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Cantor’s paradox

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*Cantor's paradox* demonstrates that there can be no largest cardinality. In particular, there must be an unlimited number of infinite cardinalities. For suppose that  $\alpha$  were the largest cardinal. Then we would have  $|\mathcal{P}(\alpha)| = |\alpha|$ . (Here  $\mathcal{P}(\alpha)$  denotes the power set of  $\alpha$ .) Suppose  $f : \alpha \rightarrow \mathcal{P}(\alpha)$  is a bijection proving their equicardinality. Then  $X = \{\beta \in \alpha \mid \beta \notin f(\beta)\}$  is a subset of  $\alpha$ , and so there is some  $\gamma \in \alpha$  such that  $f(\gamma) = X$ . But  $\gamma \in X \leftrightarrow \gamma \notin X$ , which is a paradox.

The key part of the argument strongly resembles Russell's paradox, which is in some sense a generalization of this paradox.

Besides allowing an unbounded number of cardinalities as ZF set theory does, this paradox could be avoided by a few other tricks, for instance by not allowing the construction of a power set or by adopting paraconsistent logic.