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Subject: A bit of perspective for all you "intellectuals".  
Posted by [boma57](#) on Tue, 29 Jul 2003 02:25:01 GMT  
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## Comprehending Eternity

The human mind is very limiting, but it is also very flexible. For instance, on the topic of comprehending eternity and infinity, we can understand these things because we can name them. However, though, we cannot comprehend them. We live in a three dimensional world. If I talk about a five dimensional world, one has the capacity to understand that I speak of a world with five dimensions, yet they cannot comprehend what this world would be like.

There can be a few explanations for why mankind cannot yet accurately interpret these things. As for eternity, one of the reasons for this may be that our minds cannot comprehend these things because they do not exist. Infinity and eternity may not exist, the same as a perpetual motion machine can never exist in a world with friction.

It's not the best explanation, but it's one of them. The obviously significant opposite is that the concepts are right, yet we just cannot grasp them. Infinity exists. If you fly off into space, you can travel forever, constantly seeing new things. If the universe is infinite, you'll never reach the end. Or perhaps the universe is not infinite, but space itself is, in which case you'd find something beyond the universe. It certainly is the definition that allows for the most creativity and artistry of the mind.

But the final explanation, and one that I find to be most probable, is that we're looking at it from the wrong angle. Infinity is a line with no end...But not necessarily a straight line. A circle is made up of one line that has no ends. That line is infinite. You can trace it for eternity, and never find it's beginning, nor it's end.

Ancient cultures believed the world to be flat. They could not comprehend infinity any more so than we can, so they assumed that it ended. This explanation was a scapegoat for their uninformed sense of understanding. Turns out though, the world is infinite. You could travel in a "straight" line, and never reach the end of the Earth, and thus I believe the Universe is the same.

Depending on the particular flexibility of one's mind, they may not be able to completely comprehend this concept. The universe is a three-dimensional space. You can transform a two-dimensional plane into a three-dimensional sphere and it seems infinite, but what does a three dimensional object become in order to retain the same apparent infiniteness?

Well, therein lies our quandary. Our predecessors could not understand how we could stand on a sphere yet not fall off the bottom, and as such we do not understand the things which I've attempted to outline; eternity, infinity, a fourth dimension.

The human mind is ever changing, though. Perhaps in centuries or even millennia to come, our descendants will grasp and realize the concepts which elude us. But of course, they too will have questions that plague them.

We have a number system which is endless. Thus, we can understand an infinite number of

dimensions. It's been roughly five thousand years since the first civilization appeared on this planet, though, and we can comprehend only three of them. Perfection of the human mind has a while to wait. Eternity to wait, in fact.

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