

THE ANTHROPIC PRINCIPLE

Astrophysicist Stephen Hawking cites the term “anthropic principle” when attempting to explain why the universe is so exquisitely fine-tuned for life. Hawking writes, “it seems clear that there are relatively few ranges of values for the number that would allow the development of any form of intelligent life. ...One can take this either as evidence of a divine purpose in Creation and the choice of the laws of science or as support for the strong anthropic principle.”¹⁸Hawking has advocated the strong anthropic principle solution of many universes in order to avoid the conclusion of a designer.

The anthropic principle is a fancy term for stating the obvious about the fine-tuning of the universe, i.e., if all the conditions in the universe weren't perfect for human life to exist, we wouldn't be here to ask the question of why it is so finely-tuned for life. What sounds like circular reasoning has led to a revival of the argument from design, which had lost its intellectual respectability among many scientists after Darwin.

One aspect of the anthropic principle is that it asserts that our place in the universe is special. This contradicts the general trend of science since Copernicus; that there is nothing special about Earth. (the Copernican principle) Many materialists who dislike the implications, squirm when discussing the anthropic principle, and it remains a controversial topic. But thus far, no scientist has been able to refute the fine-tuning evidence that supports its premise, and many believe it is simply a commonsensical way of saying life on Earth is special.

NOTES

1. Charles Seife, *Alpha and Omega* (New York: Viking Penguin, 2003), 187-188.
2. Hugh Ross, *The Creator and the Cosmos*, 3rd ed. (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2001), 158.
3. *Ibid.*
4. Martin Rees, *Our Cosmic Habitat* (London: Phoenix, 2003), 164.
5. Stephen Hawking, *A Brief History of Time* (New York: Bantam, 1990), 127-141.
6. Seife, 222.
7. Hawking, 140-141.
8. Julian Barbour, *The End of Time: The Next Revolution in Physics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 312.
9. Brian Greene, *The Elegant Universe* (New York: Vintage, 2000), 368.
10. Paul Davies, *Other Worlds* (London: Penguin, 1990), 14.
11. Paul Davies, *God and the New Physics* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1983), 174.
12. Gregg Easterbrook, “The New Convergence,” *Wired*, December 2002, Issue 10.12.
13. William A. Dembski, *The Design Revolution* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press 2004), 68.
14. John Boslough, *Stephen Hawking's Universe* (New York: Avon, 1989), 109.
15. Paul Davies, *The Cosmic Blueprint* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1988), 203.
16. Edward Harrison, *Masks of the Universe* (New York: Collier, 1985), 252, 263.
17. Robert Jastrow, *God and the Astronomer* (New York: Norton, 1978), 116.
18. Hawking, 125.