

7 TIMES WHEN MUSIC IS MORE THAN MUSIC

1 WHEN IT REDUCES CRIME

What deters loiterers and vandals? The soothing sounds of classical music. (Or, at one theater in Seattle, "It's a Small World.") How it works: When we're around something we find unpleasant, our brains shut off the production of dopamine, one of the chemicals that makes us feel happy. So unscrupulous shoppers who don't care for Chopin may get Straussed out and take a step Bach when confronted with classical music.

2 WHEN IT MOTIVATES FACTORY WORKERS

Up-tempo music is pumped into factories to help line workers stay efficient as they perform the same task over and over. According to studies, up-tempo music works even better if it doesn't have lyrics and if it's turned off and on periodically.

3 WHEN IT SOOTHES LITTLE BABIES

Moms have been singing lullabies for millennia, and now science backs them up. A 2009 study found that music in neonatal units helps preemies eat better and gain weight faster.

4 WHEN IT HELPS PHELPS

Swimmer Michael Phelps was on to something when he listened to Young Jeezy's "Go Getta" before winning eight gold medals at the 2008 Olympics. According to several studies, music helps athletes (or people exercising) stay motivated, helps them enjoy their activity, and can increase their performance. In fact, in 2007 USA Track and Field officials banned the use of portable music players during races in part because they felt it gave the music-listening runners an edge.

5 WHEN IT HELPS PLANTS GROW

In 2007 South Korean scientists played classical music across rice fields, which grew faster than the fields without music. Their conclusion: Music played at certain frequencies—125 Hz and 250 Hz—activates certain plant genes, which increases their growth rate and can even make them flower early.

6 WHEN IT SCARES BIRDS AWAY

Officials at England's Gloucestershire Airport tried everything to keep birds off the runways. What finally worked? Pumping music onto the tarmac. (Tina Turner works the best.)

7 WHEN IT'S WEAPONIZED

"Joshua's army used horns to strike fear into the hearts of the people of Jericho," retired U.S. Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Dan Kuehl said about using music to "intimidate and interrogate." But not everyone likes what they hear: In 2008 the Zero Decibels Project was launched to protest using music as a weapon. So far, the feds show no sign of stopping the practice.

5 "INTIMIDATING" SONGS ON THE U.S. GOVERNMENT'S PLAYLIST

- 1 **"These Boots Were Made for Walking"** (Nancy Sinatra) FBI, 1993, used against a cult in Waco, Texas
- 2 **"Panama"** (Van Halen) U.S. armed forces, 1989, used against Manuel Noriega in Panama
- 3 **"Slim Shady"** (Eminem) U.S. armed forces, 2005, used against prisoners in Afghanistan
- 4 **"Hell's Bells"** (AC/DC) U.S. armed forces, 2004, during the taking of Fallujah (Iraq)
- 5 **"I Love You"** (Barney the dinosaur) U.S. armed forces, 2003, used against prisoners in Iraq