

A rat model of impulsive choice
behavior: Reward-related correlates
of performance.

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Impulsive choice

High levels of impulsive choice:

ADHD (e.g., Barkley et al., 2001; Kuntsi et al., 2001; Solonto et al., 2001)

Gambling (e.g., Dixon et al., 2003; 2006)

Substance abuse (e.g., Kirby & Petry, 2004; Madden et al 1997; Mitchell, 1999; Vichinich & Simpson, 1998)

Relapse in smoking cessation treatment programs (Krishnan-Sarin et al, 2007; Yoon et al, 2007)

What do we mean by impulsive choice?

EASY DECISION: SMALL (S) OR LARGE (L)

One cookie or two?



What do we mean by impulsive choice?

EASY DECISION: SOONER (S) OR LATER (L)

In 10 minutes or in 30 minutes?



What do we mean by impulsive choice?

DIFFICULT DECISION:

SMALLER SOONER (SS) OR LARGER LATER (LL)

**One cookie in 10 minutes or
two cookies in 30 minutes?**



What do we mean by impulsive choice?

DIFFICULT DECISION: SS or LL?

**One cookie in 10 minutes or
two cookies in 30 minutes?**



The impulsive choice would be to take the one cookie SS option. Why would people lose self-control?

What are momentary and molar maximizing?

WHAT GETS ME MORE COOKIE PER MINUTE DELAY?:

One cookie in 10 minutes or
two cookies in 30 minutes?



What are momentary and molar maximizing?

WHAT GETS ME MORE COOKIE PER MINUTE DELAY?:

One cookie in 10 minutes or
two cookies in 30 minutes?



I can wait three times the delay for twice the amount of cookie.

What are momentary and molar maximizing?

I'LL TAKE ONE COOKIE IN 10 MINUTES PLEASE



SS option

I'm living for the moment. I'm momentary maximizing.

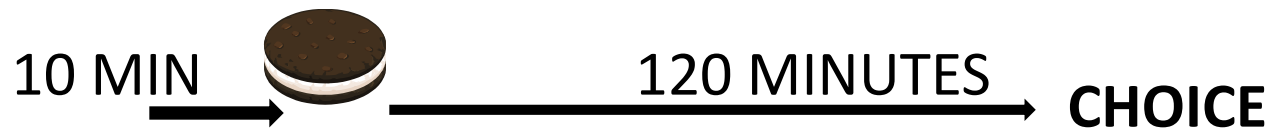
What are momentary and molar maximizing?

WHEN CAN I CHOOSE AGAIN?



What are momentary and molar maximizing?

I HAVE TO WAIT TWO HOURS?



CHOICE



What are momentary and molar maximizing?

I'LL WAIT 30 MINS FOR TWO COOKIES



LL option

I'm looking at the bigger picture. I'm molar maximizing.

Individual differences in choice

Here be rats..... Gaaarghhh

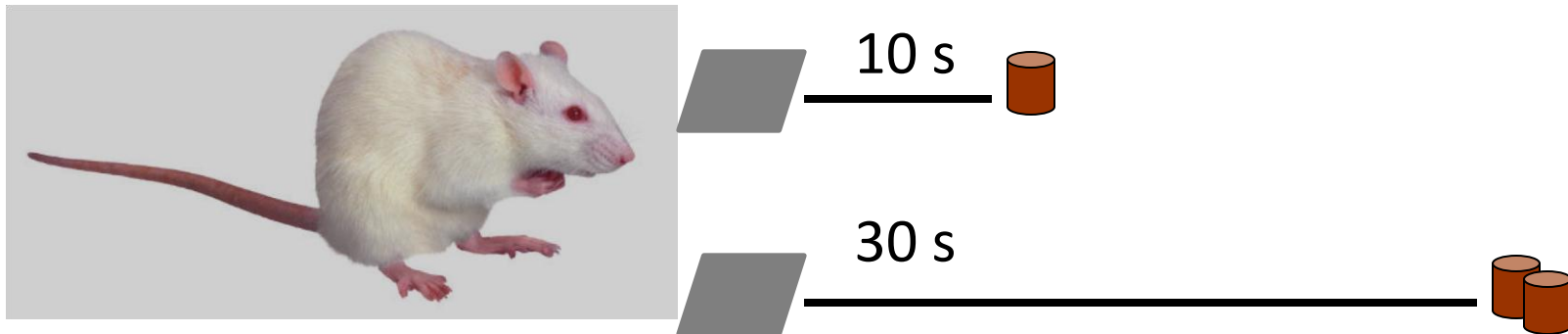


Individual differences in choice

A rat version of the cookie dilemma:

SS 10s 1 PELLETT

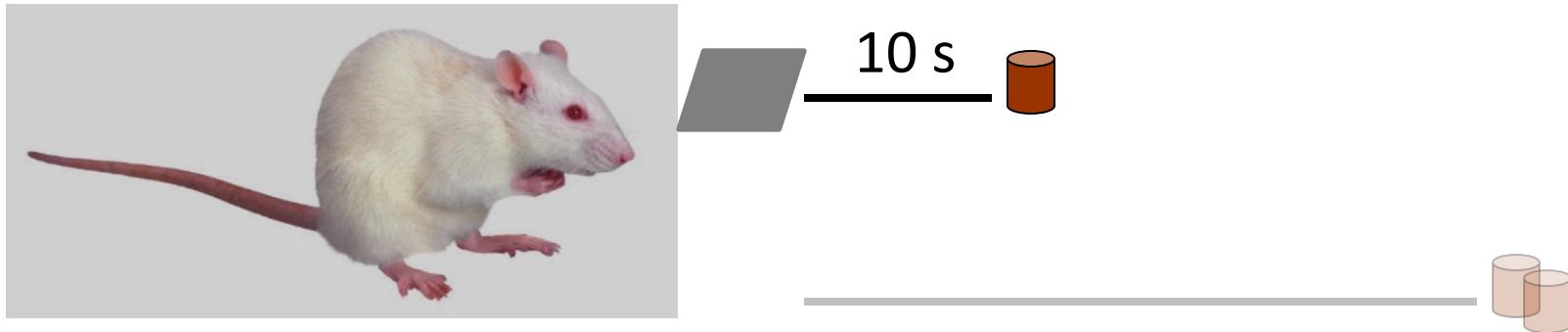
LL 30s 2 PELLETT



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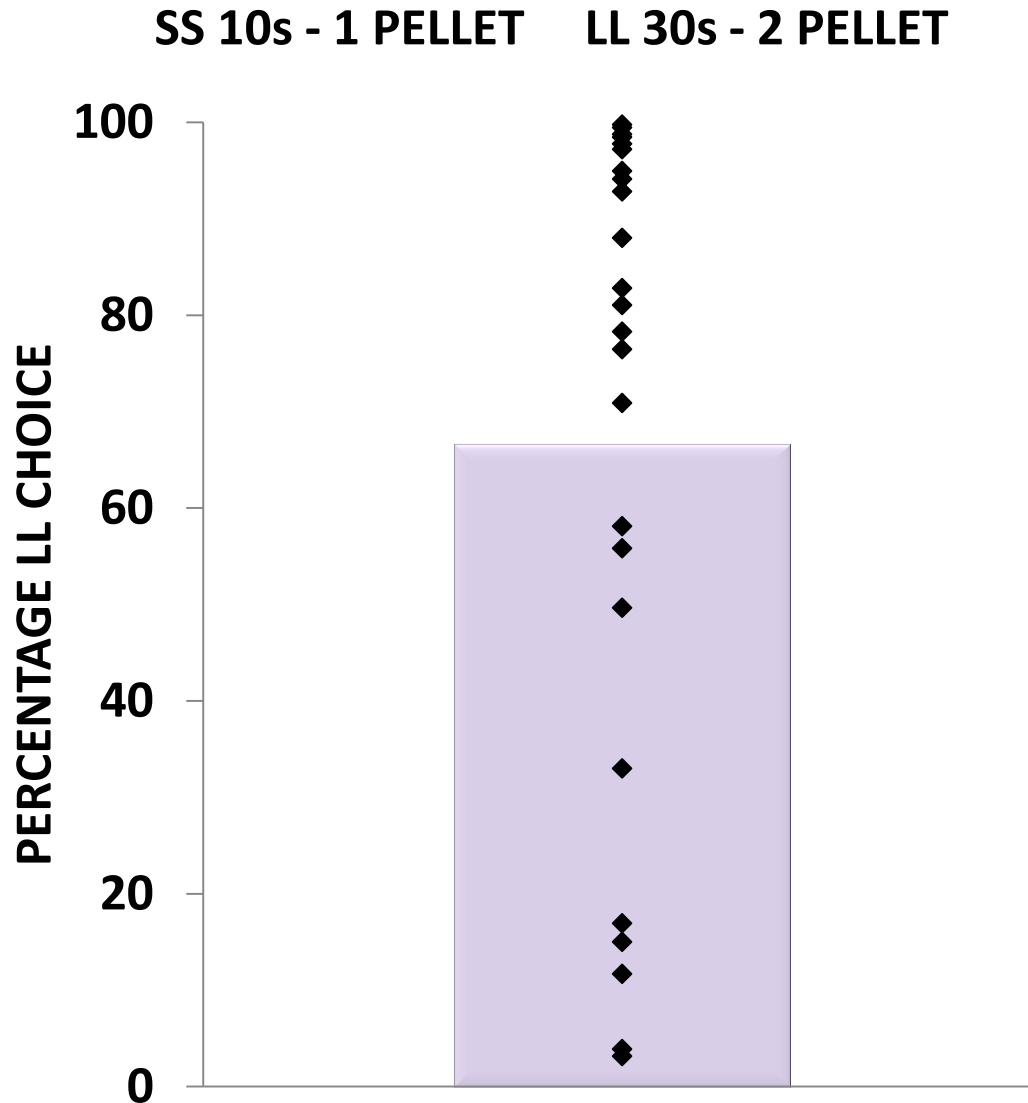
LL 30s 2 PELLETT



Inter-trial interval (ITI) 120 s until next choice



Individual differences in choice



Moderating choice behavior

Why?

The ability to moderate choice behavior depending on outcome is important:

Underlying factors may be a cause of disorders,

e.g. Insensitivity to outcome delay

 Insensitivity to outcome amount

 Current motivational state

Moderating choice behavior

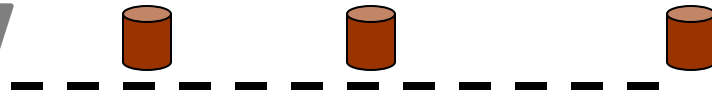
Manipulating the SS delay:

SS 1 PELLET

LL 30s 2 PELLET



5 s, 15 s or 30 s (over session blocks)



30 s



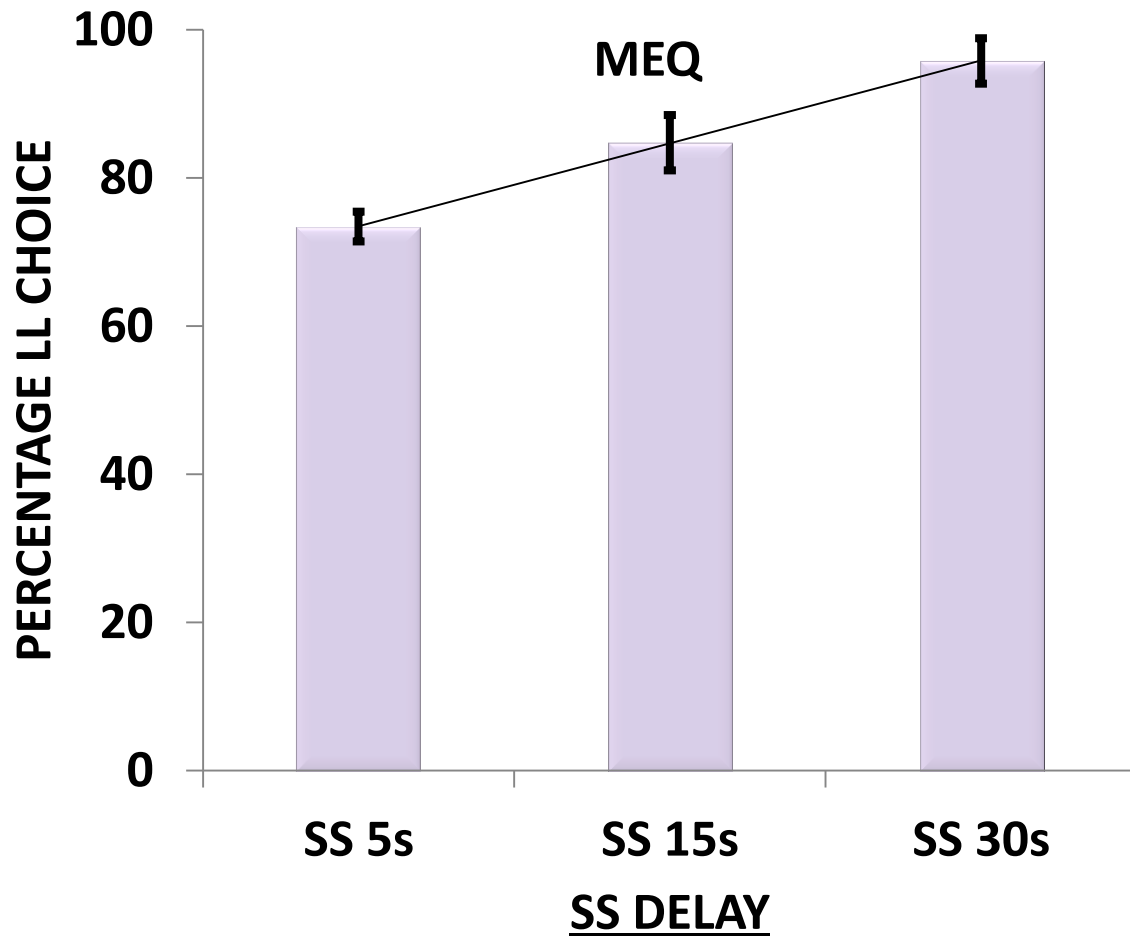
Moderating choice behavior

Manipulating the SS delay

SS 1 PELLET

LL 30s 2 PELLET

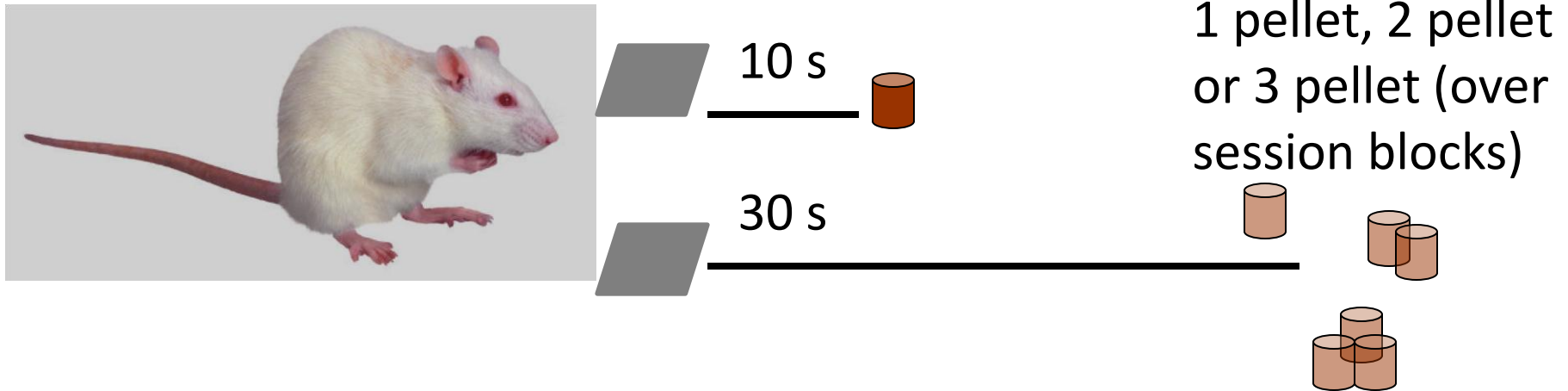
Increasing SS
delay increases
molar
maximizing



Moderating choice behavior

Manipulating the LL amount:

SS 10s 1 PELLET **LL 30s**



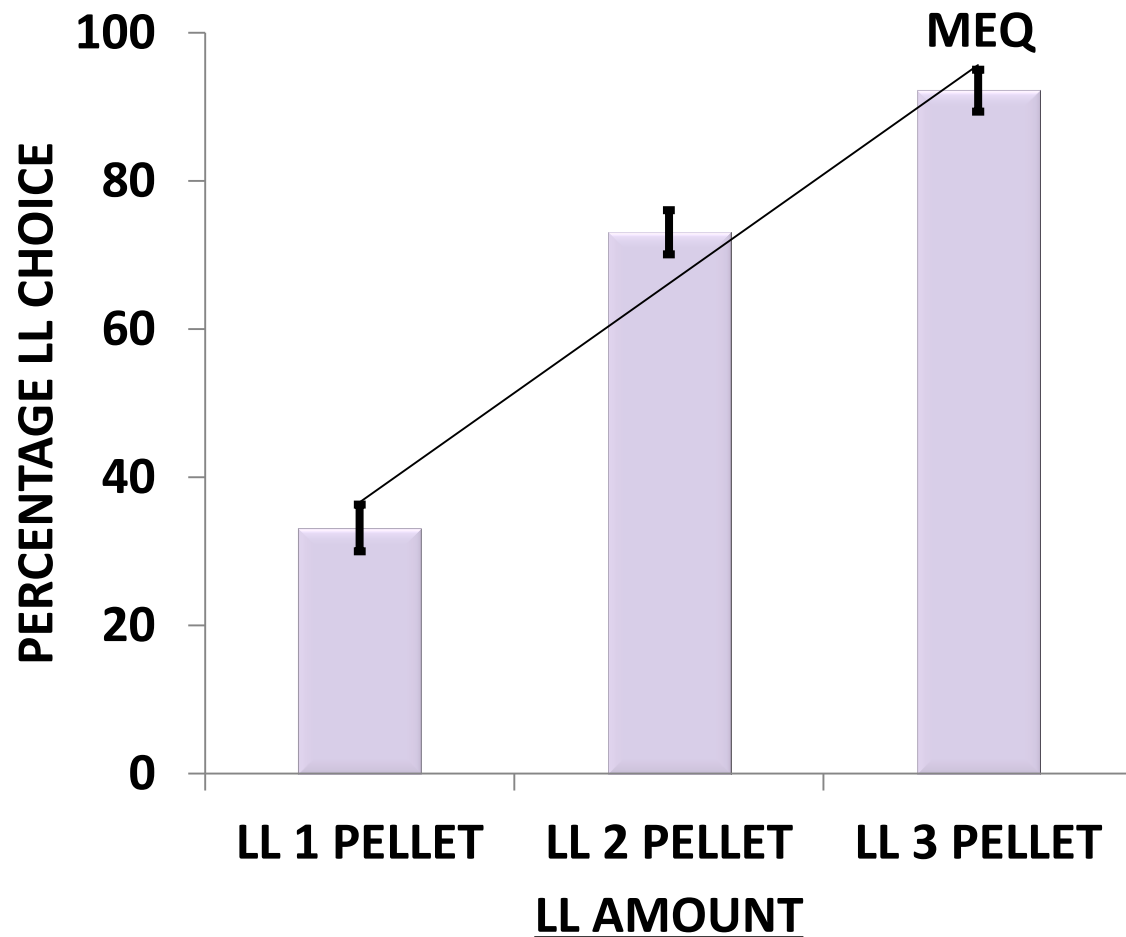
Moderating choice behavior

Manipulating the LL amount:

SS 10s 1 PELLET

LL 30s

Increasing LL
amount
increases molar
maximizing



Moderating choice behavior

Manipulating current motivational state:

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LL 30s 2 PELLETT



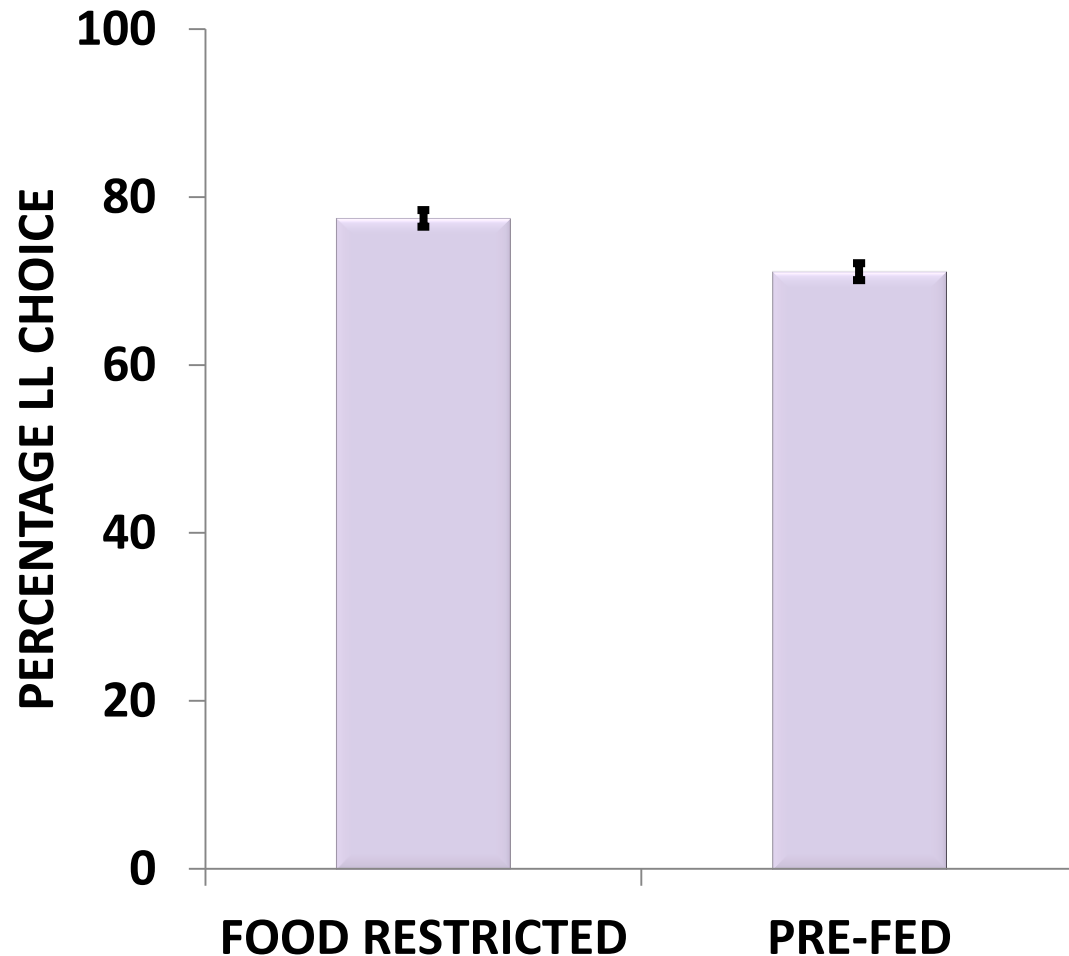
Moderating choice behavior

Manipulating current motivational state:

SS 10s 1 PELLETT

LL 30s 2 PELLETT

Pre-feeding
increases
momentary
maximizing



Predicting choice behavior

Correlating performance on other behavioral tasks with choice behavior.

Why?

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If performance on simple tasks can predict choice behavior they can be used in screening.

If performance on other tasks is related to choice behavior the tasks may share underlying factors useful in intervention.

Predicting choice behavior

Outcome efficiency: differential reinforcement of low rates (DRL)

DRL 10s and DRL 30s (separate sessions and levers)



Predicting choice behavior

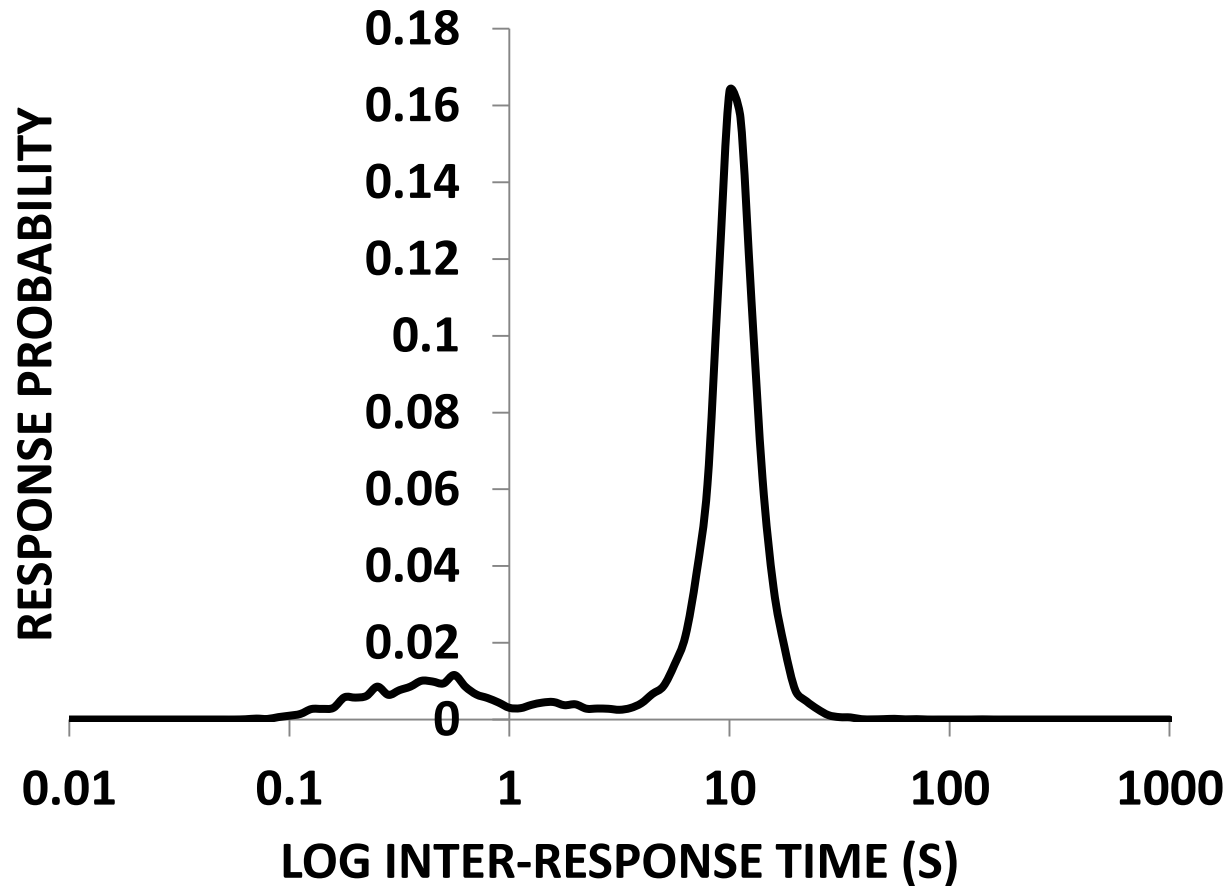
Outcome efficiency: differential reinforcement of low rates (DRL)

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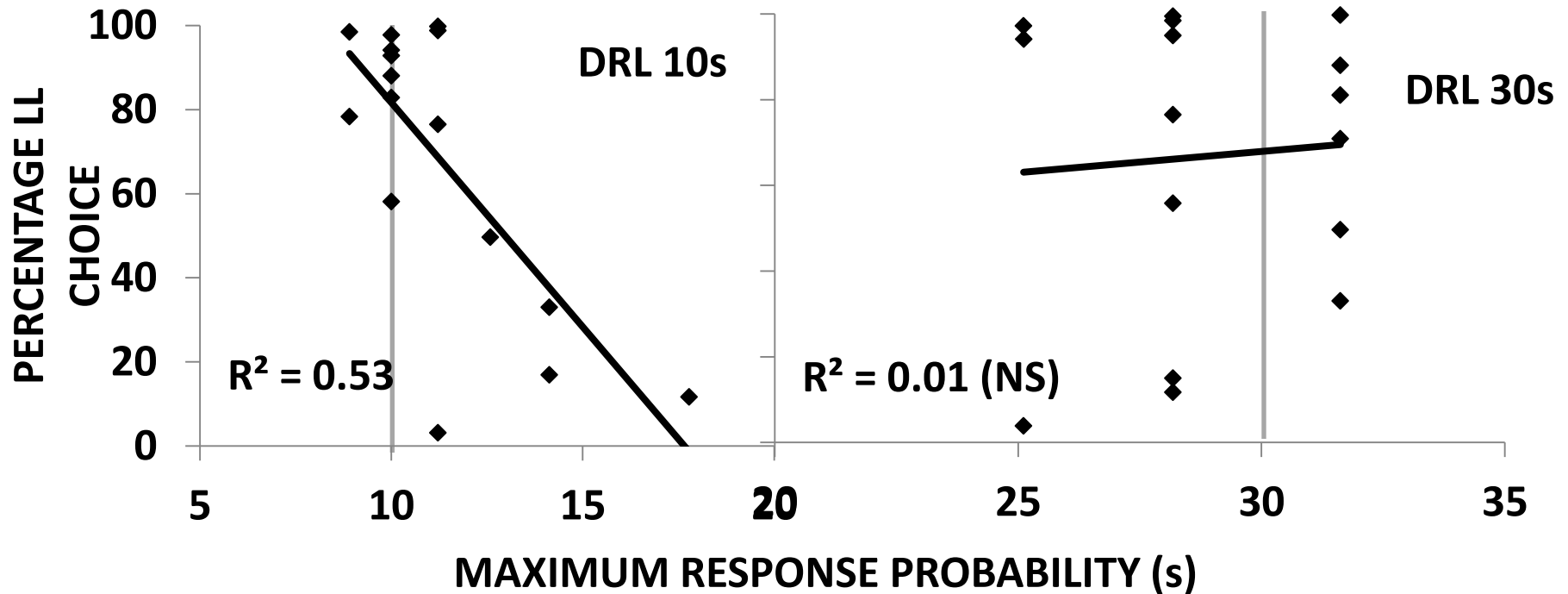
Predicting choice behavior

Outcome efficiency: DRL 10s



Predicting choice behavior

Outcome efficiency: Correlation with choice



Outcome efficiency on DRL 10s predicts molar maximizing

Predicting choice behavior

Incentive motivation to work for increasing reward: Progressive ratio (PR)

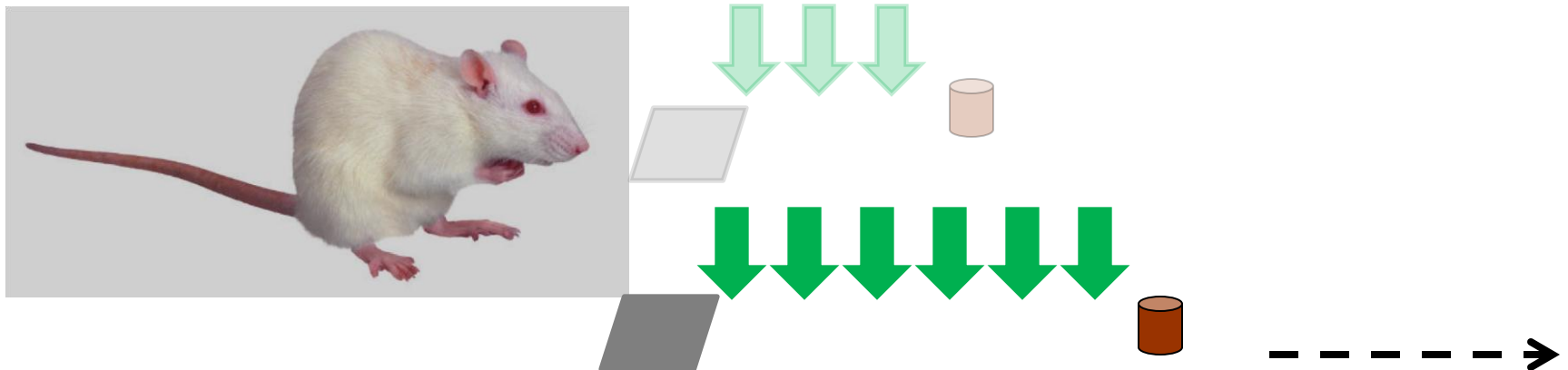
PR3 1 pellet compared to PR3 4 pellet



Predicting choice behavior

Incentive motivation to work for increasing reward: PR

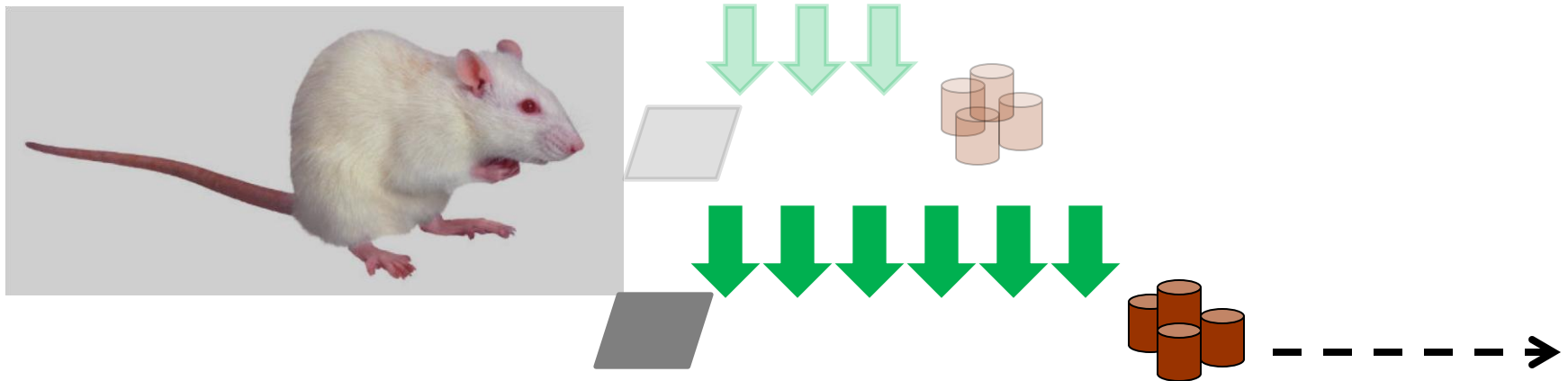
PR3 1 pellet compared to PR3 4 pellet



Predicting choice behavior

Incentive motivation to work for increasing reward: PR

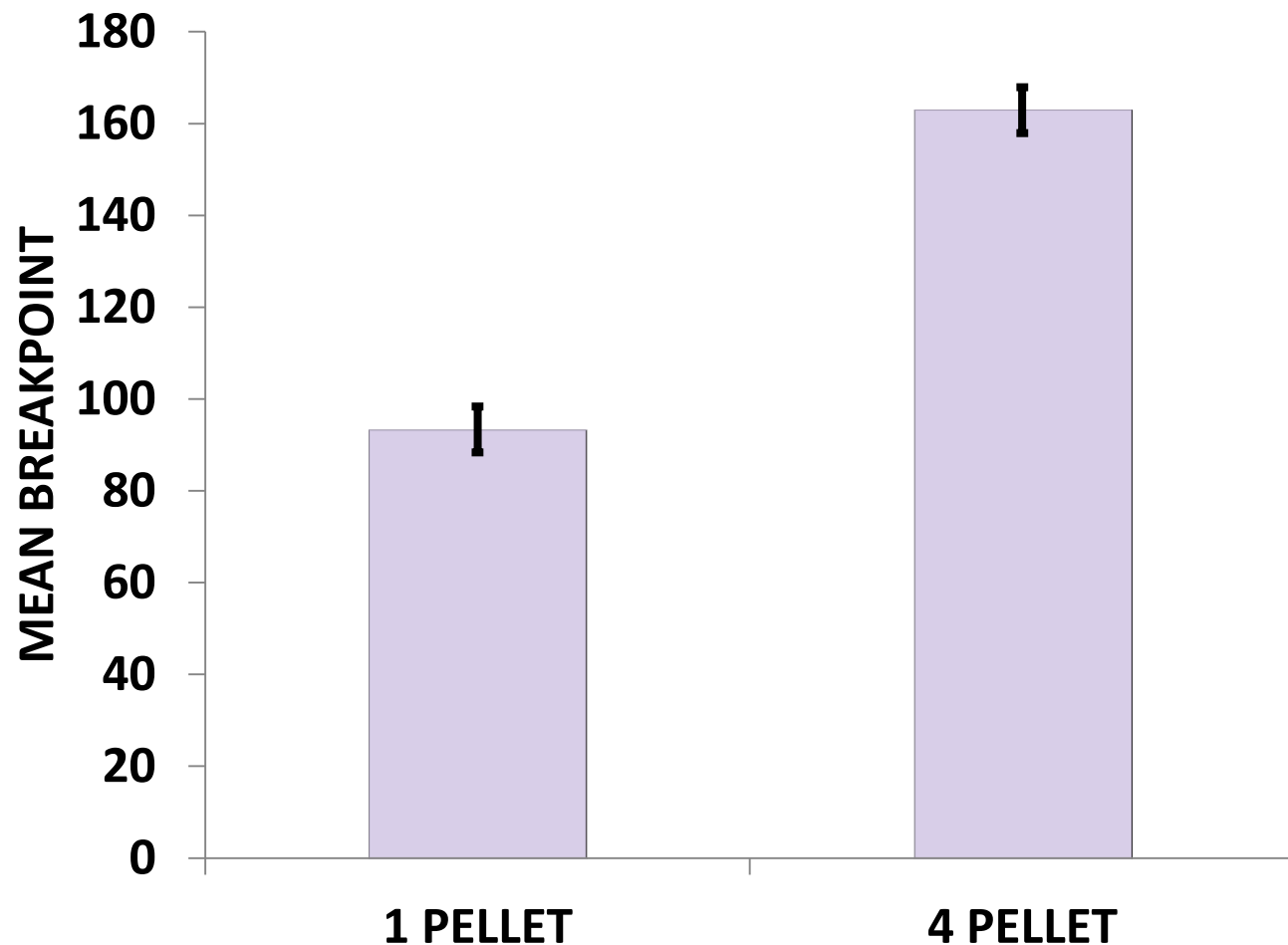
PR3 1 pellet compared to PR3 4 pellet



Predicting choice behavior

Incentive motivation to work for increasing

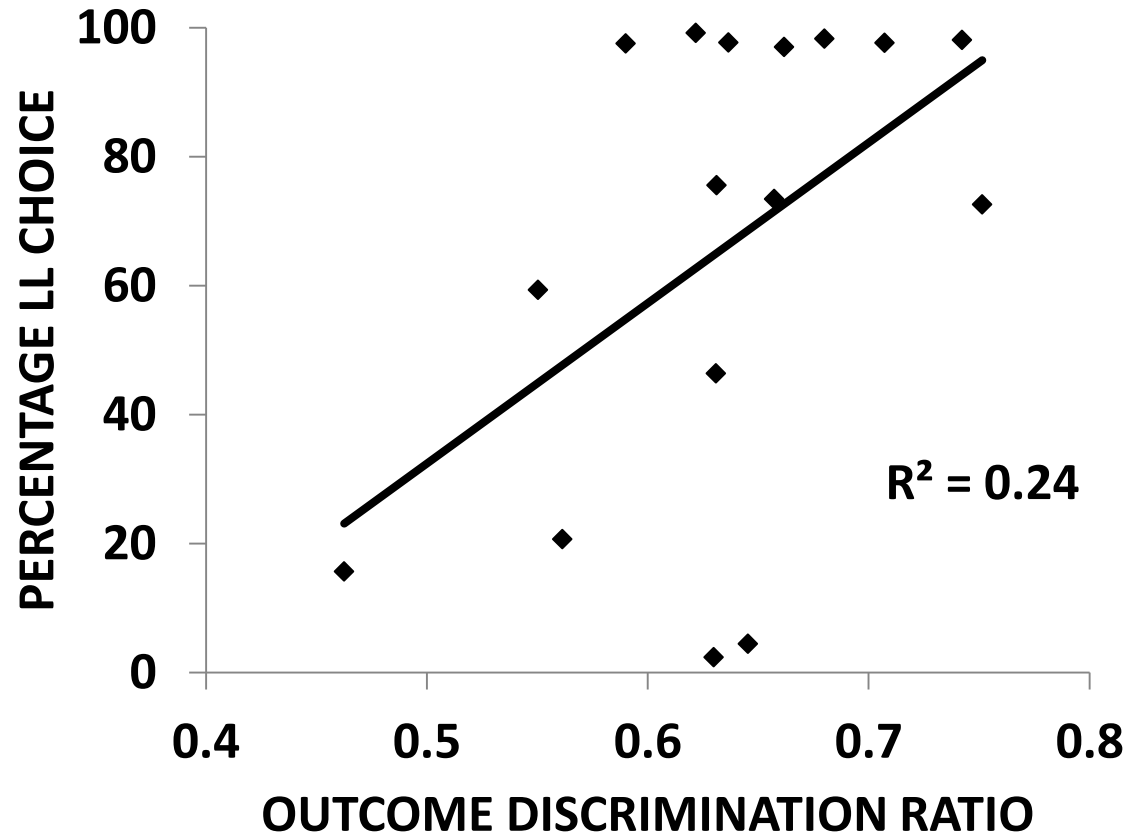
reward: PR



Predicting choice behavior

Incentive motivation to work for increasing reward: Correlation with choice

Greater increase of work rate for larger outcomes predicts molar maximizing



Applications of a rat model

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Explore neurobiological areas that are currently unavailable in human research.

Thanks go to:

Behavioral testing:

Aaron Smith

The rats

Members of the KK behavioral neuroscience lab





STEPHANIE KLEIN-DAVIS | The Roanoke Times

Mellisa Williamson, 35, a Bullitt Avenue resident, worries about the effect on her unborn child from the sound of jackhammers.