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The Mozart Effect: Can Rats Discriminate between Classical and Modern Music?

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Poster Presentation 19

THE MOZART EFFECT: CAN RATS DISCRIMINATE BETWEEN CLASSICAL AND MODERN MUSIC?

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The popular media have made much of something that they dubbed the "Mozart effect." College students who were exposed to Mozart performed spatial reasoning tasks better than students who were exposed to Philip Glass or silence. More recently, it has been suggested that exposure to Mozart also increased maze learning in rats. The present study further examined animal's response to the musical stimuli used in the Mozart experiments. Rats pressed bars for food in the presence of Mozart's "Sonata in D" or Philip Glass' "Music with Changing Parts." Preliminary results suggest that rats respond faster during Glass. This may be the result of a generalized arousal effect. Theoretical implications are unclear at present, pending further data collection.