you know \_ \_ \_

06 1234 6 01234 6 \_ I had my shot+ \_ gun \_ poin+ ted in the win+ \_ dow \_

07 12 4 7 01 3 \_ He got \_ scared, \_ \_ and hit the \_ gas \_ \_ \_ \_

08 2 4 7 0123456 \_ \_ Right \_ then, \_ \_ I knew I had to smoke his ass \_

09 12 4 670 234 6 \_ He kept \_ rol+ \_ lin', I jumped \_ in the buck+ \_ et, \_

10 1234 6 012 4 6 \_ We could+ n't catch \_ him, \_ so I said \_ "Fuck \_ it." \_

11 23456 0 234 \_ \_ Then we hea+ ded right \_ back \_ to the fort \_ \_ \_

12 0123456701 3 567 Swea+ tin' all the bi+ tches in the bi+ ker \_ shorts \_ We did+ n't

13 01 3 12 45 get no \_ play, \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ from the \_ la+ dies \_ \_

14 12 4567012 4 6 \_ With six \_ nig+ gas in the car, are you \_ cra+ \_ zy? \_

15 234 70 2 45 7 \_ \_ She was scared, \_ \_ and it \_ was \_ show+ in' \_ We

16 0 2 45 7 12 4 6 all \_ said, \_ <"Fuck you, \_ bitch!"> \_ and kept \_ go+ \_ in' \_

17 234 1234 6 \_ \_ To the hood, \_ \_ \_ \_ and we was fi[xi]n' \_ to \_

18 2 45 7 12 4 6 \_ \_ Find \_ some+ thin' \_ else \_ to get \_ in+ \_ to \_

19 0 2 4 6 01 3 Like \_ some \_ pus+ \_ sy, \_ or in \_ fact \_ \_ \_ \_

20 12 4 7 0 234 6 \_ A bum \_ rush, \_ \_ but we \_ call it rat \_ pack \_

21 23456 012 4 6 \_ \_ On a nig+ ga for \_ no+ thin' at \_ all \_ Ice \_

22 012 45670 2 4 6 Cube+ 'll go \_ stu+ pid when I'm full \_ of \_ eight \_ ball. \_

23 12 4 6701 3 \_ I might \_ stum+ \_ ble, but still won't \_ lose. \_ \_ \_ \_

24 234 6701 3 7 \_ \_ Now I'm dressed \_ in the coun+ ty \_ blues \_ \_ \_ 'Cause

25 0123456 0 23 67 I'm the type o' nig+ ga that's \_ built \_ to last \_ \_ If you

26 0 23 5670123 6 fuck \_ with me \_ I'll put a foot in your ass \_ \_ See, \_

27 01234 67 2 4 6 I don't give a fuck \_ 'cause I \_ \_ keep \_ bel+ \_ lin' \_

28 0 2 4 67012 45 <bel+ \_ lin'> \_ Yo, \_ what the fuck are they \_ yel+ lin'? \_ \_

Ice Cube's rap from "\_\_\_\_ the Police"

01 012 4 670 23456 Fuck the po+ \_ lice, \_ Co+ min' straight \_ from the un+ der+ ground: \_

02 12 45670 234 \_ A young \_ nig+ ga got it bad \_ 'cause I'm brown. \_ \_ \_

03 1234567012 4 7 \_ And not the o+ ther co+ lor so po+ lice \_ think \_ \_ They

04 012 4567012 456 have the au+ \_ tho+ ri+ ty to kill a mi+ \_ no+ ri+ ty. \_

05 2 4 670123 67 \_ \_ Fuck \_ that \_ shit 'cause I ain't the one \_ \_ For a

06 0 2345670123 56 punk \_ mo+ ther+ fuck+ er with a badge and a gun \_ To be \_

07 012 701 3 67 beat+ in' on, \_ \_ \_ \_ and throw'n' in \_ jail: \_ \_ We can

08 0 234 6701234 go \_ toe to toe \_ in the mid+ dle of a cell. \_ \_ \_

09 012 4 6 012 4 6 Fuck+ in' with \_ me \_ 'cause \_ I'm a tee+ \_ na+ \_ ger \_

10 2345670 234 6 \_ \_ With a lit+ tle bit of gold \_ and a pa+ \_ ger. \_

11 012 4 01234 6 Search+ in' my \_ car, \_ \_ \_ look+ in' for the prod+ \_ uct, \_

12 0123456 012 4 6 Think+ in' ev+ 'ry nig+ ga is \_ sel+ lin' nar+ \_ co+ \_ tics. \_

13 2 456 0123 6 \_ \_ You'd \_ ra+ ther see \_ me in the pen \_ \_ Than \_