

The Unabomber tells all

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It's usually true, I guess, *ex nihilo, nihil fit*;
but not in set theory. There, in the *beginning*:
innocent \emptyset
but {nothing up either sleeve: for notice
the quote marks to come}: " ϵ ", a lonely
chunk of hieroglyph, and presto, a universe.
Admittedly, it's only set-theoretic {although
with transcendental ellipses}; and,
admittedly, brackets are needed
{the mathematician's trip wires};
but we know that singularities {of whatever sort}
are by law tricked into giving birth.

We all begin small, don't we? I started out
that way: trying to divide by 0; for I noticed
the essential thing; the smaller
the denominator, the bigger the quotient.
Somehow {wouldn't you know it?} 0 is just
too small; ∞ just too close.

But there's the key, right? Rapid growth?
Think of the insidious $f(x) = e^x$; boy,
does *that* start out slowly {logarithmically so}.
Get to 1, however, and suddenly it's all in a rush
{surpasses every polynomial, as it turns out}.

Don't get the impression that my interest
in the relative growth of functions
is purely formal. Explosions have implications,
moral ones, no doubt.
But these are perhaps just details, just
a question of what remains
after we've squashed flat the singularity,

smeared it out across the furniture
of the world: given {along the way} an academic
or 2 a new slant on the means of production
{the Luddite irony of the prosthesis}.

Do I sound cold-blooded? You forget
the ascetic beauty in all this:
Call it an idealization if you will:
starting from a real point {no width, no length,
no depth} and expanding in 4-space
{the equations nonlinear; forgive me
if I omit them}. Think of something like
a radially expanding sphere
muscling its way through its recipient,
its volume swelling as of r^3 ,
its surface area as of r^2 . But I digress.

Did I answer all your questions? Probably
not. You'd like to know: Do I drink? was
my mother kind to me? why didn't my brother
want all that money? did I use a hammer
when I built my house? do I have regrets?