



Infinity and the Mind: The Science and Philosophy of the Infinite (Princeton Science Library)

By Rudy Rucker

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In *Infinity and the Mind*, Rudy Rucker leads an excursion to that stretch of the universe he calls the "Mandscape," where he explores infinity in all its forms: potential and actual, mathematical and physical, theological and mundane. Rucker acquaints us with Gödel's rotating universe, in which it is theoretically possible to travel into the past, and explains an interpretation of quantum mechanics in which billions of parallel worlds are produced every microsecond. It is in the realm of infinity, he maintains, that mathematics, science, and logic merge with the fantastic. By closely examining the paradoxes that arise from this merging, we can learn a great deal about the human mind, its powers, and its limitations.

Using cartoons, puzzles, and quotations to enliven his text, Rucker guides us through such topics as the paradoxes of set theory, the possibilities of physical infinities, and the results of Gödel's incompleteness theorems. His personal encounters with Gödel the mathematician and philosopher provide a rare glimpse at genius and reveal what very few mathematicians have dared to admit: the transcendent implications of Platonic realism.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Rudy Rucker's *Infinity and the Mind* is a terrific study with real mathematical depth."--*New Yorker*

"Rudy Rucker, set theorist and science-fiction author, has continued the tradition ... of making mathematics and computer science accessible to the intellectually minded layperson.... *Infinity and the Mind* is funny, provocative, entertaining, and profound."--**Joseph Shipman, *Journal of Symbolic Logic***

"Attempts to put Gödel's theorems into sharper focus, or at least to explain them to the nonspecialist, abound. My personal favorite is Rudy Rucker's *Infinity and the Mind*, which I recommend without reservation."--
Craig Smorynski, *The American Mathematical Monthly*

"[Rucker] leads his readers through these mental gymnastics in an easy, informal way."--*San Francisco Chronicle*

"A captivating excursion through the mathematical approaches to the notions of infinity and the implications of that mathematics for the vexing questions on the mind, existence, and consciousness."--*Mathematics Teacher*

"It is difficult to find any aspect of infinity that is not explored in this compelling book. . . . This memorable book is one to be kept on an accessible shelf after reading it: it will not leave the reader unaffected."--*Journal for Research in Mathematics Education*

From the Back Cover

"*Infinity and the Mind* can be read and enjoyed by experts and nonexperts alike. Rudy Rucker is a talented logician who draws on his talents as a science-fiction writer and cartoonist to convey his ideas. This makes for not only a solid, accurate, and informative book but also a good read."--**Thomas Tymoczko, Smith College**

"Informal, amusing, witty, profound. . . . In an extraordinary burst of creative energy, Rudy Rucker has managed to bring together every aspect of mathematical infinity. . . . A dizzying glimpse into that boundless region of blinding light where the mysteries of transcendence shatter the clarity of logic, set theory, proof theory, and contemporary physics."--**Martin Gardner**

About the Author

Rudy Rucker is Professor of Mathematics and Computer Science at San Jose State University and the author of numerous books on mathematics and philosophy, including "Artificial Life Lab", "Mind Tools: The Five Levels of Mathematical Reality", and "The Fourth Dimension: A Guided Tour of Higher Universes". Among his works of science fiction are "White Light, Software," and "Space-Time Donuts".

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