



## Why Life Speeds Up As You Get Older: How Memory Shapes our Past

By Douwe Draaisma

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Is it true, as the novelist Cees Nooteboom once wrote, that memory is like a dog that lies down where it pleases? Where do the long, lazy summers of our childhood go? Why, as we grow older, does time seem to condense, speed up and elude us, while in old age, significant events from our distant past can seem as vivid and real as what happened yesterday? Douwe Draaisma, author of the internationally acclaimed *Metaphors of Memory* (Cambridge, 2001), explores the nature of autobiographical memory. Applying a unique blend of scholarship, poetic sensibility, and keen observation, he tackles such extraordinary phenomena as *deja-vu*, near-death experiences, the memory feats of idiot savants, and the effects of extreme trauma on memory recall. Raising almost as many questions as it answers, this fascinating book will not fail to affect you at the same time as it educates and entertains. Douwe Draaisma is Professor of the History of Psychology in the Department of Theory and History of Psychology at the University of Groningen, The Netherlands. He has published books on time and memory and his articles have appeared in professional journals as diverse as *Annals of Science*, *Psychological Medicine*, and *Nature*. The original Dutch version of *Why Life Speeds Up As You Get Older* has won several scientific and literary awards.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"Draaisma...is a terrific writer, whose erudition and passion for the topic are apparent in every page."  
--Nature Magazine

"This is a provocative and well-written book."  
--Desert Morning News

"Douwe Draaisma's Why Life Speeds Up As You Get Older won prizes when it appeared in Dutch, and is a treasure. The result is informative, amusing and moving. Long after you close it, it leaves a good memory."  
--New Scientist, Jon Turney

"...expertly and fluidly integrates applied autobiographical memory topics with interesting historical and contemporary vignettes of the psychology research literature. Excellent supplementary reading for courses in cognitive psychology and the history of psychology, highly recommended."  
--CHOICE

"Douwe Draaisma has written a delightful book about some intriguing aspects of memory...We applaud Draaisma's identification of hard-to-reach places and hope that this book will challenge experimental psychologists to develop new methodologies."  
--PsycCritiques, Elizabeth J. Marsh, Lisa K. Fazio

"In this remarkable volume, our hope of understanding the impact of time upon memory is amply met. Douwe Draaisma, an academic psychologist in the Netherlands, has organized a compelling and thorough review of studies in memory. These studies are offered to the reader in understandable terms, thanks to both the author's clarity of presentation and to the skill of the translators, Arnold and Erica Pomerans."  
--Philip W. Brickner, MD

"...Applying a unique blend of scholarship, poetic sensibility, and keen observation, he tackles such extraordinary phenomena as déj...-vu, near-death experiences, the memory feats of idiot savants, and the effects of extreme trauma on memory recall. Raising almost as many questions as it answers, this fascinating book will not fail to affect you at the same time as it educates and entertains."  
--**Human Evolution**

#### About the Author

Douwe Draaisma is Professor of History of Psychology at the University of Groningen, The Netherlands. He is the author of *Metaphors of Memory* (Cambridge, 2001).

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