



# Equations of Eternity, Speculations on Consciousness, Meaning, and the Mathematical Rules That Orchestrate the Cosmos

*David Darling*

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## **Equations of Eternity, Speculations on Consciousness, Meaning, and the Mathematical Rules That Orchestrate the Cosmos** David Darling

You are roughly eighteen billion years old and made of matter that has been cycled through the multimillion-degree heat of innumerable giant stars. You are composed of particles that once were scattered across thousands of light-years of interstellar space, particles that were blasted out of exploding suns and that for eons drifted through the cold, starlit vacuum of the Galaxy. You are very much a child of the cosmos. In giving birth to us, the universe has performed its most astonishing creative act. Out of a hot, dense melee of subatomic particles - which is all that once existed - it has fashioned intelligence and consciousness. Some of those tiny, primordial pinpoints of matter from the infant cosmos have become temporarily arranged to make your brain and mine. Your thoughts at this very moment derive from energy transactions between particles born at the dawn of time. Somehow the anarchy of genesis has given way to exquisite, intricate order, so that now there are portions of the universe that can reflect upon themselves and ask: Why am I here? What is the purpose of life, consciousness, and reality? In posing these questions, we are, in a sense, the universe questioning itself - a most extraordinary realization. It helps dispel permanently the notion that we are irrelevant and insignificant in nature's broad scheme. The fact is, we stand at the known apex of cosmic evolution. Small though we may be physically, we are giants when measured on the scale of complexity. And it is that complexity, of our brains in particular, that is an essential prerequisite to awareness. Yet the universe did not set out to be aware. During the first few chaotic microseconds, when all the matter and energy there would ever be was erupting from the primeval fireball, there was no great plan to make conscious minds. Nature is congenitally blind. Evolution is not, and never was, a steady march toward a certain type of order, or life, or consciousness. There is no way of knowing in advance what forms nature will take, no favorites, no movement toward a predetermined goal. On the other hand, it is hard to believe that we are here by chance. Why are we aware? Key words - Death, Reincarnation, Consciousness, Cosmos, Science, Soul, Mind, Universe

**Author Bio - David Darling** is the author of more than 40 titles including narrative science titles: *Megacatastrophes!*, *We Are Not Alone*, *Gravity's Arc*, *Equations of Eternity*, a New York Times Notable Book, and *Deep Time*. He is also the author of the bestseller *The Universal Book of Mathematics: From Abracadabra to Zeno's Paradoxes*. Darling's other titles include *The Universal Book of Astronomy*, and *The Complete Book of Spaceflight*, as well as more than 30 children's books. His articles and reviews have appeared in *Astronomy*, *Omni*, *Penthouse*, *New Scientist*, the *New York Times*, and the *Guardian*, among others. David Darling was born in Glossop, Derbyshire, England, on July 29, 1953, and grew up in the beautiful Peak District, close to Kinder Scout for those who know the area. He went to New Mills Grammar School and then on to Sheffield University, where he earned his B.Sc. in physics in 1974, and Manchester University, for my Ph.D. in astronomy in 1977. David Darling's interests, apart from his work and family, include singing, song-writing, and playing guitar, walking, and travel.

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