Real Millennium Group™
Go 2 Zero Debates - File 2
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These are conversations and debates with Go2Zero supporters. Alan Dechert is the creator of the Global Era Calendar which he hoped would be used starting this year to eliminate the religious connotations of our current AD/BC system, and begin with Year 0, so all the millennia and centuries begin in the "0" year, such as 2000, instead of the current 2001 year. The first 4 files that are primarily posts from me and Alan. Files 5 and 6 contain posts from other people, as well as myself about this and other related subjects. My correspondence is in **Bold** lettering, people other than Alan are in Blue.

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Subject: Re: Problems of having a Zero Year
Date: 01/20/2000
Author: bjwyler <bjwyler@my-deja.com>
First, I am hardly a "newbie" at posting -- just one to this board. I have found it to be much easier, and less time consuming to not waste space, and everyone's time, by posting a message that does not contain some form of information that is helpful to whatever argument may be taking place. Valuable time is wasted by reading Slider's post. It offers nothing to the discussion. Nothing was learned, and the time that could have been spent increasing one's knowledge is lost forever because of the wastefulness of the message. Score that victory in my column. John's message is much more adequate and helpful, at least he is imparting knowledge. As for being smarter, I have met some real smart stupid people in my lifetime. To paraphrase a characterization of one of these people: "Smart is as smart does."

As for my credentials. I have a BA in Communications (TV/radio/journalism, etc.) and am an amateur historian and researcher. I also know how to count, and how to read a dictionary. In his message, John said that "counting from one is a nuisance." I shouldn't have to remind anyone that it is not a nuisance, but the very foundation of our mathematical system. When humankind first learned, and developed the need to count this is how it was done. Only in the higher mathematical systems, BASED ON THE SIMPLE FOUNDATIONS, have we developed different methods of counting. We have to start with the simple to reach the complex, and most times, simple problems cannot be solved with complex solutions, and vice versa. So anything dealing with complex mathematics, cannot be applied to the numbering of our years since that system was developed with a simpler method.

As for the baby example, I was trying to explain how we number years is different from numbering a person's age, as you yourself stated. The zero comes into play by the definition of zero (nothing), and the definition of year (a period of 365 days - 12 months). Since a baby does not "have a year" until the first birthday, it is zero years old. However, because that period of 12 months between birth and first birthday if the child's FIRST 12 month period, whenever we refer back to that year, we must use the number 1 -- because of the definition of first (see previous post or dictionary). Entering a year zero in your computer example would be correct, however, if the question was "in what year of your child's life did it speak it's first word?" assuming that the child spoke it's first word when it was 8 months old, you would have to input the number 1 to represent the first year of life -- there is no such thing as a "zeroth" year, at least you didn't offer the definition of one, in addition to not answering any of the other questions. Again, you said yourself that traditionally the calendar has not been numbered the same as our ages, which does make it a discrete quantity and not a scalar one, and counting apples is exactly the same as how we have been counting years, and why you would have to give me 404 quarters for my $100 bill,

by your, and John's way of thinking.

What about innings in a baseball game? Baseball has 9 innings. Not one is labeled "zero." The first inning, as is proper is labeled 1. At the top of the inning, no one has batted yet, but it is still inning 1. At the middle of the inning, only one side has batted, the inning is only half over, yet it is still inning 1. At the bottom of the inning, as the home team is finishing up, it is still inning 1. I don't see any zero's around (aside from the score, which has nothing to do with this example, so I'll stop any of those responses here and now), and this is exactly how we label our years. The whole year, from beginning to end is labeled with it's position in the system -- the 2000th year is labeled 2000. The first year was labeled 1. Very easy, and mathematically correct, is it not?

Any new system that might be created, whether religious or otherwise would have to start with 1, whether based on an event, or specific time, because the first year of that system, is just that -- THE FIRST YEAR. By definition, if we were to assign a numerical value to the year, it would have to be 1. Otherwise we would be a year off -- Year 2 would actually be the third year of the system, year 1000 would actually be the 1001st year of the system. That makes less sense than understanding the fact that the year 2000 is the 2000th year of our system (the numbers match up!), and after it is completed, we would have completed the 2nd millennia of the system. Just the same as if you were going to eat 2 millennia of apples, you would have to finish eating the 2000th apple, completely to say you have eaten 2 millennia of apples.

We call things different names to differentiate them from other things, and we use serial numbers in the same manner. The numerals have no relation to their mathematical definition -- it is just a method of naming, just as we use the 26 letters of the alphabet in different combinations to name people. Our chronological system is not the same, as we both have said. Check any document from the middle ages, and you will find that nearly all of the ones that refer to a date, do so by this method: the twelfth day of the sixth month of the third year in the reign of King Whoever; the fortieth year of our Lord; the ninth year after of Duke Such and Such's coronation, and so on. We still use this system today when we refer to the day of the month. When someone asks us what day it is, we say it is the 15th. We have a meeting on the 20th. They went to Florida on the 5th. We don't go through the whole rigamarole like they used to do in the past to save time, but the years, days, and months are still counted in the same.

This is the 2000th year of our Lord; we are now in the process of completing 2000 years of the Christian Era. If we were to start a new system, we would refer to all years in the same manner: this is the first year of the New Era (1 NE). If we wanted to recognize the dawn of a new civilization from the point of when a comet struck the earth and destroyed the old one, the day the comet hit would be: the first day of the first year of the Dawn Of Our New Civilization Since That Damn Comet Toasted Everyone Except Us (in the Middle Ages vernacular). In short it would be Day 1 of Month 1 of Year 1 DOONCSTDCTEEU; in other words the 1st of One, 1; or One 1, 1; or 1/1/01. That is how it has worked for thousands of years. To use zero simply as a label for the first year of a new system is much to confusing when judged against those years of thought. You can try to change the attitude people have towards the number zero, but that won't change the definition, which is where the resistence is based. People don't like the idea not because no one wants to be a "real zero in life," but because zero means "nothing/none," and how can you have a "nothing/none" year? That is why a year zero will, more than likely, never gain popular support. Unless you change the definition of zero, one, first, and the rest of our numbers, you would be better off, and probably have more support, for the formation of a Year "A." These definitions you have yet to refute.

BJWyler
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Subject: Re: Problems of having a Zero Year
Date: 01/20/2000
Author: adechert <adechert@my-deja.com>
Here, you are a newbie. Moreover, a quick search on deja turns up no Usenet posts at all to any other newsgroup either. None, nada, zip, zilch. I searched on bjwyler back to Jan 1 1998. Maybe I missed something. Surely, you wouldn't be dumb enough to lie about something so easily checked, would you?

Your posts don't contain any information whatsoever, other than a demonstration of your lack of knowledge. Slider gave a quick assessment of the content of your post. It was quite accurate. Unfortunately, you were unable to absorb what he was telling you.

<<John's message is much more adequate and helpful, at least he is imparting knowledge.>>
Yes, he did bring up some good points--none of which you seemed to understand.
<<As for my credentials. I have a BA in Communications (TV/radio/journalism, etc.) and am an amateur historian and researcher.>>
Which puts your educational level (when it comes to math, science, and computers) somewhere around the level of the media morons that fell for all the Y2K hype. Worse, you don't seem to have any professional background in TV/radio/journalism (at least nothing remarkable enough to turn up on the Internet).

Let me explain something to you, before you or anyone else accuses me of making an ad hominem attack. We get a lot of trolls, fakers, phonies, etc. in this newsgroup. "Writers" that never had a byline. "Computer professionals" that never had a job, and so on. The problem here is that you've stepped into a group implying some superior knowledge of mathematics and you speak in the name of "the basic laws of the science of the universe." You make ex cathedra pronouncements as if you are the all-knowing science/math expert.

Let me give you some clues. There are a lot of idiots on this newsgroup but there are also a lot of highly qualified people in the field of math, science, and computers--quite a few have advanced degrees in these technical fields from top universities. Some of us are recognized experts in our fields. From the mindless babble you've spewed so far, it's apparent that your math education froze somewhere around elementary school. You exhibit less comprehension of math than your average third grader. You are not qualified to explain anything about math, science, or computers to me or most of the other people on this newsgroup.

<<In his message, John said that "counting from one is a nuisance." I shouldn't have to remind anyone that it is not a nuisance, but the very foundation of our mathematical system.>>
You conveniently omitted an important preface to that comment.He said, "In computer science." Since your knowledge of computer science is nil, it's no wonder this went straight over your head. John's point is valid. Again, you simply demonstrate that you don't have the slightest idea what you're talking about. Here you pontificate on counting. Unfortunately, you didn't understand the point John was making. And, you are not qualified to pontificate on counting.

You may have been trying to explain something but you failed. In fact, the baby example serves to illustrate my point and defeat your argument. You got this absolutely backwards.

We can use ordinals beginning anywhere. You seem to be saying that the first must be one. The "first" could be 42; the second count be 43, and so on. If I were talking about the first anniversary of my marriage, I'd say "1990." The second would be 1991, and so on. There is no inconsistency in saying "the first is zero." It depends on what set of things you're talking about. Sometimes we also choose to use zero as an ordinal--especially in computer science.

<<Entering a year zero in your computer example would be correct,>>
This much you got right but it's clear you still don't understand the example I gave.
<<... however, if the question was "in what year of your child's life did it speak it's first word?" assuming that the child spoke it's first word when it was 8 months old, you would have to input the number 1 to represent the first year of life -->>
Wrong. The age of the baby is zero years, eight months. We normally omit the "zero years" part. You need to review the explanation I gave earlier.

Time is a scalar quantity. In some database software, there is a single data type for time that includes date and time. This makes sense and works quite well because date and time are really the same thing, different only be size of units.

Internally, computers typically reckon the date as so many seconds since some arbitrary point in time. The date is then calculated from the second-count. A simple algorithm utilizing the second-count will give the calendar date on any variety of calendars--including some systems that have no years at all (e.g., the Julian day calendar). BTW, at least one calendar in use does have a year zero (the calendar by Jacques Cassini is often used by astronomers and has year zero before 1 A.D.). For more information on that, see:
http://www.deja.com/
[ST_artlink=www.theatlantic.com]/jump/http://www.theatlantic.com/issues/97jul/zero.htm
John Barron gave another fine example, the 24 hour clock, which you failed to absorb. The time 00:00:00 is midnight. The zero hour continues until 00:59:59. One second later it becomes. "One" o'clock. The zero hour on the 24 hour clock is perfectly analogous to the year zero idea.

<<This is the 2000th year of our Lord; we are now in the process of completing 2000 years of the Christian Era.... That is how it has worked for thousands of years.>>
It would be a bit more accurate and less polemical to say it's the year of *your* Lord. Most people in the world (myself included) are not Christian.
We can begin a new time at any point and call it anything we like. This is matter of convention. They used to do it differently. At the time of various calendars began, they had no concept of zero. The Romans couldn't start numbering years with zero because Roman Numerals had no zero.

Mathematically, the notion of zero is very important. Of course, this fact seems to elude you since you are stuck with elementary school counting and haven't the slightest comprehension of computers. Do you really feel that since it has been this way for "thousands of years," that's the way it should always be? Does the fact that they had no zero thousands of years ago mean anything to you?Again, you are the one confused. Remember, "the first" doesn't always have to be "one." "The first" could be 42, 1990, zero, or anything else.

When I started my year zero campaign, people weren't in favor of it because no one had ever heard of it. Not a one. Zip, nada, zilch, zero. Gradually, more and more are hearing about it and more and more are supporting it. You have no idea how popular it will get. It's an idea that may die on the vine, but it's

also an idea that could succeed. Given that the idea is now growing pretty much without any assistance from me at this point, I'd say it has a very good chance of success. Time will tell-- not you.

You stand refuted, Junior. When you gain some credentials--any at all-- in the field of math, science, or computers, let us know.
--Alan Dechert

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