The Society for Music Theory Podcast

Three's a Crowd: Understanding the Rise of Two-Chorus Form in Recent Popular Music

Jeremy Orosz (University of Memphis) jorosz@memphis.edu

SMT-Pod 3.09 (Spring 2024) Release Date: Thursday, March 21

Permalink: https://smt-pod.org/episodes/season03/#e3.9

(Page intentionally left blank)

Supplemental Tables

Table 1: 2021 Two-Chorus Songs (Sorted by Publication and List Rank)						
	NPR only		Billboard only (Hot)			
Rank	Artist and Song	Type	Rank	Artist and Song	Туре	
3	Lucy Dacus, "Thumbs"	2	20	Masked Wolf, "Astronaut In The Ocean"	3	
5	Sharon Van Etten and Angel Olsen, "Like I Used To"	1	22	Pop Smoke, "What You Know Bout Love"	1	
6	Cassandra Jenkins, "Hard Drive"	2	23	Machine Gun Kelly Blackbear, "My Ex's Best Friend"	1	
19	Emily Scott Robinson, "Let 'Em Burn"	1	31	Giveon, "Heartbreak Anniversary"	1	
24	Japanese Breakfast, "Be Sweet"	3	36	Lil Baby, "On Me"	1	
28	Pink Panthress, "Just for me"	1	44	SpotemGottem (ft. DaBaby) "Beat Box"	1	
31	Amber Mark, "What It Is"	2	47	Drake (feat. Lil Baby), "Wants And Needs"	1	
33	Charli XCX, "Good Ones"	1	50	CJ, "Whoopty"	1	
36	Esperanza Spalding, "Formwela 10"	1	52	SZA, "Good Days"	2	
37	Victoria Monét, "F.U.C.K."	2	65	Justin Bieber & benny blanco, "Lonely"	1	
42	BLACKSTARKIDS, "Juno"	2	75	Mooski, "Track Star"	1	
43	Joy Oladokun, "jordan"	1	76	Moneybagg Yo, "Time Today"	1	
52	amaarae (ft. Moliy), "SAD GIRLZ LUV MONEY (Remix)"	2	83	Bad Bunny, "Yonaguni"	2	
57	Larry June, "Iced Coffee"	1		Songs on both lists		
75	Silvia Estrada, "Marchita"	2	Rank (Avg)	Artist and Song	Туре	
80	Tyler, The Creator, "WUSYANAME"	1	5	Lil Nas X, "Montero (Call Me By Your Name)" (NPR- #1, Billboard- #9)	3	
83	Khemmis, "Avernal Gate"	2	16.5	Olivia Rodrigo, "Deja Vu" (NPR- #20, Billboard- #13)	2	
89	Pom Pom Squad, "Drunk Voicemail"	1	53.3	Rauw Alejandro, "Todo de Ti" (NPR #7, Billboard #100)	2	
91	Bachelor, "Back Of My Hand"	1	63	Drake (etc.), "Knife Talk" (NPR- #40, Billboard- #86)	1	
96	Snail Mail, "Automate"	2	69.5	Moneybagg Yo, "Wockesha" (NPR- #97, Billboard- #42)	1	

Table 2: 2021 Two-Chorus Songs (Sorted by Formal Type)					
Type 1 Ex	camples (22) :	Type 2 & 3	Type 2 & 3 Examples (15):		
Only Verse-Chorus Units (plus Intro		 Include a bridge or significant contrasting 			
and Outro)		section			
No bridge or significant contrasting		 Type 2 have a contrasting section after 			
section		the final chorus.			
Rank Song Artist and Title		 Type 3 have a contrasting section before the final chorus 			
5 (NPR)	Sharon Van Etten & Angel Olsen, "Like I Used To"	Type 2 Examples			
19 (NPR)	Emily Scott Robinson, "Let 'Em Burn"	Rank	Song Artist and Title		
22 (Hot)	Pop Smoke, "What You Know Bout Love"	3 (NPR)	Lucy Dacus, "Thumbs"		
23 (Hot)	Machine Gun Kelly and Blackbear, "My Ex's Best Friend"	6 (NPR)	Cassandra Jenkins, "Hard Drive"		
28 (NPR)	Pink Panthress, "Just for me"	16.5 (Avg)	Olivia Rodrigo, "Deja Vu"		
31 (Hot)	Giveon, "Heartbreak Anniversary"	31 (NPR)	Amber Mark, "What It Is"		
33 (NPR)	Charli XCX, "Good Ones"	37 (NPR)	Victoria Monét, "F.U.C.K."		
36 (NPR)	Esperanza Spalding, "Formwela 10"	42 (NPR)	BLACKSTARKIDS, "Juno"		
36 (Hot)	Lil Baby, "On Me"	52 (NPR)	amaarae (ft. Moliy), "SAD GIRLZ LUV MONEY (Remix)"		
43 (NPR)	Joy Oladokun, "jordan"	52 (Hot)	SZA, "Good Days"		
44 (Hot)	SpotemGottem (ft. DaBaby) "Beat Box"	53.5 (Avg)	Rauw Alejandro, "Todo de Ti"		
47 (Hot)	Drake (ft. Lil Baby), "Wants And Needs"	83 (NPR)	Khemmis, "Avernal Gate"		
50 (Hot)	CJ, "Whoopty"	83 (Hot)	Bad Bunny, "Yonaguni"		
57 (NPR)	Larry June, "Iced Coffee"	96 (NPR)	Snail Mail, "Automate"		
63 (Avg)	Drake (etc.), "Knife Talk"	Type 3 Examples			
65 (Hot)	Justin Bieber & benny blanco, "Lonely"	Rank	Song Artist and Title		
69.5 (Avg)	Moneybagg Yo, "Wockesha"	5 (Avg)	Lil Nas X, "Montero (Call Me By Your Name)"		
75 (Hot)	Mooski, "Track Star"				
76 (Hot)	Moneybagg Yo, "Time Today"	20 (Hot)	Masked Wolf, "Astronaut In The Ocean"		
80 (NPR)	Tyler, The Creator, "WUSYANAME"	24 (NPR)	Japanese Breakfast, "Be Sweet"		
89 (NPR)	Pom Pom Squad, "Drunk Voicemail"	75 (NPR)	Silvia Estrada, "Marchita"		
91 (NPR) Bachelor, "Back Of My Hand"					

Table 3: 2021 Two-Chorus Songs (Sorted by Duration: Shortest to Longest)				
Song Artist and Title	Song Duration	Туре		
Pink Panthress, "Just for me"	1:56	Type 1		
Tyler, The Creator, "WUSYANAME"	2:02	Type 1		
CJ, "Whoopty"	2:04	Type 1		
Masked Wolf, "Astronaut In The Ocean"	2:13	Type 3		
Moneybagg Yo, "Time Today"	2:16	Type 1		
Charli XCX, "Good Ones"	2:17	Type 1		
Lil Nas X, "Montero (Call Me By Your Name"	2:18	Type 3		
Machine Gun Kelly & Blackbear, "My Ex's Best Friend"	2:19	Type 1		
Lil Baby, "On Me"	2:19	Type 1		
Justin Bieber & benny blanco, "Lonely"	2:29	Type 1		
Pop Smoke, "What You Know Bout Love"	2:41	Type 1		
BLACKSTARKIDS, "Juno"	2:54	Type 2		
Moneybagg Yo, "Wockesha"	3:01	Type 1		
SpotemGottem (ft. Poo Sheisty) "Beat Box" (Ver 2)	3:02	Type 1		
Snail Mail, "Automate"	3:09	Type 2		
Drake (ft. Lil Baby), "Wants And Needs"	3:14	Type 1		
Japanese Breakfast, "Be Sweet"	3:15	Type 3		
Giveon, "Heartbreak Anniversary"	3:19	Type 1		
Mooski, "Track Star"	3:19	Type 1		
Rauw Alejandro, "Todo De Ti"	3:20	Type 2		
SpotemGottem (feat. DaBaby) "Beat Box" (Ver 3	3:21	Type 1		
Victoria Monét, "F.U.C.K."	3:25	Type 2		
amaarae (ft. Moliy), "SAD GIRLZ LUV MONEY (Remix)"	3:25	Type 2		
Bad Bunny, "Yonaguni"	3:26	Type 2		
Esperanza Spalding, "Formwela 10"	3:29	Type 1		
Pom Pom Squad, "Drunk Voicemail"	3:30	Type 1		
Bachelor, "Back Of My Hand"	3:30	Type 1		
Olivia Rodrigo, "déjà vu"	3:36	Type 2		
Larry June, "Iced Coffee"	3:41	Type 1		
Silvia Estrada, "Marchita"	3:47	Type 2		
Joy Oladokun, "jordan"	4:01	Type 1		
Drake (ft. 21 Savage and Project Pat), "Knife Talk"	4:03	Type 1		
Sharon Van Etten (etc.), "Like I Used To"	4:24	Type 1		
Lucy Dacus, "Thumbs"	4:25	Type 2		
Emily Scott Robinson, "Let 'Em Burn"	5:08	Type 1		
Amber Mark, "What It Is"	5:25	Type 2		
Cassandra Jenkins, "Hard Drive"	5:27	Type 2		
Khemmis, "Avernal Gate"	7:11	Type 2		

Table 4: Two-Chorus Songs from *Billboard Charts* 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017 and 2019 (Sorted by Year)

Song Artist and Title	Year	Type	Duration
Drake, "Headlines"	2011	1	3:55
Avicii, "Wake Me Up"		2	4:07
Anna Kendrick, "Cups" ("When I'm Gone")		1	2:06
Swedish House Mafia ft. John Martin, "Don't You Worry Child"	2013	1	3:32
•			or 6:43
Calvin Harris ft. Florence Welch, "Sweet Nothing"	2013	2	3:32
Ylvis, "The Fox (What Does the Fox Say?)"	2013	2	3:33
Mariah Carey ft. Miguel, "#Beautiful"	2013	1	3:19
Fetty Wap, "Trap Queen"	2015	1	3:42
Skrillex and Diplo (Jack Ü) ft. Justin Bieber, "Where Are Ü Now"	2015	1	4:10
Fetty Wap feat. Monty, "My Way"	2015	1	3:33
Beyoncé, "7/11"	2015	3	3:33
Sia, "Chandelier"	2015	1	3:36
Drake, "Back to Back"	2015	1	2:50
Kendrick Lamar, "HUMBLE!"	2017	1	2:57
Childish Gambino, "Redbone"	2017	2	5:26
Kygo and Selena Gomez, "It Ain't Me"	2017	1	3:40
Kyle ft. Lil Yachty, "iSpy"	2017	1	4:13
Rihanna, "Love on the Brain"	2017	1	3:44
Animé, "Caroline"	2017	1	3:29
Zay Hilfigerrr & Zayion McCall, "Juju on That Beat (TZ Anthem)"	2017	1	2:24
Drake, "Passionfruit"	2017	1	4:58
DRAM ft. Lil Yachty, "Broccoli"	2017	3	3:45
Calvin Harris (etc.), "Slide"	2017	1	3:50
Playboi Carti, "Magnolia"	2017	1	3:01
Hailee Steinfeld & Grey ft. Zed, "Starving"	2017	1	3:01
Gucci Mane ft. Drake, "Both"	2017	1	3:10
XXXTentacion, "Look at Me!"	2017	1	2:06
Post Malone and Swae Lee, "Sunflower"	2019	1	2:38
Post Malone, "Wow"	2019	1	2:29
Benny Blanco (etc.), "Eastside"	2019	1	2:53
Meek Mill ft. Drake, "Going Bad"	2019	1	3:00
Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper, "Shallow"	2019	3	3:35
J. Cole, "Middle Child"	2019	1	3:33
Lil Baby and Gunna, "Drip Too Hard"	2019	1	2:25
Lil Tecca, "Ransom"	2019	1	2:11
Drake ft. Rick Ross, "Money in the Grave"	2019	1	3:25
Lil Nas X, "Panini"	2019	3	1:54
Blueface, "Thotiana"	2019	1	2:09
Juice Wrld, "Lucid Dreams"	2019	1	3:59
Ed Sheeran ft. Khalid, "Beautiful People"	2019	1	3:17
Calboy, "Envy Me"	2019	1	2:00
Panic! at the Disco, "Hey Look Ma, I Made It"	2019	1	2:49
Lil Baby and DaBaby, "Baby"	2019	1	2:22

Table 5: Two-Chorus Songs from <i>Billboard Charts</i> 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017 and 2019 (Sorted by Type)			
Type 1 Songs	Type 1 Songs (continued)		
Drake, "Headlines" (2011)	Benny Blanco (etc.), "Eastside" (2019)		
Anna Kendrick, "Cups" ("When I'm Gone", 2013)	Meek Mill ft. Drake, "Going Bad" (2019)		
Swedish House Mafia ft. John Martin, "Don't You Worry Child" (2013)	J. Cole, "Middle Child" (2019)		
Mariah Carey ft. Miguel, "#Beautiful" (2013)	Lil Baby and Gunna, "Drip Too Hard" (2019)		
Fetty Wap, "Trap Queen" (2015)	Lil Tecca, "Ransom" (2019)		
Skrillex and Diplo (Jack Ü) ft. Justin Bieber, "Where Are Ü Now" (2015)	Drake ft. Rick Ross, "Money in the Grave" (2019)		
Fetty Wap feat. Monty, "My Way" (2015)	Blueface, "Thotiana" (2019)		
Sia, "Chandelier" (2015)	Juice Wrld, "Lucid Dreams" (2019)		
Drake, "Back to Back" (2015)	Ed Sheeran ft. Khalid, "Beautiful People" (2019)		
Kendrick Lamar, "HUMBLE!" (2017)	Calboy, "Envy Me" (2019)		
Kygo and Selena Gomez, "It Ain't Me" (2017)	Panic! at the Disco, "Hey Look Ma, I Made It" (2019)		
Kyle ft. Lil Yachty, "iSpy" (2017)	Lil Baby and DaBaby, "Baby" (2019)		
Rihanna, "Love on the Brain" (2017)	Type 2 Songs		
Animé, "Caroline" (2017)	Avicii, "Wake Me Up" (2013)		
Zay Hilfigerrr & Zayion McCall, "Juju on That Beat (TZ Anthem)" (2017)	Calvin Harris ft. Florence Welch, "Sweet Nothing" (2013)		
Drake, "Passionfruit" (2017)	Ylvis, "The Fox (What Does the Fox Say?") (2013)		
Calvin Harris (etc.), "Slide" (2017)	Childish Gambino, "Redbone" (2017)		
Playboi Carti, "Magnolia" (2017)	Type 3 Songs		
Hailee Steinfeld & Grey ft. Zed, "Starving" (2017)			
Gucci Mane ft. Drake, "Both" (2017)	Beyoncé, "7/11" (2015)		
XXXTentacion, "Look at Me!" (2017)	DRAM ft. Lil Yachty, "Broccoli" (2017)		
Post Malone and Swae Lee, "Sunflower" (2019)	Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper, "Shallow" (2019)		
Post Malone, "Wow" (2019)	Lil Nas X, "Panini" (2019)		

Bibliography

/

- Barna, Alyssa. 2020. "The Dance Chorus in Recent Top-40 Music." *SMT-V* 6 (4). http://doi.org/10.30535/smtv.6.4
- Chen, Szu Yu. 2024. "Pop songs are getting shorter in the era of streaming and TikTok." *Washington Post*, January 26. https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/interactive/2024/shorter-songs-again
- De Clercq, Trevor. 2017. "Embracing ambiguity in the analysis of form in pop/rock music, 1982–1991." *Music Theory Online* 23 (3). https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.17.23.3/mto.17.23.3.de_clercq.html
- Duinker, Ben. 2020. "Song form and mainstreaming in hip-hop music." *Current Musicology* 107: 93–135.
- Osborn, Brad. 2013. "Subverting the verse-chorus paradigm: Terminally climactic forms in recent rock music." *Music Theory Spectrum* 31 (10): 23–47.
- Stroud, Cara. 2022. "Codetta and Anthem postchorus types in Top-40 pop from 2010 to 2015." *Music Theory Online* 28 (2). https://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.22.28.2/mto.22.28.2.stroud.html
- Temperley, David. 2018. The Music Language of Rock. Oxford University Press.

Discography

- Bachelor. 2021. "Back of My Hand." *Doomin' Sun*. Melina Duterte and Ellen Kempner, digital release. https://bachelortheband.bandcamp.com/track/back-of-my-hand
- Blackstarkids. 2022. "Juno." Puppies Forever. Dirty Hit DH01411, cassette.
- Bieber, Justin and Benny Blanco. 2021. "Lonely." *Justice*. Def Jam Recordings UICD-6233, compact disc.
- Brown, Blanco. 2019. "The Git Up." *Honeysuckle and Lightning Bugs.* Broken Bow Records 4050538505528, digital release.
- Charli XCX. 2022. "Good Ones." *Crash.* Asylum Records 0190296409998, compact disc.
- Drake. 2021. "Knife Talk." *Certified Lover Boy*. Ovo Sound-Republic Records 00602438865680, digital release.
- Eilish, Billie. 2021. "Happier Than Ever." *Happier than Ever.* Interscope Records, The Darkroom B003389502, compact disc.
- Estrada, Silvana. 2022. "Marchita." *Marchita*. Glassnote Music LLC, digital release. https://open.spotify.com/track/2ytk2n3eCn8hsM3leSVghN.
- Grey, Capella. 2021. "GYALIS." Capitol Records 602438507405, digital single. https://capellagrey.lnk.to/Gyalis
- Japanese Breakfast. 2021. "Be Sweet." Jubilee. Dead Oceans DOC225, compact disc.
- June, Larry. 2021. "Iced Coffee." *Orange Print.* TFM Records, Empire ERE654, compact disc.
- Jenkins, Cassandra. 2021. "Hard Drive." *An Overview on Phenomenal Nature*. Ba Da Bing! Records BING164, compact disc.
- Khemmis. 2021. "Eternal Gate." Deciever. Nuclear Blast NB 6028-4, cassette.
- The Killers. 2004. "Mr. Brightside." *Hot Fuss.* Island Records B0002468-02 IN02, compact disc.
- Lil Nas X. 2021. "Montero (Call Me By Your Name)." *Montero*. Columbia Records. G010004666429C, digital release.

- Mark, Amber. 2022. "What It Is." *Three Dimensions Deep.* EMI/PMR Records EMICD 2046, compact disc.
- Masked Wolf. 2020. "Astronaut in the Ocean" *Astronomical*. Elektra Records 075679772282, digital release.
- Monét, Victoria. "F.U.C.K. (Friend U Can Keep)." Tribe Records, digital release. https://soundcloud.com/victoria-monet/f-u-c-k.
- PinkPantheress. 2021. "Just for Me." *To Hell With It (Mixtape),* Parlophone/Elektra Records 0190296455773, digital release.
- Robinson, Emily Scott. 2021. "Let 'em Burn." *American Siren*. Oh Boy Records OBR-067-CD, compact disc.
- Rod Wave. 2021. "Tombstone." SoulFly. Alamo Records 808391111462, digital release.
- Rodrigo, Olivia. 2021. "deja vu." Sour. Geffen Records B0033785-02, compact disc.
- Snail Mail. 2021. "Automate." Valentine. Matador OLE 1785CD, compact disc.
- Stone Temple Pilots. 1994. "Interstate Love Song." *Purple.* Atlantic Recording Corporation 7567-85635-2, compact disc.