

《为何你无法回忆起你的婴儿时期，答案竟然是……》

导读:你是否也曾竭力回忆那段在父母怀中哇哇大哭的幸福岁月，但却总以失败告终。为何这段美好的襁褓时光终究未能“入档”？一起来看看科学家们的解释吧！



From the most dramatic moment in life – the day of your birth – to first steps, first words, first food, right up to nursery school, most of us can't remember anything of our first few years. How come?

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This gaping hole in the record of our lives has been baffling psychologists, neuroscientists and linguists for decades. It was a minor obsession of the father of psychotherapy, Sigmund Freud, who coined the phrase 'infant amnesia' over 100 years ago.

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Part of the puzzle comes from the fact that babies are, in other ways, sponges for new information, forming 700 new neural connections every second and wielding language-learning skills to make the most accomplished polyglot green with envy. The latest research suggests they begin training their minds before they've even left the womb.

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But even as adults, information is lost over time if there's no attempt to retain it. So one explanation is that infant amnesia is simply a result of the natural process of forgetting the things we experience throughout our lives.

[illegible]

Our culture may also determine the way we talk about our memories, with some psychologists arguing that they only come once we have mastered the power of speech.

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This leads us to the theory that we can't remember our first years simply because our brains hadn't developed the necessary equipment. The explanation emerges from the most famous man in the history of neuroscience, known simply as patient HM.

[illegible]

Perhaps, when we're very young, the hippocampus simply isn't developed enough to build a rich memory of an event. Baby rats, monkeys and humans all continue to add new neurons to the hippocampus for the first few years of life and we all are all unable to form lasting memories as infants – and it seems that the moment we stop creating new neurons, we're suddenly able to form long-term memories. “For young babies and infants the hippocampus is very undeveloped,” says Fagen.

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Perhaps the biggest mystery is not why we can't remember our childhood – but whether we can believe any of our memories at all.

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