Re: A physics question about infinity

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- *From*: David W. Cantrell <DWCantrell@xxxxxxxxxxx>
- *Date*: 25 Apr 2006 16:37:25 GMT

richard@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx (Richard Tobin) wrote:

> In article <20060425121535.984$yH@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx>,
> David W. Cantrell <DWCantrell@xxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:
>
> > You're entitled to your opinion, of course. But I see virtually no
> > difference between the care which one must use when dealing with zero
> > and that which one must use when dealing with an infinity in an extended
> > number system. For example, corresponding to the example you gave:
> >
> > For example, if y might be zero, you can't deduce x=1 from x*y=y.
>
> Well, with zero, of the four simple arithmetic operations you only
> have to worry about cancelling in multiplication;

In an extended system, with zero, I'd be loath to say that we don't have to worry about cancelling in division. For example, if y might be zero, you can't deduce x=1 from x/y=1/y.

> with infinity you have to worry about all four.

Yes, what you have to be careful about with zero regarding multiplication/division, you have to be careful about with infinity regarding both multiplication/division and addition/subtraction. But it seems like essentially the same sort of care in all those cases. And we mathematicians are a careful sort anyway.

David
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