While you were sleeping: Mechanisms for memory consolidation

Terrence Sejnowski
Salk Institute

Your brain is active during sleep as it cycles between deep, slow wave sleep and rapid eye movement (REM), or dream sleep. Evidence is accumulating that experiences during the day are integrated into long-term memories during sleep. Recordings from human cortex have revealed traveling waves of electrical that may trigger mechanisms for synaptic plasticity during sleep that may underlie memory consolidation.