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[Why Fingernails On a Chalkboard Sound Painful](#) 176

2

Posted by [Soulskill](#) on Monday October 31, @03:05PM
from the enjoy-your-goosebumps dept.

sciencehabit writes "Some sounds are excruciating. Take fingernails squeaking on a chalkboard. The noise makes many people shudder, but researchers never knew exactly why. A new study finds that there are two

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factors at work: the knowledge of where the sound is coming from and the unfortunate design of our ear canals. The offending frequencies were in the range of 2000 to 4000 Hz. Removing those made the sounds much easier to listen to. Deleting the tonal parts of the sound entirely also made listeners perceive the sound as more pleasant. ... other frequencies or the noisy, scraping parts of the sound made little difference."

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[Taught? \(Score:3, Interesting\)](#)

by [Hazel Bergeron \(2015538\)](#) on Monday October 31, @03:08PM ([#37899466](#))

Did they test with people who haven't been culturally informed that fingernails on a chalkboard should sound annoying?

From chalk to communism, there are so many, "Why do people find blah disagreeable?" which seem to come down to, "Because that's what mother and the TV say."

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[Re: Taught? \(Score:5, Insightful\)](#)

by [decipher_saint \(72686\)](#) on Monday October 31, @03:14PM ([#37899544](#)) [Homepage](#)

Dammit no. I remember being a child and hearing that sound and cringing then finding out AFTER that I wasn't alone.

Some things just plain old suck (like fingernails on a chalkboard and communism).

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[Re: \(Score:3\)](#)

by [X0563511 \(793323\)](#)

I never found it to be that annoying.

Now, silverware scratching on a plate? Gives me the shudders.

- [2 hidden comments](#)

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[Re: \(Score:2\)](#)

by [Kagura \(843695\)](#)

I never found it to be that annoying.

Now, silverware scratching on a plate? Gives me the shudders.

Exactly the same for me! "Fingernails on a chalkboard" kinds of sounds never bothered me in the slightest. But if I'm the one scraping silverware on a plate, it makes me shudder exactly like other people do when hearing fingernails on a chalkboard! It's weird, maybe my sense of whatever causes the shuddering is slightly "shifted" compared to a normal person.

- [1 hidden comment](#)

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[Re: \(Score:2\)](#)

by [drkich \(305460\)](#)

You know I never thought anyone else was annoyed by the glug glug sound of liquid pouring. We should create a support group so that all of us that are thus

afflicted can come out and let the world know that we hate that sound.

- [1 hidden comment](#)

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[Re: \(Score:2\)](#)

by [spazdor \(902907\)](#)

Know what I hate?

The *texture* of that unrefined pulpy cardboard that McDonald's drink trays are made of. Feeling that stuff against my fingertips just makes my skin crawl. Styrofoam and chalkboards don't bug me at all.

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[Re: \(Score:2\)](#)

by [Seng \(697556\)](#)

Microfiber cotton "terrycloth" wipes do that to me - the kind that kind of snag your fingertips no matter how smooth or clean your fingers seem to be.

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[Re: \(Score:2\)](#)

by [chad_r \(79875\)](#)

Know what I hate?

The *texture* of that unrefined pulpy cardboard that McDonald's drink trays are made of. Feeling that stuff against my fingertips just makes my skin crawl. Styrofoam and chalkboards don't bug me at all.

Sort of related, I can't stand the feeling of wooden popsicle sticks against my teeth. Certain paper products have the same effect. It's hard to finish a popsicle--it has to be very tasty for me to take that last lick. Funny, even just the thought of the feeling is only slightly less pleasant....Gotta go, I'm going to be sick.

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[Re:Taught? \(Score:1\)](#)

by [LC Trucido \(1934100\)](#)

This. When I was a kid I rode my bike to the corner store and carried

the paper bag home between my teeth. I hit a bump and the noise/feeling of the paper bag rubbing between my teeth almost put me into a tree.

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Re:Taught? (Score:1)

by [malilo \(799198\)](#)

I ALSO HATE the sound of pouring liquids! Yay, there are two of us! (And, it is really weird, an no I have no idea why I hate it)

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Re:Taught? (Score:1)

by [TangoMargarine \(1617195\)](#)

Now those are real friends! :-D

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Re: (Score:2)

by [Mal-2 \(675116\)](#)

I never found it to be that annoying.

Now, silverware scratching on a plate? Gives me the shudders.

Stravinsky was at a formal dinner of some sort, and asked the diner next to him "do you know how to make a violin section do this?" and scraped his fork across his plate with a horrible screech. When the fellow diner cringed, Stravinsky smiled, and said "I do."

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Re: (Score:1)

by [Tooke \(1961582\)](#)

Rubbing styrofoam does it for me. I can barely stand just thinking about it.

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Re: (Score:2)

by [Antony T Curtis \(89990\)](#)

Communism, like Capitalism: I am not actually aware of anywhere which have attempted to implement these pure concepts.

Everywhere tends to end up implementing an ad-hoc mish-mash of all three... in varying degrees and proportions.

- [2 hidden comments](#)

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[Re: \(Score:2\)](#)

by [compro01 \(777531\)](#)

Hutterites have been living in a society of common ownership for over a century and they appear to be functioning fine. Evidently something about their society (probably religious ties, or could be the limits on colony size) allows it to work where it failed for the Jamestown bunch.

- [1 hidden comment](#)

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[Re:Taught? \(Score:2\)](#)

by [Hazel Bergeron \(2015538\)](#)

Yeah, those arseholes, trying to live peacefully in their own way!
How dare they not submit to the yoke of capital! Let's liberate them!

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[Re: \(Score:2\)](#)

by [tycoex \(1832784\)](#)

If you choose to live in common ownership isn't it still, basically, capitalism? In that type of opt-in system you still have to choose to give "your" private property to the group.

Actually, I can think of a much more prevalent example, most married couples. My wife and I live in a state of common ownership between two people. But we still have private property, we choose to live in this state.

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[Re: \(Score:2\)](#)

by [LordLimecat \(1103839\)](#)

To go completely off-topic:

Places that historically have been capitalism-based have tended to be generally quite free, and prosperous. Places that have shot for communism have tended to end up as authoritarian, murderous nightmares. The one possible counter-example I can think of, is what China may look like in 20 years-- and mostly because they are shedding so much of the communist vestiges and aiming at hyper-capitalism right now (though they are retaining the authoritarian nature).

Take that how you want.

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Re: (Score:2)

by [GerryHatrick \(1037764\)](#)

True, but have you considered reverse causation? 'Places whose culture is of authoritarian murderous nightmares tend to end up with extreme political systems'. Communism is indeed one of those, but think also Mexico, Cambodia, Burma, Saudi...

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Re: (Score:2)

by [LordLimecat \(1103839\)](#)

Why dont we look at Russia / Soviet Union / USSR over the past 100 years, and tell me whether it got better or worse (in terms of "millions of people murdered") after the introduction of communism?

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Re: (Score:2)

by [dunkelfalke \(91624\)](#)

Matter of fact, on average it got way better. Especially comparing USSR in and after the seventies.

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Re: (Score:2)

by [hitmark \(640295\)](#)

Iraq is the most recent attempt at getting pure capitalism shocked into existence. So far failed attempts are Argentina, Peru and Russia.

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Re: (Score:1)

by [tbird81 \(946205\)](#)

Dammit no. I remember being a child and hearing that sound and cringing then finding out AFTER that I wasn't alone.

I have the same memory. I remember kids doing that on the chalkboard and wondering how come they could make that noise when it was such an awful sound for me.

(I also agree that communism sucks. It's only trendy talk amongst young hipsters, but it doesn't and can't work, and it's incredibly unfair.)

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Re:Taught? (Score:2)

by [tbird81 \(946205\)](#)

Look at Cambodia. They did Communism right, and that was fucking terrible.

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Re: (Score:2)

by [JigJag \(2046772\)](#)

I agree with you. Fingernails on chalkboard never bothered me and they still don't. I have excellent audio reception btw so it's not a question of being tone-deaf. I hear the sounds but my skin doesn't crawl up.

On a related note, I moved from a place with no skunks to a place teeming with them. To the locals, the odour is unbearable and they have like a flight-response to it. Personally, I don't abhor the smell; It's akin to "burning rubber". When my mother visited, it reminded her of the smell of "roasting

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Re: (Score:2)

by [djdandlib \(732853\)](#)

On a related note, I moved from a place with no skunks to a place teeming with them. To the locals, the odour is unbearable and they have like a flight-response to it.

I have seen another distinct entry for your list of reactions. Potheads apparently love the smell. As a non-pothhead who grew up in skunk country, it's pretty funny to see people who

can't get enough of that vile aroma. Gross!

- [3 hidden comments](#)

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Re: (Score:2)

by [djdanlib \(732853\)](#)

Just adding data points to his collection, that's all. I thought that would be appropriate on a site for nerds. Your contribution is also interesting.

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Re: Taught? (Score:2)

by [djdanlib \(732853\)](#)

Too bad you're posting AC, this could have been a great conversation.

Some of the ingredients in our everyday lives are better off unknown. Take carmine for example... the red coloring used for many things, such as red velvet cake... it's made of crushed insects.

I just can't fathom a perfume or cologne using skunk smell, but I'm sure some enterprising perfume scientist (whatever they are called) has tried it at some point in history. Might as well toss some deer urine in there for good measure, I guess? Maybe that's a secret ingredient somewhere, but we'd never know. There is a website out there somewhere where scientifically-inclined people do detailed chemical analysis on perfumes and colognes. I seem to have lost the address.

It's fascinating to see how subjective these things are and indeed how many different ways one's nose can be tuned by their surroundings. I don't like skunky smells, some do. One man in a crowd might like the smell of feet or armpits or whatever, where everyone else is either ambivalent or grossed out. Some people can't smell a particular chemical in urine. Some folks (like myself) can tell you what kind of meat is cooking on a grill down the street.

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You should perform an experiment (Score:2)

by [cruff \(171569\)](#)

Perhaps the odor varies from location to location due to diet or other environmental conditions, and possibly by the distance from the point of origin. You should thus perform an experiment for our edification:

1. Acquire the appropriate eye protection and a sufficient supply of clothing to replace the

ruined clothing you will be burning.

2. Travel to each state and province in North America where skunks are naturally found. Optionally, include locations on other continents.
3. Start at a distance of 100m from the

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Re: Taught? (Score:4, Interesting)

by [bws111 \(1216812\)](#) on Monday October 31, @03:43PM ([#37899976](#))

Isn't that just learning? You have not yet directly experienced skunk spray, so it doesn't have the same effect on you as someone who has experienced it. The area I have always lived in has a lot of skunks. Like you, the smell never bothered me all that much. Then one day our cat got sprayed, and before we knew it he was in the house. Now I absolutely can not stand that smell, no matter how far off it is.

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Re: (Score:3)

by [Zancarius \(414244\)](#)

Isn't that just learning? You have not yet directly experienced skunk spray, so it doesn't have the same effect on you as someone who has experienced it. The area I have always lived in has a lot of skunks. Like you, the smell never bothered me all that much. Then one day our cat got sprayed, and before we knew it he was in the house. Now I absolutely can not stand that smell, no matter how far off it is.

People who've never lived in areas with a lot of skunks seldom appreciate just how potent and horrendous

■

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Re: (Score:1)

by [sexconker \(1179573\)](#)

Isn't that just learning? You have not yet directly experienced skunk spray, so it doesn't have the same effect on you as someone who has experienced it. The area I have always lived in has a lot of skunks. Like you, the smell never bothered me all that much. Then one day our cat got sprayed, and before we knew it he was in the house. Now I absolutely can not stand that smell, no matter how far off it is.

People who've never lived in areas with a lot of skunks seldom appreciate just how potent and horrendous fresh spray is. It doesn't smell anything like the odor of a far off skunk. I had a cat that got skunked once and did the exact same thing. I've heard fresh skunk spray described as an acrid mix of burning onion, garlic, and tire rubber left on the stove to char, and that seems pretty accurate.

My dog got sprayed once, directly in the face, and he ran into the house and we had to give him a bath for hours.

The smell was just a stronger version of what you normally smell when a skunk has sprayed "somewhere" nearby.

It wasn't horrendous at all (I've posted already that I find it pleasant and peppery). Just more of the same.

■

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Re: (Score:2)

by [Zancarius \(414244\)](#)

My dog got sprayed once, directly in the face, and he ran into the house and we had to give him a bath for hours.

The smell was just a stronger version of what you normally smell when a skunk has sprayed "somewhere" nearby.

It wasn't horrendous at all (I've posted already that I find it pleasant and peppery). Just more of the same.

Interesting. I wonder if you might be lacking (or have extra?) receptors that detect the rancid part of the smell or bind to a different part of the oil? It might be worth researching if any of your immediate relatives also find it similarly pleasant.

As an aside, owls are one of the skunk's main predators. They can't smell the spray, because they lack receptors for it.

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Re: (Score:2)

by [exploder \(196936\)](#)

This. One time a skunk sprayed underneath the cabin my family was staying in. It was in the middle of the night, and woke all of us up. We searched the whole place, afraid an appliance was burning out or something. It was an awful chemical plastic burning smell that was nothing like the "skunky" whiff you get passing one on the road.

■

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Re: (Score:2)

by [Zancarius \(414244\)](#)

This. One time a skunk sprayed underneath the cabin my family was staying in. It was in the middle of the night, and woke all of us up. We searched the whole place, afraid an appliance was burning out or something. It was an awful chemical plastic burning smell that was nothing like the "skunky" whiff you get passing one on the road.

Exactly. Onions, garlic, plastic, rubber--basically anything noxious you can think of left on the stove to burn. It's completely alien to you the first time you smell it, and for most people it's the most unpleasant experience you'll ever have.

Thanks to a local vet, I did discover that neither tomato juice nor vinegar are effective at neutralizing the spray. Instead, I was told that the best solution is equal parts baking soda, water, and hydrogen peroxide with a dash of dish soap (optionally diluted with more water if required). It works wonders, and when I had a cat get skunked (he mistook it for a raccoon and was inside a fully enclosed but meshed-in porch with the skunk outside--and since he's always loved scaring the raccoons half to death by slamming down on a bench... you can see where this is going). On exterior structures, a solution with mostly dish soap seems to work reasonably well since skunk spray is oil-based.

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Re: (Score:3)

by [anagama \(611277\)](#)

I have this great book of marine charts for the Puget Sound which places historical anecdotes in place context.

There is one entry from early European explorers, which indicates that one of the men chased down a skunk having never seen such an animal before. It continues to note that the stench was unbearable, that no amount of boiling would remove it from the clothes, and that in the end, the skunk hunters were forced to destroy their clothing.

I'd quote it exactly but its on my boat. Anyway, close contact

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Re: (Score:3)

by [anagama \(611277\)](#)

OK, here is the exact quote. It's from page 19, [Exploring Puget Sound & British Columbia, Stephen Hilson](#) [google.com]

June 10, 1792

Vancouver survey party in this area [points to [William Point on Samish Island \(*\)](#) [google.com]] Puget relates ... "An animal called a Skunk was run down by one of the marines after Dark & the intolerable stench it created absolutely awakened us in the tent. The Smell is to bad for a Description ... The Man's Cloaths were afterwards so offensive that notwithstanding boiling, they still retaine

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Re: (Score:1)

by [sexconker \(1179573\)](#)

I agree with you. Fingernails on chalkboard never bothered me and they still don't. I have excellent audio reception btw so it's not a question of being tone-deaf. I hear the sounds but my skin doesn't crawl up.

On a related note, I moved from a place with no skunks to a place teeming with them. To the locals, the odour is unbearable and they have like a flight-response to it. Personally, I don't abhor the smell; It's akin to "burning rubber". When my mother visited, it reminded her of the smell of "roasting coffee". We weren't raised to despise that smell, and we don't when confronted to it. That being said, I never have been sprayed or anything like that. I am talking about the far-off whiff you get in you're downwind from a skunk.

JigJag

I kind of enjoy the smell of skunk. It's very peppery. Never been sprayed, though, I'm sure that's a bit different.

Manure (the bagged stuff) smells good too. But a lump of cow shit is still a nasty lump of cow shit.

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Re: (Score:3)

by [skids \(119237\)](#)

More importantly, do they control for whether or not test subjects have actually tried to make the noise by themselves running their fingernails down a chalkboard.

For me the noise meant nothing until it was linked with the disturbing feeling of chalk building up under my nails as they vibrate painfully.

- [1 hidden comment](#)

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Re: (Score:2)

by [bws111 \(1216812\)](#)

I was thinking the same thing. The noise itself does not bother me, but the thought of my own fingernails doing that gives me the creeps.

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Re: (Score:2)

by [RivenAleem \(1590553\)](#)

You get the same effect when you scrape a knife/fork the wrong way on a plate when eating.

Surely this should be control enough, as it's a similar painful sound, without the pain associated with physical discomfort?

■

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[Re: \(Score:2\)](#)

by [Baloroth \(2370816\)](#)

FTFA:

The ratings also changed depending on what the listeners thought the sounds were. If they thought a sound came from a musical composition, they rated it as less unpleasant than if they knew it actually was fingernails on a chalkboard. But their skin conductivity changed consistently even when they thought the chalkboard sound was from music and rated it as less unpleasant.

So yes. They discovered that, even when people said they didn't find it as unpleasant (and thought it was supposed to be music), there was still a physical pain-like reaction in the hearers. Some sounds really are painful.

Of course, I would probably find it even more painful if you told me it was from a modern musical composition. Cannot stand that crap (I'm talking the orchestral-style musical crap, not the Britney Spears-style musical crap.)

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[Re: \(Score:2\)](#)

by [black3d \(1648913\)](#)

Some listeners were told the true source of the sounds, whereas others were told that the sounds were part of contemporary musical compositions.

The ratings also changed depending on what the listeners thought the sounds were. If they thought a sound came from a musical composition, **they rated it as less unpleasant than if they knew it actually was fingernails on a chalkboard.** But their skin conductivity changed consistently even when they thought the chalkboard sound was from music and rated it as less unpleasant.

So naw.. that theory doesn't really hold much water. Personally, I found the chalkboard sound unbearable well before I "knew" I was meant to. More likely it's simply that some folk don't react the same way to that sound (and likely, have their own quirks, completely unrelated). There's a physiological explanation for this which doesn't involve influence, like how some people absolutely can't stand the flavour of gherkin (or pickle, if you prefer), and some love it so much they'll eat my discarded gherkin sl

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[Re: \(Score:2\)](#)

by [black3d \(1648913\)](#)

Also, apologies, I did mean to highlight the second part of that, where their skin consistency changed consistently in either scenario. The part I highlighted agrees with what you said - that

there is a cultural attitude that fingernails on a chalkboard is an unpleasant sound. However, this seems to not have any effect on the physiological reaction - that being, the physical reaction is the same in either case.

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Re: (Score:2)

by [MobileTatsu-NJG \(946591\)](#)

My cats don't like sounds like that either and I never taught them about the evils of communism.

Seriously, who modded that up? Somebody who went to a school where the teacher said *"Okay class, here's something else you shouldn't like..."*

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Re: (Score:2)

by [falzer \(224563\)](#)

It would get very tiresome for everyone to have to explain from axioms and first principles every opinion they held, even if they did reflect upon and study them.

Alternately, do you think people who agree with you on whatever subject have also been "culturally informed" that way?

I am, of course, not talking about capitalism, communism, chalk, or cottonballs, but wearing socks with sandals.

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Re: (Score:2)

by [richlv \(778496\)](#)

oooh. people who object to others wearing socks should be forced to obey any whims anybody on the planet might have. the desire to inflict upon others the annoying feeling of sweaty feet just requires some pushback :>

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Re: (Score:2)

by [spazdor \(902907\)](#)

I wonder if the aversion is congenital. I would be interested to know if hating chalkboard squeaking runs in families.

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Re: (Score:1)

by [h5inz \(1284916\)](#)

I haven't been taught that the squeaking of the handling of polystyrene should sound unpleasant, but it still does to me.

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Re: (Score:3)

by [BluBrick \(1924\)](#)

Are you absolutely sure you were never taught that? There are many ways of being taught. Perhaps it was not a conscious lesson, and perhaps it was not even the intent of the lesson. Infants have a tendency to experiment with things that make new sounds. If that new sound is "unpleasant" enough, you can be certain that any nearby adults will exhibit some sort of reaction. That reaction could be irritation, visibly blocking the ears, or even taking away the object that causes the sound. From such a reac

- [1 hidden comment](#)
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Re: (Score:1)

by [h5inz \(1284916\)](#)

You might be right about it. Then you could also explain just about everything being learnt that way. Then again may be somebody could re-make the research study using only the people unable to learn from other peoples fear or disgust reactions (they were once called psychopaths but nowadays the antisocial personality is more preferred but also more broader term applying also to a wide variety of not so extreme cases). Good luck for that poor fellow who needs to supervise them during the study.

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Re: (Score:1)

by Anonymous Coward

From TFA (and alluded to in TFS):

Some listeners were told the true source of the sounds, whereas others were told that the sounds were part of contemporary musical compositions.

The ratings also changed depending on what the listeners thought the sounds were. If they thought a sound came from a musical composition, they rated it as less unpleasant than if they knew it actually was fingernails on a chalkboard. But their skin conductivity changed consistently even when they

thought the chalkboard sound was from music and rated it as less unpleasant.

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Re: (Score:1)

by [Canjo \(1956258\)](#)

Yes, in fact this is part of what the research was testing! Here is an official summary of the actual paper: http://www.acoustics.org/press/162nd/Oehler_4pPP6.html [acoustics.org] They either told subjects that this is the sound of a chalkboard, or said it was from a "contemporary composition." Subjects found it more painful when they had been told it was chalkboard, and they found it less painful when they thought it was music. So it seems that the idea of chalk on a a chalkboard is part of what makes it so horrible, and that's probably just learned.

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Re: (Score:2)

by [Hazel Bergeron \(2015538\)](#)

It confirms that the lesson is certainly learnt at some higher (not fully aware) level of mental functioning, but it doesn't go the full way to testing subconscious learned response to stimulus. The moment your mother says EWWW to something while you're in the room as an infant, you'll have a little bit of that EWWW response in you to similar stimulus without realising why.

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Re: (Score:1)

by [sexconker \(1179573\)](#)

Did they test with people who haven't been culturally informed that fingernails on a chalkboard should sound annoying?

From chalk to communism, there are so many, "Why do people find blah disagreeable?" which seem to come down to, "Because that's what mother and the TV say."

Exactly.

I've never had a problem with fingernails on a chalkboard.

Or a knife on a plate.

But I do have a problem with wet wood (like a popsicle stick) touching my front teeth.

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Re: (Score:2)

by [mattack2 \(1165421\)](#)

You and chad_r are apparently a match made in heaven -- same popsicle-stick reaction.

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•
Just thinking about it (Score:5, Interesting)

by [mrxak \(727974\)](#) on Monday October 31, @03:10PM ([#37899488](#))

There's certainly a psychological component. Just thinking about that noise and making the clawing/scraping motion with my hand, right now, made me react as I would hearing it for real.

Reply to This

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Re: (Score:2)

by [bigdavex \(155746\)](#)

Shit, me too. Stop it.

■ [1 hidden comment](#)

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Re:Just thinking about it (Score:2)

by [jones_supa \(887896\)](#)

Isn't your head a bit itchy? Shouldn't it be scratched?

■

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Re:Just thinking about it (Score:4, Funny)

by [Baloroth \(2370816\)](#) on Monday October 31, @03:27PM ([#37899726](#))

They also tested Styrofoam squeaks and forks scraping on plates. You are welcome :)

Reply to This Parent

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Re: (Score:2)

by [mrxak \(727974\)](#)

Fork-scraping never bothered me. Maybe it depends on the fork and plate, but as I recall, it's usually lower frequency. Styrofoam is annoying, but not shiver-inducing like the fingernails on chalkboard thing. Again, I think the frequency is lower most of the time I've encountered the stuff rubbing against itself.

■

■

Re: (Score:2)

by [Mal-2 \(675116\)](#)

Fork-scraping never bothered me. Maybe it depends on the fork and plate, but as I recall, it's usually lower frequency. Styrofoam is annoying, but not shiver-inducing like the fingernails on chalkboard thing. Again, I think the frequency is lower most of the time I've encountered the stuff rubbing against itself.

My parakeet rather likes squeaky noises made by rubbing styrofoam against various things. This sound can actually get her to start singing or playing with bells. She also likes when I watch basketball, because of the squeaky shoes.

■

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Re: (Score:2)

by [hitmark \(640295\)](#)

I would say it heavily depends on the plate, or more accurately its glazing. We have a older set in the house that makes a annoying noise if there is the slightest angled contact between the plate and fork.

■

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Re: (Score:2)

by [jones_supa \(887896\)](#)

Meh. I think the article is a bit shallow when talking about "frequency" being the only characteristic of sound. Does a bare high-frequency sine give you the same chills than the chalkboard or plate thing. Not to me. So there's more to it, and I would think the biggest factor of it is knowing or/and seeing where the sound comes from.

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One octave (Score:2)

by [i kan reed \(749298\)](#)

Since it's a range of doubling frequency, it's one octave. Worst. Scale. Ever.

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Re: (Score:2)

by [Garble Snarky \(715674\)](#)

That doesn't really make any sense at all.

■

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Re: (Score:2)

by [i kan reed \(749298\)](#)

Honestly, I thought it did.

■

Now You Know... (Score:2)

by [ackthpt \(218170\)](#)

You can employ these sounds in your Halloween display!!!

"I just had that horrible feeling I was in 4th period English again and didn't have my book report done! Arrrrggghhh!"

○

They still haven't explained it (Score:4, Insightful)

by [Arlet \(29997\)](#) on Monday October 31, @03:14PM ([#37899548](#))

They've only narrowed down the class of sounds, but not **why** we would find those sounds so annoying.

[Reply to This](#)

○ [2 hidden comments](#)

○

Re: (Score:2)

by [Baloroth \(2370816\)](#)

The researchers suspect that the shape of the human ear canal may be to blame for the pain. Previous studies have shown that the ear canal amplifies certain frequencies, including those in the range of 2000 to 4000 Hz. A loud screech on a chalkboard could be amplified within our ears to painful effect, the researchers propose.

So, in a sense they did. They didn't prove this is why it is annoying, but it is definitely a possible (and likely) explanation. I personally have noticed those noises appear extremely loud (and hence very annoying.) This may also explain why some people don't find it quite as annoying (as some comments above note): minor variation in ear canal shape would amplify different specific ranges, so certain frequencies could annoy different people more.

■

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Re: (Score:2)

by [bill_mcgonigle \(4333\)](#) *

They've only narrowed down the class of sounds, but not why we would find those sounds so annoying.

Some video I watched in high school bio class said that the sounds are coincidentally almost the same waveform as primate danger screeches. Hard-wired aversion.

Seems plausible.

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The Straight Dope ...did it (Score:5, Informative)

by [smoothnorman \(1670542\)](#) on Monday October 31, @03:22PM (#37899658) and in 1986 no less (back when "chalkboard" still had some meaning): <http://www.straightdope.com/columns/read/540/why-is-the-sound-of-fingernails-scraping-a-blackboard-so-annoying> [straightdope.com]
[Reply to This](#)

- o [2 hidden comments](#)

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What is a chalkboard? (Score:2)

by [bussdriver \(620565\)](#)

We still have chalkboards?

I thought everybody was getting high off those markers? How about why do those give me headaches?

- [1 hidden comment](#)

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Re: (Score:2)

by [rossdee \(243626\)](#)

When I was a lad at school the teacher would write on a blackboard with chalk. I assume this is referred to these days as a chalkboard - maybe the term blackboard is politically incorrect.

(I am sure that they would not be allowed to throw chalk at the children who were misbehaving either these days)

■

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Re: (Score:2)

by [exploder \(196936\)](#)

In mathematics departments (in the US, that I know of), there is not a trend toward

whiteboards. We like chalk, and are constantly at odds with our IT people who complain about dust in the computers.

We never asked for the computers, either.

■

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Re: (Score:2)

by [SleazyRidr \(1563649\)](#)

The markers give you headaches because they contain a solvent, which is included to make it easier to clean the boards. They're generally based on organic compounds with a low boiling point, so they evaporate quickly, leading to high levels of fumes in the area. When you inhale the fumes they irritate your mucus membranes, leading to a variety of symptoms, including headaches.

■

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Re: (Score:1)

by [hgesser \(605301\)](#)

(back when "chalkboard" still had some meaning)

Well, guess what most schools still use in the class rooms, at least in Germany... If there was a trend away from chalkboards/blackboards, it would be towards those newish electronic boards running interactive learning/teaching software. But those are expensive so you won't see them too often.

■

■

Re: (Score:2)

by [Nidi62 \(1525137\)](#)

Well, guess what most schools still use in the class rooms, at least in Germany... If there was a trend away from chalkboards/blackboards, it would be towards those newish electronic boards running interactive learning/teaching software. But those are expensive so you won't see them too often.

In the US, most schools now use whiteboards. However, they usually are mounted over the old original chalkboards, so I guess technically they are still there. And I remember using a Smartboard back in 04 in my advanced Calc and Trig class. Was actually pretty fun to mess around with.

■

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Re: (Score:3)

by [EXrider \(756168\)](#)

Most of the schools around here have Smartboards now... and the average kids that are graduating from said schools around here are still dumb as shit, so much for *Smartboards*.

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Re: The Straight Dope ...did it (Score:2)

by [Dogtanian \(588974\)](#)

This was before [the word "blackboard"] was made verboten at the insistence of the PC lobby.

Yeah, right. The fact that the rabid anti-PCers (*) keep repeating this "fact" says more about it sounding plausible to their paranoid minds and its appeal to them (and the more you repeat something the more everyone "knows" it's right) and the fact it's a convenient strawman to use against political correctness. But it says absolutely nothing about whether the story's true or not.

I strongly suspect that this is either outright bullshit, or one overzealous person in a minor case that has been magnified a thousandfold by repetition.

(*) I say "anti-PCer", but truth is that the present-day form of political correctness is really just a strawman stereotype created and used by the reactionary right-wingers to justify their own spoutings.

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Re: (Score:2)

by [b4dc0d3r \(1268512\)](#)

They quote some research which compared two sounds, found them similar, and concluded one was the cause of the other.

I used to like this idea, but after reading this again it's bunk. They have a hypothesis but nothing to back it up. I like the ear canal idea better, and that leads us the other way around.

In conclusion, monkey shrieks evolved to match our ear canal design because those who were able to warn others were part of a successful coping strategy. And chalkboards just by chance happen to be similar sounding and unrelated.

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Re: (Score:2)

by [Timmmm \(636430\)](#)

Erm, blackboards are still used...

Also, why do neither of these articles have the sounds to listen to? Seriously, this is as bad as all those articles about imaging that don't have pictures...

■

•

No. (Score:2)

by [unity100 \(970058\)](#)

It is because it makes me feel as if im doing it, which is very irritating. that dusty blackboard, the nails going against it in the opposite direction.

notice, the feeling is not so irritating if you do it in the right direction - outwards.

○ [1 hidden comment](#)

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Re:No. (Score:2)

by [unity100 \(970058\)](#)

oh boy.

■

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That's Baby Crying Frequency (Score:5, Interesting)

by [Sarusa \(104047\)](#) on Monday October 31, @03:41PM ([#37899950](#))

Baby crying has a wide variation, and the fundamental frequency is (depending on who you ask) somewhere around 500Hz, but you get strong harmonics and nonlinears up in the 3Khz area. The non-linears are a strong part of the annoyance too. See for example <http://ergo.human.cornell.edu/studentdownloads/DEA3500pdfs/hearing.pdf> [cornell.edu]

And you are designed by millions of years of evolution to find that so annoying you will do anything to make it stop.

Reply to This

○ [1 hidden comment](#)

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Re: (Score:1)

by [token0 \(1374061\)](#)

As an aforementioned 1986 article comments "we might just as plausibly conclude that the reason our hair is brownish is that it enabled our monkey ancestors to hide amongst the coconuts".

Personally the first thing that comes to my mind when I see someone scraping a chalkboard is

- cover my ears

- throw something at the source

Certainly "feed the source of the noise" would not be high on my list on instinctive priorities.

You might also notice that actual baby crying isn't nowhere as repelling.

■

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Re: (Score:2)

by [Sarusa \(104047\)](#)

"You might also notice that _actual baby crying_ isn't nowhere as repelling."

You think so? When a baby goes all out screaming I'll take the chalkboard.

But leaving that aside I'm talking about taking an evolved pathway (the 3KHz crying baby zone) and superstimulating it. Like cocaine to your mesolimbic reward pathway.

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Re: (Score:2)

by [Falconhell \(1289630\)](#)

There is also the fact that our direction sensing of sound is most sensitive at 2.5KHZ, which also is one of the frequencies that we hear very efficiently, I have seen it suggested due to that region being common in the rustling of leaves and breaking twigs, it was a great asset when avoiding predators in the wild, so we evolved such sensitivity.

So much so that Robbie McGrath, AC/DC and Simply Red sound engineer once wrote "2.5K is volume"

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Re:That's Baby Crying Frequency (Score:2)

by [Sarusa \(104047\)](#)

That's why you're also flooded with hormones (fathers too!)

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Re: (Score:2)

by [Geminii \(954348\)](#)

"You have: a hammer..."

-

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Re: (Score:2)

by [davide marney \(231845\) *](#)

"And you are **designed** by millions of years of evolution ..."

A great example of some of the difficulties of stating evolutionary theory fairly. You can't say that evolution "designed" something, because evolution is a response to external conditions that affect reproduction. It is a weeding-out process. Thus, you'd have to say something like, "Over millions of years of evolution, some external sound source, whose effect on people whose sensitivity to sound was either narrower or broader than today, and which resulted in those people not reproducing at the same rate as today, has resulted in a selection of people who have a painful reaction to the sound of fingernails on chalkboards."

And if you can "prove" that line of reasoning, you are a better man than I. Evolution, fairly stated, requires a pretty significant level of faith.

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[worse sound \(for me\) \(Score:2\)](#)

by [Ogive17 \(691899\)](#)

needles into styrofoam. Ugh, makes me cringe just thinking about it.

○

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[Worse than fingernails \(Score:3, Interesting\)](#)

by Anonymous Coward on Monday October 31, @04:03PM ([#37900238](#))

My high school music teacher taught me how to make a stick of chalk squeal on a chalkboard at will.

Hold a fresh piece between your first two fingers and your thumb lightly, with the other end resting against the middle of your palm. hold the tip against the board with a sharp downward angle about the same as a backlash \, and draw a line downward. Don't press too hard or you'll dampen the resonance and get nothing. When you get the hang of it it's very easy to produce a head-splitting screech above 100dB

[Reply to This](#)

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[The cringe-worthy sounds... \(Score:2\)](#)

by [QuasiSteve \(2042606\)](#)

Fingernails raking against a chalkboard and chalk squeaking against slate were the most unpleasant sounds from a family of recordings, which also included sounds such as Styrofoam squeaks and scraping a plate with a fork.

Oh scraping a plate with a fork.. *shudder*

Also unpleasant: rub the smooth ends of two drills together.

But I have to give kudos to Shad Clark for a sound that is not necessarily cringe-worthy on its own - but

by virtue of its associated visual, makes the hairs on my arms stand on end just t

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Re: (Score:1)

by [babywhiz \(781786\)](#)

Or the sound of someone chewing on yarn..... *eeeeeee*

■

A little late on this one (Score:4, Funny)

by [dontmakemethink \(1186169\)](#) on Monday October 31, @04:55PM ([#37900868](#))

You don't need an audiology experiment to figure this out. Harvey Fletcher and W. A. Munson established the lab work back in 1933, resulting in the [Fletcher-Munson Curve](#) [slashdot.org] which illustrates how the sensitivity of the human ear varies at different frequency ranges and volume levels, and is most sensitive in the 2-6kHz range. It's fair to assume this range is more sensitive since it is the hardest range for predators to keep silent while stalking prey, i.e. a twig snapping.

It is believed mankind has pre-historic rodents to thank for their advanced auditory system, which developed during the 65 million year period where mammals and dinosaurs co-existed. During this time there was low oxygen content in the air, so mammals had to maintain high respiratory rates, making them easy prey for the much larger dinosaurs, whose respiratory system involved hollow bones to transport air directly throughout their bodies rather than just lungs to deliver oxygen to the bloodstream. (Birds benefited from the hollow bones to fly, but only use lungs for respiration now that oxygen levels are up.) Mammals had to forage at night and depended almost entirely on their auditory systems for defense. 65 million years of that is likely the only reason we can discern music, much less appreciate it.

As a sound engineer I can attest that the 2-6kHz range is of special significance when putting a mix together. It's usually actually more important that the 2-6kHz range of each voice or instrument be balanced against each other than each voice or instrument be of even frequency response themselves. If something is dominant in that range, it dominates the listener's attention every time. If something has a sharp spike in that range, meaning a very narrow frequency band, it will not be pleasant to the ear. If you check out the frequency response graphs of the cheaper guitar speakers by clicking on the options [here](#) [usspeaker.com], you might notice they all have spikes around 2-2.5kHz. That is why they suck.

Reply to This

- o [2 hidden comments](#)

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Re: (Score:2)

by [Falconhell \(1289630\)](#)

Beat me to it! Quite right about the predators. I remember years ago Robbie McGrath AC/DC sound guy wrote in sonics magazine;

250HZ is mud, 2.5KHZ is volume.

■

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●
My wife's voice (Score:1)

by Anonymous Coward

Is the only sound that is more harsh than fingernails on a chalkboard.

- [2 hidden comments](#)

-

Re:My wife's voice (Score:5, Funny)

by [MobileTatsu-NJG \(946591\)](#) on Monday October 31, @03:44PM ([#37899986](#))

Yeah, inflatable plastic makes a balloon-like squeal when punctured.

Reply to This Parent

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Re: (Score:2)

by [garyebickford \(222422\)](#)

+1 :D

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Re:My wife's voice (Score:5, Insightful)

by [uncqual \(836337\)](#) on Monday October 31, @05:12PM ([#37901022](#))

How is the AC's comment sexist?

It appears that AC is married to someone with a harsh voice. The AC didn't claim that all women, or even all wives, have harsh voices. AC just claimed one person who AC likely spends a lot of time with has a harsh voice.

Although AC could have said "*\$WIFE_NAME's voice is the only sound more harsh...*", that would not have conveyed that AC likely spent a lot of time with that person. For example, if AC had said "*Jane's voice is the only sound more harsh...*", for all we know 'Jane' could be a checker at the local Walmart and since, presumably, AC doesn't spend that much time with a particular checker at Walmart, the message would have reduced significance.

AC *could* have used the word *spouse* instead, but that's rather unnatural and unusual as most people refer to their 'wife' or 'husband' rather than their 'spouse' in normal conversation.

Not all observations or criticisms aimed at anyone but a straight white middle aged able-bodied male is "racist" or "sexist" or "\$GROUPphobic".

Reply to This Parent

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Re: (Score:2)

by [makomk \(752139\)](#)

It appears that AC is married to someone with a harsh voice. The AC didn't claim that all women, or even all wives, have harsh voices. AC just claimed one person who AC likely spends a lot of time with has a harsh voice.

For some reason, it almost always happens to be wives rather than husbands that are referred to as having harsh, screeching voices. Odd that. Heaven forbid anyone suggest this might be due to sexism, though!

■

■

Re: (Score:3)

by [syousef \(465911\)](#)

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For some reason, it almost always happens to be wives rather than husbands that are referred to as having harsh, screeching voices. Odd that. Heaven forbid anyone suggest this might be due to sexism, though!

The human male voice tends to be deeper than the female voice. This has to do with physiology. So referring to husbands as having shrill irritating voices does not ring true. Stereotypes tend to take a truth and exaggerate it - the truth makes it recognisable. Heaven forbid reality get in the way of political correctness.

There are plenty of anti-male stereotypes - just watch an episode of an American sitcom like say Everybody Loves Raymond for example. He's obtuse, lazy and incompetent. His wife is whiny ov

■

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Re: (Score:2)

by [causality \(777677\)](#)

How is the AC's comment sexist? It appears that AC is married to someone with a harsh voice. The AC didn't claim that all women, or even all wives, have harsh voices. AC just claimed one person who AC likely spends a lot of time with has a harsh voice. Although AC could have said "*\$WIFE_NAME's voice is the only sound more harsh...*", that would not have conveyed that AC likely spent a lot of time with that person. For example, if AC had said "*Jane's voice is the only sound more harsh...*", for all we know 'Jane' could be a checker at the local Walmart and since, presumably, AC doesn't spend that much time with a particular checker at Walmart, the message would have reduced significance. AC *could* have used the word *spouse* instead, but that's rather unnatural

and unusual as most people refer to their '*wife*' or '*husband*' rather than their '*spouse*' in normal conversation. Not all observations or criticisms aimed at anyone but a straight white middle aged able-bodied male is "racist" or "sexist" or "\$GROUPphobic".

Hmm. This one isn't irrationally hypersensitive and doesn't make unfounded accusations against the character of others.

Clearly this one needs to be re-educated. You must cater to everyone's overly-emotional sensitivities no matter how irrational, psychotic, and baseless. If a bigot cannot be found, you must create one, Comrade!

■

■

Re: (Score:2)

by [snowgirl \(978879\)](#)

The OP posted that his wife's voice is harsher than fingernails on a chalkboard. I don't like the voices of Rosanne Barr, Gilbert Gottfried, or Fran Drescher, but I wouldn't call them harsher than fingernails on a chalkboard.

So, AC posts a comment disparaging his wife and exaggerating a possible negative characteristics of hers (if she even actually exists). I don't mean to imply that AC is lying about being married, but this is clearly a joke, and jokes don't need to be true to be told. (I've told a "two strings walk into a bar" joke more often than is necessary to doubt my personal sanity, but that doesn't mean that I've seen two strings walking into a bar...)

So, as someone pointed out, the nagging wife with an annoyingly shrill voice is a stereotype. This joke plays upon that stereotype in order to establish a joke. While there may be an actual individual with a shrill and annoying voice, the joke relies upon a sexist stereotype in order to be funny to the larger population.

As an example, "The only thing crustier than XY, is my husbands psoriasis!" ... WTF dude? That's not funny, because the person has a real condition, it's not funny to talk about, it's a private matter that shouldn't be shared with complete strangers. It's also not funny, because there is no cultural expectation with the audience about husbands typically having psoriasis. At best, you can make it funny by playing up the "TMI" route, but that's clearly not what happened here. People found the joke funny because we have a stereotype that wives have shrill voices to nag men with.

Let me put it another way, "The only thing that humps anything that movies more than the dog, is my husband." HEYO! Oh... now it's not funny, because I'm making fun of men, right? Damn, men only seem to recognize sexism when it happens to them, doesn't it?

■

■

Re:My wife's voice (Score:2)

by [causality \(777677\)](#)

[My wife's voice] Is the only sound that is more harsh than fingernails on a chalkboard.

I'm sorry, I couldn't hear you over the sexism...

Too bad I posted so I cannot mod you down. C'est la vie. I'd rather try to reason with you anyway.

I guess we're all just a bunch of nasty, brutish men who hate women and want to keep them down. When in doubt, and there is no evidence at all either for or against any sort of bigotry, simply interpret everything this way. Right? Seriously, if that's your perception, it would make *you* the sexist.

Aren't you better than this?

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[Re:My wife's voice \(Score:1\)](#)

by [hairyfeet \(841228\)](#)

Its not sexist if its true. I've known women that even when pissed off at you had a very pretty lilting quality to their voice, and then other women (like my ex) that while having a quite lovely voice when she was pleased had a voice that would cut you like a chainsaw when she was PO'd. you know the kind where it gets higher the more they get pissed? yeah that kind. of course there are guys that also irritate the fuck out of you with just their voice, or even worse like my last boss where they'd get that spit thing going like they were foaming at the mouth. So it isn't really sexist if its true and for all we know his wife's voice could make a man's balls climb into his chest and make your ovaries shrivel in fear.

As for TFA I've always wondered if it isn't a frequency thing that causes cats not to give a fuck what humans say. Dogs always seem to respond to human speech better so I have to wonder if we aren't using frequencies that sound pleasing to the dog but just bounce right off the cat. Or it could just be that cats don't give a shit, who knows.

all I know is I loaded up on horror games off the Steam sale (still good until Nov 1st if there are any scary games you'd like cheap) so I'm gonna enjoy this holiday by painting the walls with bad guys and trying not to let that creepy little Alma grab me. Happy Halloween y'all!

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[Re:My wife's voice \(Score:2\)](#)

by [causality \(777677\)](#)

[My wife's voice] Is the only sound that is more harsh than fingernails on a chalkboard.

I'm sorry, I couldn't hear you over the sexism...

So you won't even respond and prefer to pretend none of this exchange happened? Can't even admit that maybe you were too eager to demonize someone for no good reason? Most of all, you can't even see your hypersensitivity as a problem, specifically as *your* problem?

How courageous.

As a man, I'd be rightly viewed as gutless if I handled a mistake the same way. If you want to really strike a blow against sexism, maybe next time you could show that a woman can uphold

the same standard, like an equal. As for me, not only do I believe the capability is there (else there's be no point in writing this), I believe it's just a choice. Nothing more than that.

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Re: (Score:1)

by [Lucky75 \(1265142\)](#)

More surprisingly, they found that the frequencies responsible for making a sound unpleasant were commonly found in human speech,

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Re: (Score:2)

by [Walt Dismal \(534799\)](#)

Here at the Justin Bieber Institute for Annoying Sounds, we take exception to your statement.

■

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Styrofoam (Score:1)

by [rish87 \(2460742\)](#)

I would be curious to see if similar frequencies are major components to the sound of rubbing Styrofoam together-a sound I find even more unbearable.

○ [2 hidden comments](#)

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Re: (Score:2)

by [Jeng \(926980\)](#)

That and crusty snow.

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Re: (Score:2)

by [tbird81 \(946205\)](#)

How do i get money to 'study' such amazingly useless and stupid things like this...

You think knowing about the human response to sound is useless?

-
-

Re: (Score:2)

by [damn_registrars \(1103043\)](#)

How do i get money to 'study' such amazingly useless and stupid things like this...

You think knowing about the human response to sound is useless?

Some people are inclined to call anything that does not directly apply to killing more people, more quickly, as useless.

- -

•

Its not about the sound! (Score:1)

by [nullnick \(1409223\)](#)

At least in my case. When I was five, I did scratch a chalkboard with my own initiative. The skin skin under my fingernails was very sensitive, and I got this weird trembling spreading in my whole body! The sensation did hurt, but it was also very appealing, and I scrached the board a few more times. After that experience every time someone scratches a chalkboard, I only remember the trembling and the hurt sensation, and cant help not to shudder. This is my experience.

○ [1 hidden comment](#)

○

Re: (Score:1)

by Anonymous Coward

You will go blind if you don't stop that

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Re: (Score:1)

by [matthiasvegh \(1800634\)](#)

A very similiar resonance happens in almost everyone, albeit at different frequencies. That trembling spreads around me too, and I almost always want to see if it would happen again. Likewise, if my teeth collide, it doesn't hurt per se, it's just unpleasant, but I keep wanting to try again.

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Doesn't bother me... (Score:1)

by [mrtumnus \(1793406\)](#)

Fingernails on a chalkboard has never bothered me. Neither does rubbing a balloon. I wonder what the criteria for having or not having the negative physical reaction they describe is.

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Primate warning cries (Score:1)

by [orchardville \(2497560\)](#)

So are they going to give out another [Nobel prize](#) [physorg.com] for this?

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chalkboard memories (Score:2)

by [k6mfw \(1182893\)](#)

In a physics class I asked the instructor is there something in our brain that resonates from chalkboard squeals? He thought probably so, kind of like that Tacoma bridge incident. A math teacher used to get excited when the boards were cleaned by custodian, "Yes! We can now break this in" as he would grab a new piece of chalk to use on that dark green board. Then there were some erasers extra wide so not take too long to wipe the board. What about a pocket defense system that blasts high dB levels of this chalkboard sound against muggers? I used to wonder about rigging up something like that.

Speaking chalkboards, another of those things us old people talk about that 20-somethings ain't got a clue what these are. We now have whiteboards which have their problems (i.e. someone grabs a Sharpie and covers a whiteboard with their discussion. Poor smucks on following meeting get screwed).

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Re: (Score:2)

by [NoisySplatter \(847631\)](#)

I find it interesting that you think 20 year olds don't know what a chalk board is. I'm 27 and currently going to a university in which I have not seen a single dry-erase board. Also, my high school was about 75% chalk and 25% marker.

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Re: (Score:2)

by [HopefulIntern \(1759406\)](#)

The pocket defense system you speak of already exists, more or less, in the form of rape alarms (not quite debilitating but certainly annoying) and the serious "sound grenade).

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Re: (Score:2)

by [HopefulIntern \(1759406\)](#)
Ugh that should say "less serious"

■

•

It doesn't bother you? Mid-range hearing loss. (Score:1)

by [chuckfirment \(197857\)](#)

If the sound of screeches on chalkboards doesn't bother you, you may have some mid-range hearing loss.

This is especially true if you have trouble understanding conversations in a noisy environment, like a bar or crowded party. It's not that you can't HEAR the sound, it's that you can't differentiate between varying tones and can't make out what is said. (It may unfortunately also be sensorineural hearing loss - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hearing_aid#Indications [wikipedia.org])

New hearing aids can fix this by selectively increasing only a specific frequency range.

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I can't hear it at all (Score:2)

by [damn_registrars \(1103043\)](#)

I can't hear the sound of fingernails on a chalkboard. And no, its not because whiteboards are so much more common now. It's also not from too many loud concerts or anything like that; I couldn't hear fingernails on a chalkboard when I was in elementary school, either (I did it once to get my classmates' attention and thought I was doing it wrong since I didn't hear **anything**).

Are there many others who can't hear it?

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I'm really sensitive to these things these days (Score:2)

by [flimflammer \(956759\)](#)

As a kid nothing could phase me. I'd laugh when someone would try it and I'd see everyone freaking out. But when I turned around 20 several years ago that all changed and I've become super sensitive. It's not even just fingernails on chalk boards that get me, it's a wide assortment of things.

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2000 to 4000 Hertz? (Score:2)

by [GeneralEmergency \(240687\)](#)

Ah, yes. Very familiar with that range.

The "Ex-Wife" frequencies.

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This is not new... (Score:2)

by [Phoenix \(2762\)](#)

I can not remember which Science Show I was watching at the time but I learned that it was the lower frequencies at least in the early 2000's.

While I'm not sure if they mentioned the specific 2k-4k range, they had broken the noise into low, mid, and high frequencies and did a test with people listening to the noise. While some did flinch at the higher frequencies, most reacted to the lower range.

So unless they took almost a decade to isolate the specific frequency range...is this really new?

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The idea of wool (Score:1)

by [toxonix \(1793960\)](#)

Fingernails or cat's claws stuck caught in wool, like a wool jacket or tweed. This makes part of my brain hurt bad. The idea of it.

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IgNobel (Score:1)

by [meteormarc \(1715840\)](#)

Sounds (...) like a good candidate for next year's IgNobel prize

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The only way to keep your health is to eat what you don't want, drink what you don't like, and do what you'd rather not. -- Mark Twain

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