To Infinity and Beyond!

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Is there anything in mathematics more thrillingly distressing than the concept of infinity? Many of us first had our minds blown by the infinite as children, when it was a trump card in any game of one-upsmanship... until we got to infinity plus one! Later, we came across infinity again in a much more formal setting when we learned about limits in our calculus classes. We may or may not have learned that Newton found it pretty distressing, too. And, infinity plus one notwithstanding, most of us probably haven’t thought much about what happens when we go past infinity – into the mathematical stratosphere, if you will. This is the realm of set theory, and we will discuss what is in many ways its foundational distressing question: the continuum hypothesis.