



SCIENCE

Germans to Present Results of Landmark 'Fingernails on Blackboard' Study

At last, the mystery has been solved of why the sound of long, sharp fingernails running *sloooooowly* down a dry blackboard can induce chills and screams just by description alone. And we can all thank a group of scientists from Germany, who subjected a number of participants to that very sound over and over and OVER and OVER and HAHHAHAHAHA!!!

Half the people were told the sound was part of an avant-gare musical piece; the other half was told that they were being tortured in precisely the way that they were being tortured. All vitals were then measured and they were asked to describe how the sound made them feel.

The ones who thought they were listening to music found it slightly less unpleasant, yes. But both groups found it pretty fucking unbearable, and that's because the sound's pitch falls somewhere between 2,000 and 4,000 hertz. That's a perfect sweet-spot for humans, as the sound tends to get amplified inside the ear canal. The new theory discounts a **crazy older one** which suggested that the sound mimics primate warning calls. They'll present their findings at the Acoustical Society of America annual meeting in San Diego this week.

Thanks, German scientists! Now break the Knuckle-Cracking Code, the Eyeball-Touching Effect, and Random Mayonnaise Revulsion Syndrome. We need answers! [ABC News, Image via Shutterstock

RELATED STORIES

- Watch the largest polar bear gathering in the world live via HD webcam IO9
- The neuroscience behind Rick Perry's big oops IO9
- Squids and Octopi Change From Invisible to Camouflaged in a Snap GIZMODO

BY SETH ABRAMOVITCH

NOV 4, 2011 2:59 AM

Share +1 Like 60 9,222 50

GAWKER

FACEBOOK

Gefällt mir 112.729 Personen gefällt das.

DISCUSSION THREADS

FEATURED ALL START A NEW THREAD

Oh No I Di'n't

04 Nov 2011 3:21 AM

Hey, Seth, could you not use such a graphic image? I mean, some of use are sensitive to nails on a chalkboard. Why stop with this picture? Why not put a picture of some popsicle sticks up.