

## Infinite sums: a cautionary tale

We cannot take infinite sums as if they were finite sums.

e.g.:

$$S = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} x^n = 1 + x + x^2 + x^3 + \dots$$

$$xS = x + x^2 + x^3 + x^4 + \dots$$

$$S - xS = 1$$

$$S = \frac{1}{1-x}$$

When  $x = 2$  :

$$S = \frac{1}{1-2} = -1$$

$$S = 1 + 2 + 4 + 8 + \dots$$

e.g.2:

$$T = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} (-1)^n$$

$$= 1 - 1 + 1 - 1 + 1 - 1 + 1 - 1 + \dots$$