The Influence of Paramecium Tetraurelia on Bacteriophages in Aquatic Ecosystems: Ingestion Without Inactivation

Jessica M. Richards
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

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THE INFLUENCE OF *PARAMECIUM TETRAURELIA* ON BACTERIOPHAGES IN AQUATIC ECOSYSTEMS:

INGESTION WITHOUT INACTIVATION

A Thesis
Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research
in Partial Fulfillment of the
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Master of Science

Jessica Richards
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
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Indiana University of Pennsylvania  
School of Graduate Studies and Research  
Department of Biology  

We hereby approve the thesis of  

Jessica M. Richards  

Candidate for the degree of Master of Science  

____________________________________  
Robert Hinrichsen, Ph.D.  
Professor of Biology, Advisor  

____________________________________  
Robert Major, Ph. D.  
Professor of Biology  

____________________________________  
Carl Luciano, Ph. D.  
Biology Department Chair, Professor of Biology  

ACCEPTED  

___________________________________  
Timothy P. Mack, Ph.D.  
Dean  
School of Graduate Studies and Research
Title: The Influence of *Paramecium tetraurelia* on Bacteriophages in Aquatic Ecosystems: Ingestion without Inactivation

Author: Jessica M. Richards

Thesis Chair: Dr. Robert D. Hinrichsen

Thesis Committee Members: Dr. Robert Major
                         Dr. Carl Luciano

It is not known how and to what extent protozoa and viruses impact each other’s population though they both rely on bacterial populations. In some species of protozoa it has been shown that there is ingestion and inactivation of bacteriophages, having a regulatory effect on the phages for the benefit of the protozoa. This study investigated the interaction of *Paramecium tetraurelia* and the bacteriophages, T4, T5, and λ, in order to determine if there was ingestion and inactivation. Paramecia and phages were incubated together and aliquots were taken every hour and evaluated for phage concentration; additionally, lysis experiments were performed to determine if there was viable phage recovery. It was shown that the concentration of viruses remains approximately the same over time and that viable phages are recovered from lysed paramecia. Therefore, there is evidence suggesting paramecia ingest but, do not inactivate, the complex, double-stranded DNA phages used in this investigation.