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Creative Coding I  
January 25th, 2025

“The Problem with Learning Styles” by Cindi May critiques the common conception that aligning instructional methods to individual learning styles improves how students learn. May highlights that while people have preferences for how they process information, scientific evidence does not support the idea that such preferences significantly impact learning outcomes. Hussman and O’Loughlin’s study showed no academic benefits when students’ study strategies matched their self-reported learning styles. This demonstrates low correlation between individual study techniques and improved learning in students, suggesting proven, universal techniques are often best utilized by everyone.

While I think that certain techniques are proven to improve learning on a subject more than others, I believe that personalizing study methods still have high value, not because it aligns with learning styles but because it can make studying more enjoyable. If using designated study schedules or interactive tools makes me more engaged, I’ll likely spend more time studying and focusing my attention on the subject. Ultimately, while universal strategies offer irrefutable benefits to learning, allowing students to choose methods they find enjoyable still fosters motivation and more consistent effort. Ideally, universal techniques should be incorporated into comfortable, individualized study methods that the student prefers.