Lessons - A Way to Think - Learning about Knowledge

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Introduction

We will use our ideas of infinity, Infinite Not, Double Not and The Definite Not to highlight ideas about knowledge - especially about the **things we do not know**. We will use Fishers 4 box model to examine the combinations **Definite Known** the **Definite Not Known**. You **will be surprised** - you will say *"I did not know that*" and it will transfer (for you) from the **Not Known** to the **Known**.

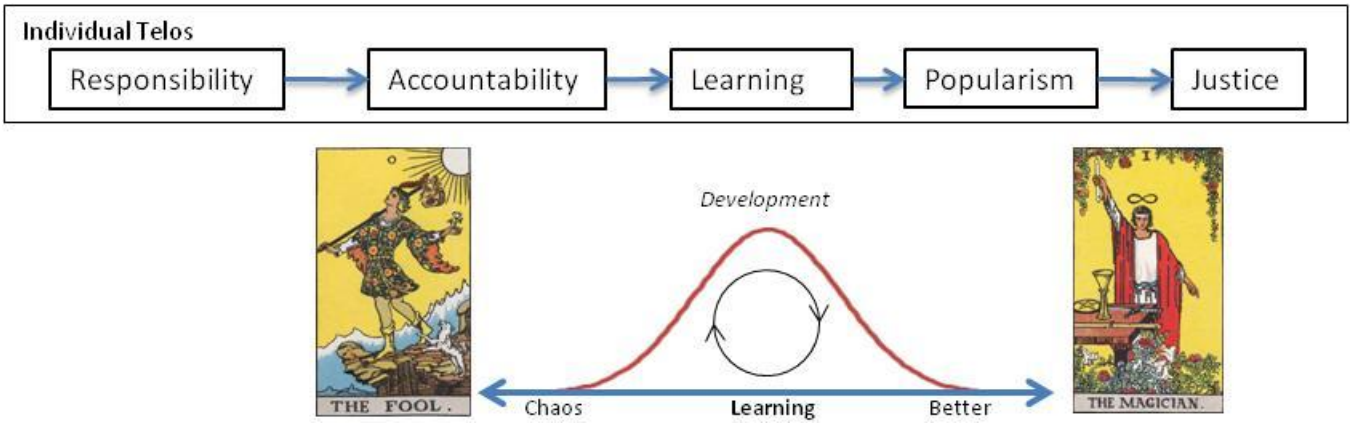
Lessons - A Way to Think - Learning about Knowledge

It is possible that we learn by comparing 2 unknown things to start with which gives us a little knowledge about both and develop more as we go but at this stage the lesson is about later stages of knowledge development, after we have established some knowledge in our schemas.

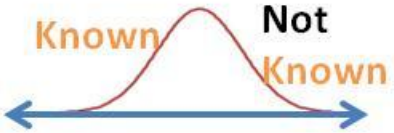
Definite Known, Definite Not Known

See **Responsibility Accountability Learning Popularism Justice** https://humanistman.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Responsibility-Accountability-Learning-Popularism-Justice.pdf

We learn from others and the world around us and make mistakes as we go. As we develop we start to take responsibility for our own continued learning and development and we are accountable when we make mistakes.



People do not often compare the Known and the Not Known - it is not a strong binary pair like Bad and Good -these things constantly **compared** to each other while Known and Not Known are not often compared with each other - this is because the cost of acquiring new knowledge from the Not Known space can be costly in mental activity but also is energy and time. Humans tend to be **Fat, Dumb** and **Lazy** to avoid doing anything unless they have to. Busy people in complex and challenging environments are often forced to learn new things to overcome challenges and dangers. History shows groups and societies collapsing after failing to learn and becoming **too complacent**. E.g. See **Evolution** of Life.



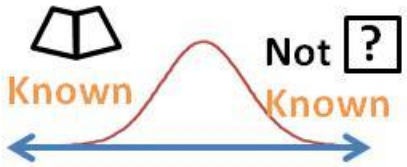
Let us think about this for a bit. Known and **Not** Known are shown on a **infinite continuum** with a kind of graph in-between - a **Gaussian distribution curve** which shows the **idea of measuring** the amount of Known and **Not** Known and showing that they generally tend towards the middle - the somewhere in-between where they are balanced out by equal **measure**.

This sometimes called the **normal distribution** curve or the "Bell Curve" because it is shaped like a Bell and the middle is usually called the **average** - as in the expression that many people habitually use - on average most things balance out. Also see the **central limit theorem** https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_limit_theorem

This idea of the balanced middle is sometimes called the **Golden mean philosophy** or the **Doctrine of the Mean** https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doctrine_of_the_Mean and many belief systems have similar ideas about this **something in the middle of two things** idea.

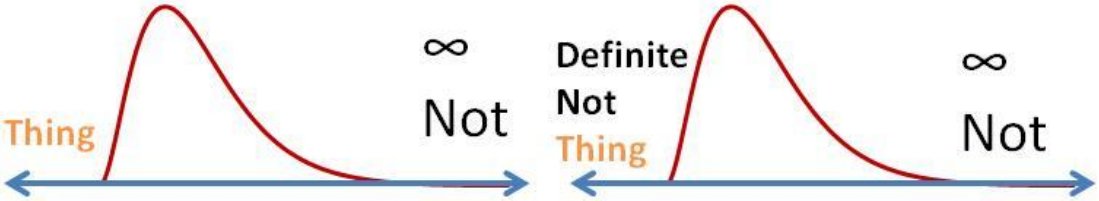
4 Box Model Known and Not Known

I am going to use some **symbols** as well to represent **Known** and **Not Known**. I will use the Book symbol for **Known** and I will use the Question mark for The **Not Known**.



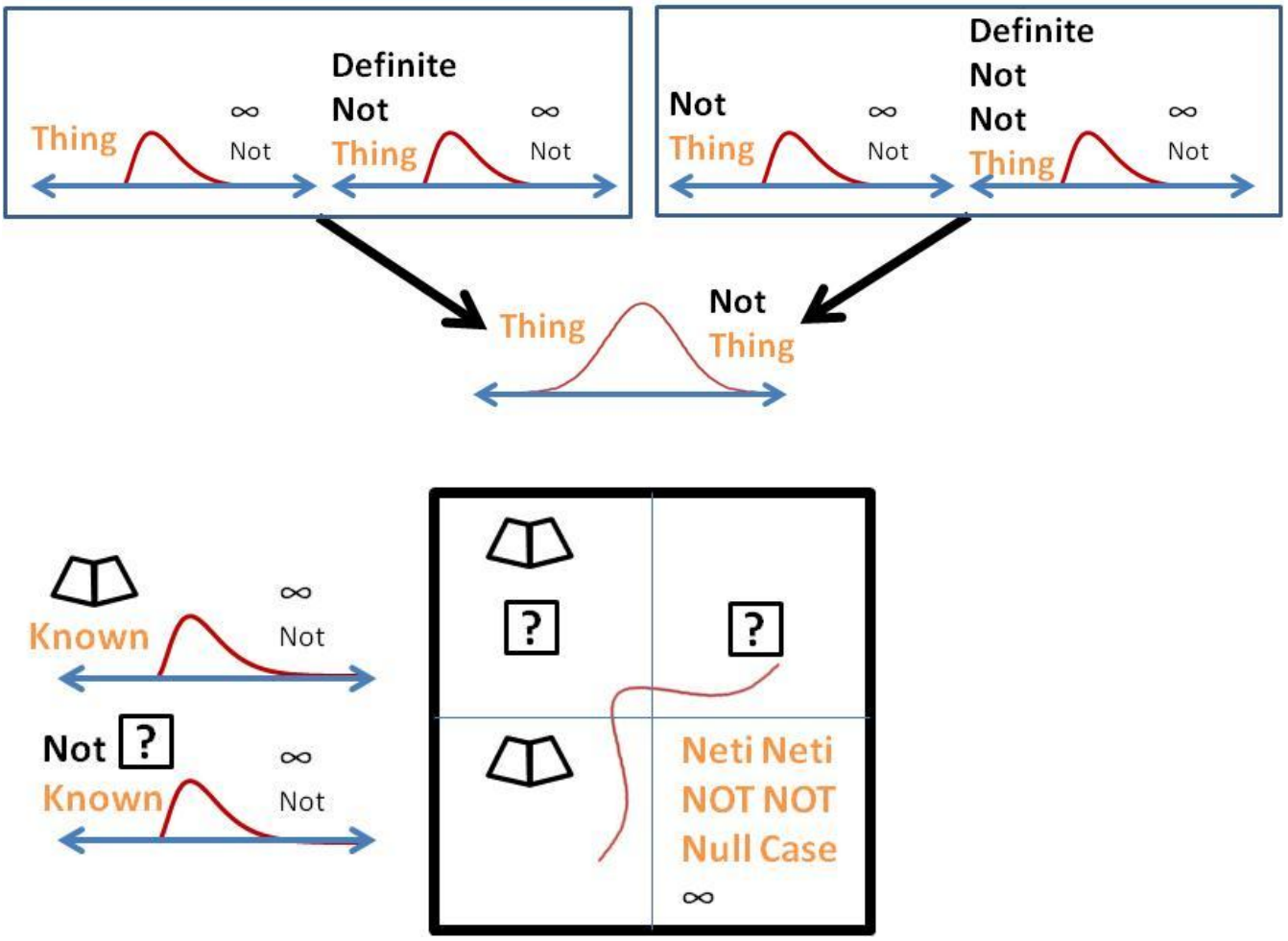
We also have learned from our previous lessons that we can see these things as two definitions of their own - each with their level of certainty. We are Comparing two different things so we can define those two different things before we compare them.

Here I define these things using the general **plurality curve** which shows that we have some definite idea of what one thing is but we leave the infinite not open for things we have not included in that definition and measurement. This emphasizes the difference between the **Infinite Not** and the **Definite Not** of a thing.



This **takes a little time and work to understand** but we can use the example of a Book. We define what a Book is (Known) and then we Define things that are **Definitely Not** a Book. We do this at the definition and measurement level before we start comparing two declared and defined things. Hence every defined thing has its own two continuums - One for the Definite "IS" and One for the Definite "IS Not". This very similar to the **Sic Et Non** argument of **Peter Abelard** in the 1100s. The **difficulty in understanding this** is to realize that **we have to define the second thing** in the **comparison** using its own ideas - we do not know what **Not Known** means - we do not how to define and measure it except in comparison with being the Opposite in comparison of Known. This may be easier to understand when comparing Good/Bad and Black/White but it is more difficult to understand using this current example.

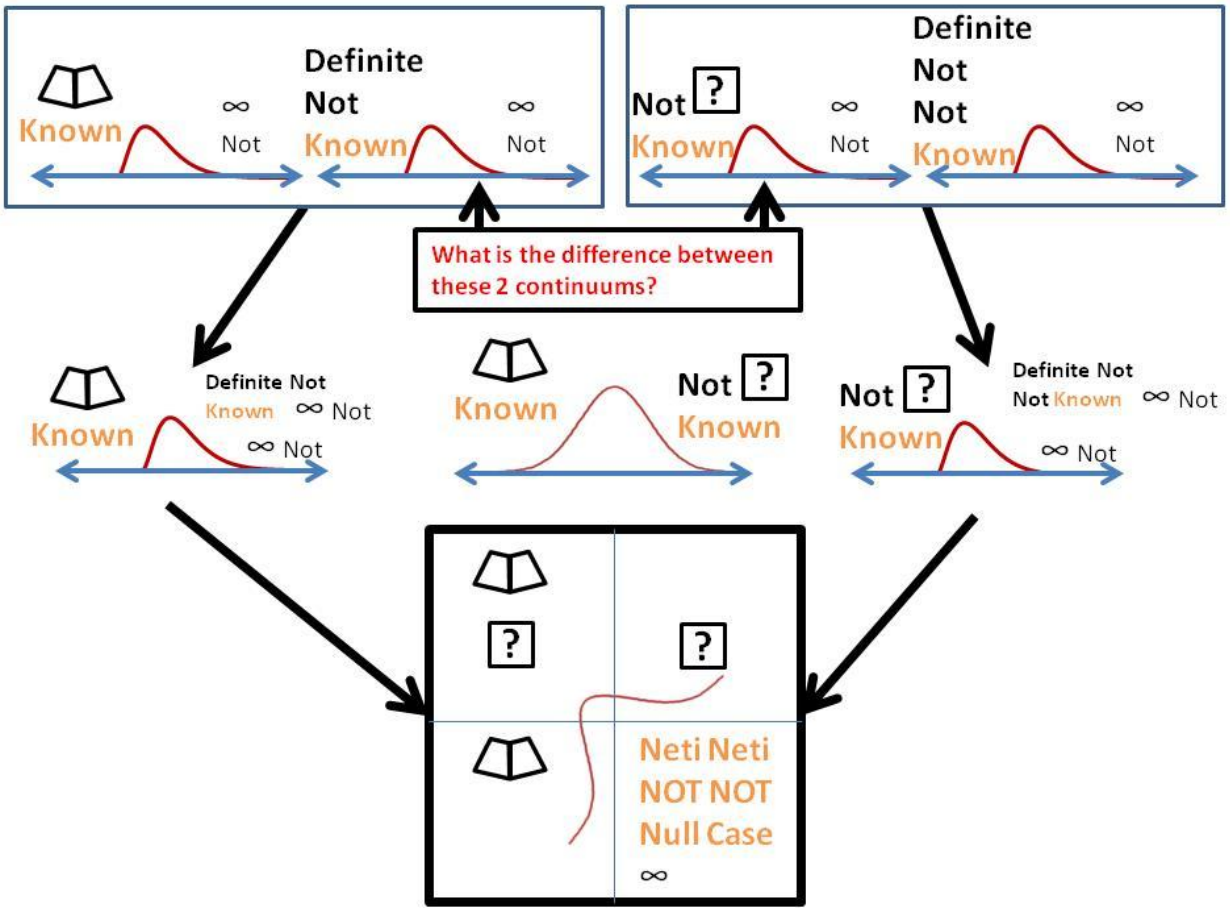
We then combine these two definitions to compare them.



So the result of this Fisher 4 box model shows that , in a binary sense, we have some things are definitely Known, Some things that are **Not** Known, Some things that have a mix of Known and **Not** Known and some things we have no idea about - the double not infinity which most people cannot see. I will demonstrate this using Books and Libraries. We have Books in a Library - you have read some so they are Known, Some you have not read or found in the library yet are **Not** Known and others which you have partially read or do not understand - which is a mix of both. The infinity of things outside your library are not even discovered yet by you or your librarian.

Review and More Detail on the 4 Box model

Notice I have expanded out the process to show more detail and that there is a **question** to whether there is a duplicated continuum.

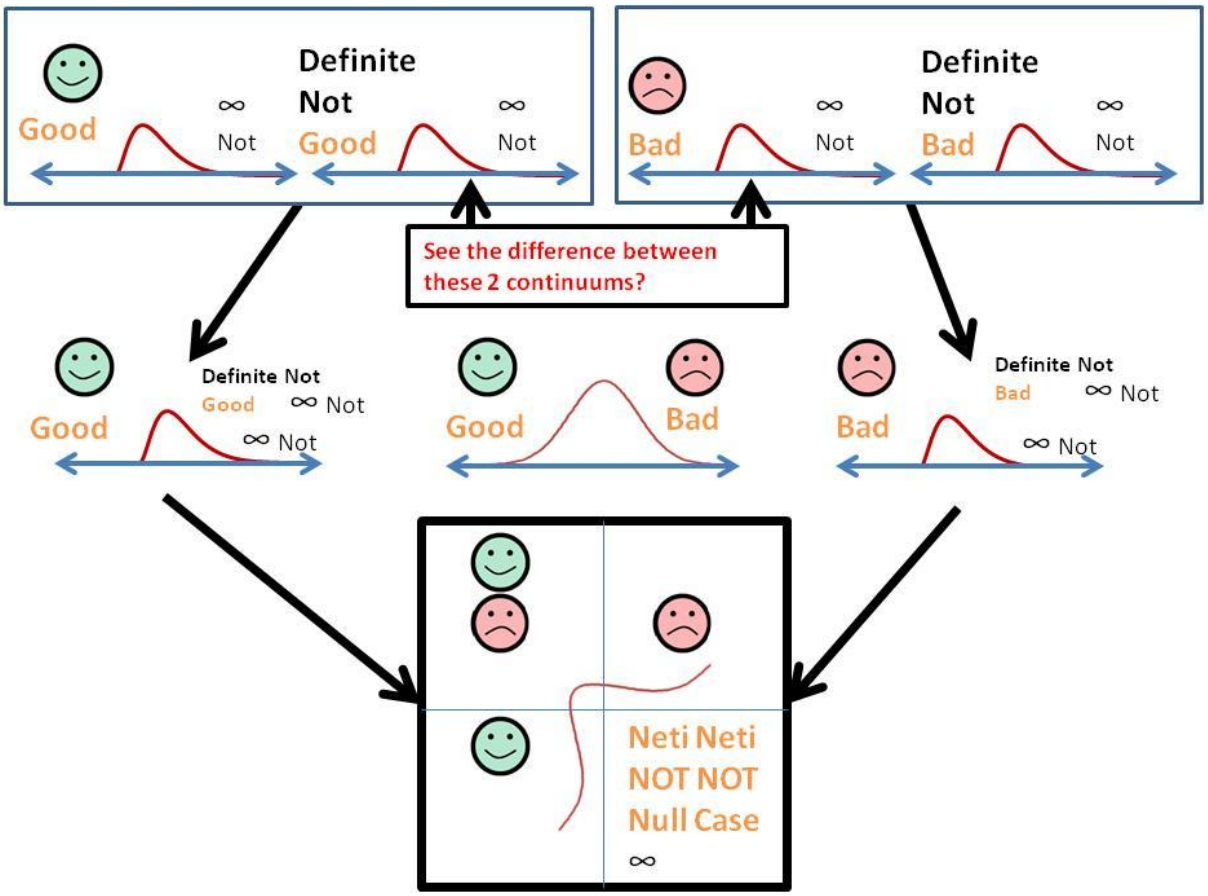


There is far more information here than most people imagine. The Answer to the Questions is Yes - **those continuums are different** because they defined and measured in two different processes and in different context. The First Process defines the first item to be eventually compared and it's Definite Not. The Second Process defines the second item to be eventually compared and it's Definite Not. Most people skip over the definition phase and **rush to comparison** before defining the thing and its measurements to be **included** (the **definite is**) and **excluded** (the **definite is not**).

This becomes easier to see when we use **Good** and **Bad** as an Example.

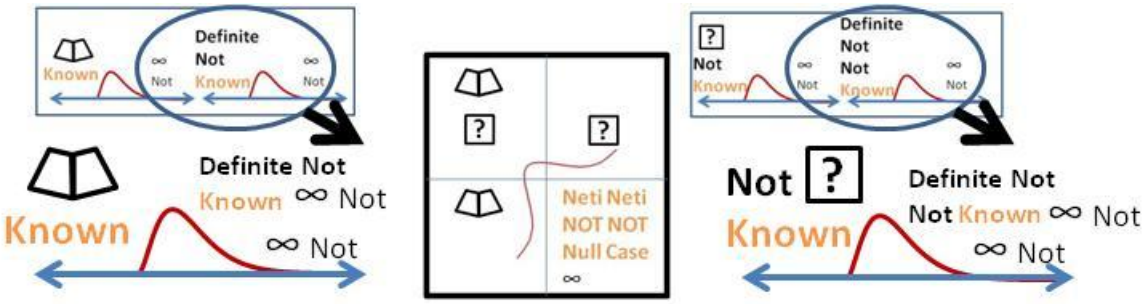
The other thing to notice is **any two things can be compared**.

There is **no valid reason** to assume that things cannot be compared (joined) to many other things or that some things **must only exist in one pair combination**. This is a **profound statement** and has significance in many things. We do build up many schemas over time that seem to repeat and be used a lot but that does not mean we should ignore the underlying process for how we got those.



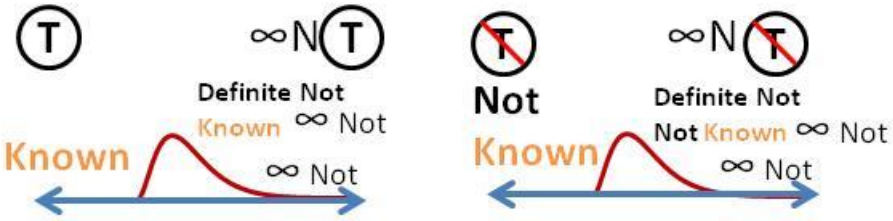
Reducing Complexity A Little

For the sake of the exercise I reduce three items into one because in general we do not tend to focus on them as much. It does not mean they are not there - they still exist and I call them **Infinity sets**.

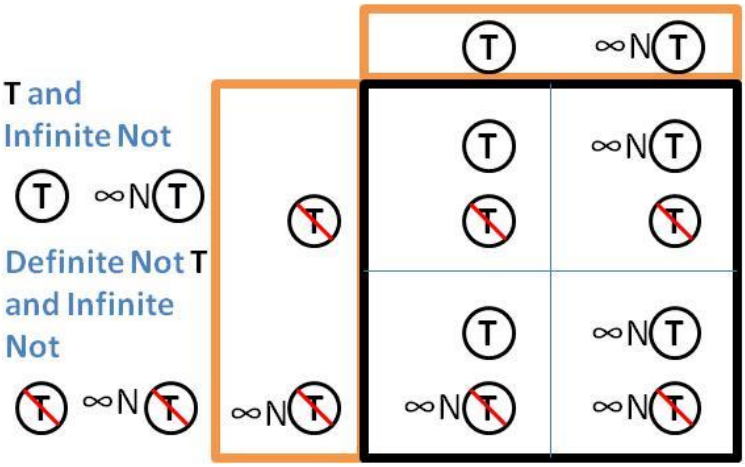


We can then take the analysis a little further to show that Fisher's 4 Box model does **only pair combinations** when in reality there are far more possible combinations. I explained this in the previous lesson. **Lessons – A Way to Think – Learning about the Infinite Not** https://humanistman.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Lessons-A-Way-to-Think-Learning-about-the-Infinite-Not.pdf

We substitute for the generic Thing and Not Thing symbols.



And we see the new 4 Box model with all the possible combination listed as well.

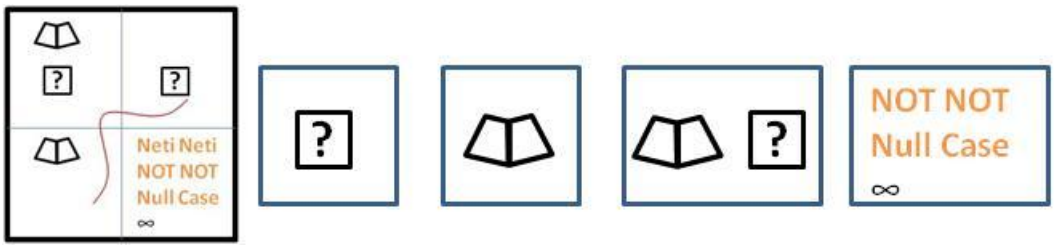


n	Thing	∞Not Thing	DN Thing	∞DN Thing
1				
2	Y			
3		Y		
4			Y	
5				Y
6	Y	Y		
7	Y		Y	
8	Y			Y
9		Y	Y	
10		Y		Y
11			Y	Y
12	Y	Y	Y	
13	Y	Y		Y
14		Y	Y	Y
15	Y		Y	Y
16	Y	Y	Y	Y

Patterns of Knowledge

The Fisher 4 Box Model categories are useful for examining patterns of knowledge in human culture.

The 4 paired categories have main features and many other infinites contained but I will reduce it to the main feature of the 4 Boxes. In one Box the Question - Not Known dominates. In Another Box the Book dominates (Known). The Third Box is dominated by the Book and the Question. The Fourth Box is dominated by the double not recursions and all the infinities.



Many simple societies only pass down knowledge via individual interaction - spoken words or simple symbols and signs. Many societies developed **language** and **writing** and stored knowledge in books. This

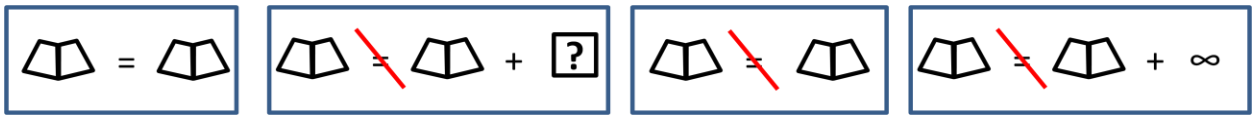
allowed a growth in knowledge amongst many people. Many people could teach many people at once using books.

The development of a Book was a major step.

Many societies believe in **One Author, One Knowledge Giver** and/or **One Book** and **No Questions** they limit their knowledge and demonize those who question or want more knowledge.

Some societies developed a culture of books and vast libraries of information and **encouraged more questions** and **more writing of books**. It is a trap of even some of these societies that they think there is very little more to learn or "***The Best Book that will ever be written has already been written***"

Others - very few societies - contain people who can also explore the infinite case as well as the other combinations to discover something "other than" what is in books or questions.



Some societies force everything to agree - this is a tendency in science and some people **mandate equality** rather than allow the difference or unequal knowledge.

Some societies leave things open to question and further work while others are happen to allow some differences just stay as they are without further investigation. Others will explore more widely to resolve differences.

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