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The Effects of Music on Subjects with Alzheimer and Dementia Disease in Cache Valley

Landon Frost, *Utah State University* | Dr. Reed Geertsen, *Utah State University*

I. Introduction

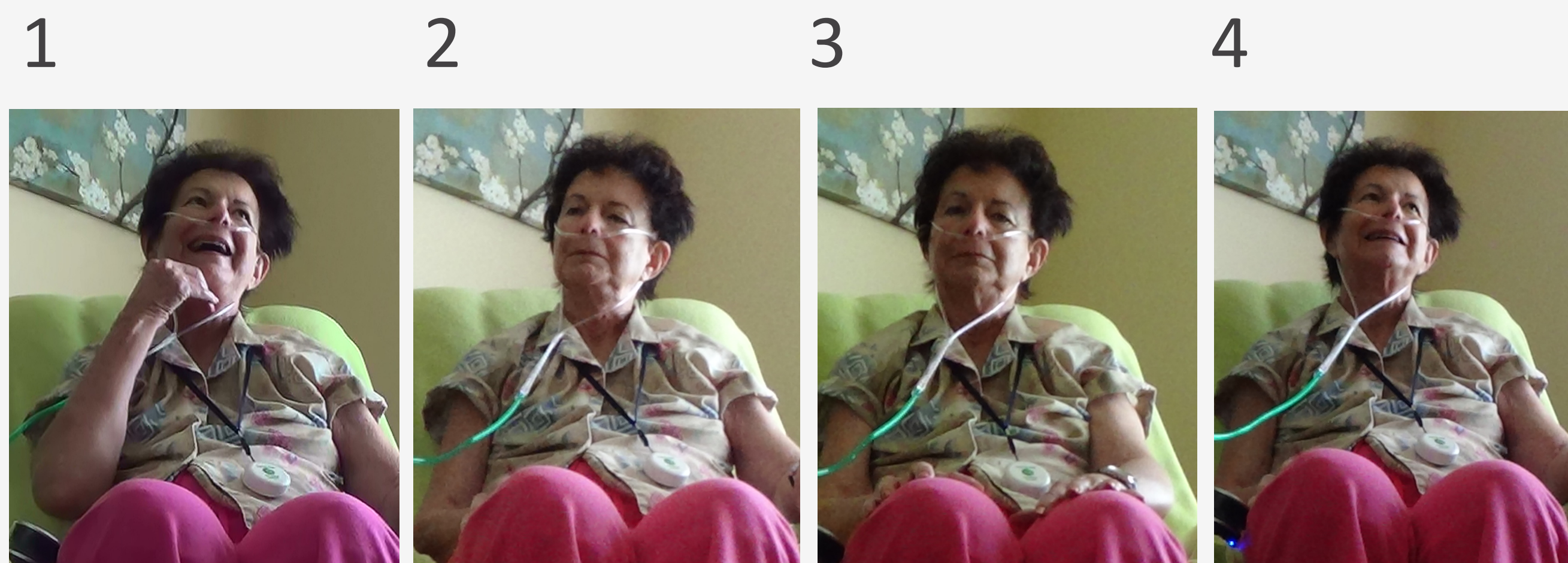
Music has been shown to trigger old memories and induce various levels of stress relief and relaxation for many different people in many different environments. My research focused on discovering which songs had the greatest effect on people with Alzheimer and Dementia Disease living in retirement centers throughout the Cache Valley.



Advertisement used to obtain subjects

II. Methods

Eleven patients were selected through an informed consent process which included permission from responsible family members. During the course of three or more visits to patients in their care centers, the subjects listened to a variety of songs. These included songs that family members thought would be personally meaningful based on their knowledge of the patient's past experiences with music. Other popular songs were selected to represent a wide range of different types of music.



III. Results

The songs that had the strongest impact on the patients with Alzheimer or Dementia disease in my study were consistent with the farming and religious background of most participants. This was evident in visual cues as subjects reacted mostly to country western and religious music rather than what had been most popular in the media at earlier times in their lives. This correlates with the agricultural and religious roots of Cache Valley.

IV. Conclusions

Though many parts of the brain have deteriorated in Alzheimer and Dementia patients, they maintain their musical preferences. This can potentially serve as a practical way for improving quality of care for this cohort. Music may also be a resource for patients and their families in many areas of health care.

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