

Reflection

There were several items in my study of infinity that surprised me and not all of them pertained to mathematics. Perhaps the most shocking was the ten years of torture, and then the execution, of Giordano Bruno, the alchemist and philosopher who simply claimed that the universe was infinite. This hindered many great thinkers, most notably Galileo, who feared the church and altered their methods to meet the church's satisfaction.

Concerning the mathematics of infinity, easily the most surprising component is the counterintuitive nature of infinity and the fact that it does not behave in the same ways as more discrete math. Some of the ideas expounded by the people in my timeline, especially my favorites Zeno, Archimedes, and Cantor, appear so radical and yet so simple that I feel it takes a special kind of genius to bring those ideas forth.