

“All The Small Things”: Microtiming in Punk Music
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While pitch material has been thoroughly studied in pop/rock (White and Quinn 2018, Doll 2017, Temperley 2018), other, less-studied parameters play a potentially larger role in these styles (Tagg 1982). For example, guitar timbres take on a signifying role for distinguishing between genres (Lavengood 2020, Howie 2020, Gjerdingen and Perrot 2008), and prosodic stress and rhyme can contribute to alternative rhythmic layers (Komaniecki 2021, Eron 2020, Condit-Schultz 2017). Following these insights, this paper studies microtiming in punk vocals to investigate genre boundaries. To do so, we constructed a corpus of pop-punk and post-punk songs—the All the Small Things Punk Corpus—consisting of both quantized transcribed musical segments, and inter-onset intervals. By analyzing the microtiming of vocal lines, we show that microtiming deviations vary significantly between subgenres of punk music. This suggests that microtiming adds specific stylistic markers of music, and that these deviations therefore may play some role in listeners’ ability to discriminate genres.