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# Changes in Response Rate: Is the Standard Operant Conditioning Unit Really Standard?

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CHANGES IN RESPONSE RATE:  
IS THE STANDARD OPERANT CONDITIONING UNIT REALLY STANDARD?

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Skinner (1938) first described the "standard" operant conditioning unit, or Skinner box. However, there has been controversy regarding whether the unit is actually standard. The present study examined whether different types of "standard" Skinner boxes would produce different results. The subjects were six female Long Evans rats which were food deprived to 80% of their normal body weight. They were tested in two different operant chambers- one was a Gerbrands Corporation model G7410, and the other was a BRS/LVE Inc. model RTC-020. The subjects were randomly assigned to run on four different VI schedules (VI 7.5s, 15s, 30s, and 240s) in blocks of 12 days per schedule. Sessions lasted for ten minutes. The results themselves were largely inconclusive: no significant differences were achieved across the Skinner boxes, but there were inconsistencies in individual performances. Further studies using longer sessions are currently in progress.