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*Musical Rats: Effects Of Music On Learning*

This project was designed to determine if certain music forms influence learning in rats. It has been suggested that classical music enhances human learning and memory. Four 11-month-old Long Evans laboratory rats from Colorado College were tested. Each rat was trained in an "Oscar Box" in a room with no distractions. The rat was given a total of 60 minutes to learn to press a lever for a food treat while one of three music selections was playing: Country, Classical, or Heavy-Metal. A control rat was tested with no music. A timer was used to determine how long it took each rat to learn the task. I found that music does not enhance learning in rats. In fact, the rat learning with no music learned the lever task the fastest, followed by the rat learning with country music, then classical, and finally heavy metal (who never completed task within 60 minute time frame). This study was surprising because previous research has shown the positive effect of classical music on learning. Perhaps animals experience music differently than humans. More rats and more music selections need to be tested in future studies.