Newton / Calculus Timeline

1643
1. Isaac Newton Born

1666
▸ 1. First Fluxions

1670
▸ 1. Alchemy/Bible



1684
▾ 1. Haley's visit
   a. "why are the orbit of planets ellipses?"
   ▾ b. Robert Hooke / Haley / Wren had ideas
      i. inverse square law
   ▾ c. On the Motion of Revolving Bodies
      i. 11 months later
   d. Leibniz publishes work on Calculus

1687
▸ 1. Pricipia

1689
1. Parliament

1692
▸ 1. Breakdown

1696
▾ 1. L'Hospital's book
   a. on Liebniz's Calculus

1699
1. Priority Dispute Begins

1704
▾ *1. Newton's Fluxions Explained*
   a. In an appendix to Optics

1711
▾ 1. Calculus work published
   a. "Analysis per quantitatum series, fluxiones, ac differentias" (Analysis by Means of Infinite Series, Fluxions, and Differences)

1727
1. Newton Died





Isaac Newton
Home: England
Lived: 1643 - 1727

- as warden of the Royal Mint, disguised himself as one of ill repute - to spy on criminal activity
- elected as Justice of the Peace so he acted as judge & jury to convict coiners
- member of English Parliamant
- wrote religious texts, interpreting the Bible (dated Creation to 4000 BC)
- studying alchemy (medieval chemistry - the transformation of matter), frequently tasted his concoctions
- Master of the Mint, President of the Royal Society, knighted by Queen Anne in 1705
- His book Principia was subtitled - “how the universe works”
- whatever he did, he did with abandon





Isaac Newton - Wikiquote

Newton's birthplace and home away from the Plague, and apple tree of gravitational inspiration

The book *The Mysteries of Nature & Art* was his inspiration for many gadgets & inventions (sundials, windmills, treadmills, - hammered pegs in walls to mark the minutes of the day, solstice, equinox, etc

Clever, but school reports read "idle, inattentive". An uncle persuaded his mother to send him to university.

Initially studying law, then astrology, then math to understand the astrology. He read voraciously, Descartes, Viete, Wallis.



Early in Cambridge, Newton was not well known, but during the Plague Years: 1665 - 1666, he retreated to his home and was his most productive.

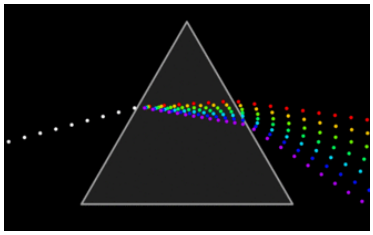


Here, he developed his law of gravity, laws of mechanics, differential & integral calculus, optics

He published nothing, returned to Cambridge for his Masters, was elected a Fellow of Trinity College, eventually Lucasian Professor when Isaac Barrow resigned, then Fellow of the Royal Society in 1672.

1690: his works on the Bible (predicted the world will end in 2060, estimated size of the Ark of the Covenant) & alchemy, Mint, President of the Royal society, knighted,

some reports indicate he lost a fortune to the collapse of the South Sea Bubble, went to live with niece where he died in his sleep, likely b/c of mercury poisoning due to his experiences with alchemy, which could explain his eccentricity in his old age.

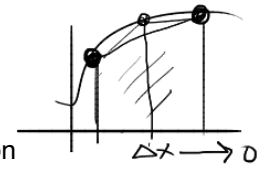


Newton in his attic:
“glass prism splits white light into colors”

also Newton:
“if I have seen farther than most me, it is because I was standing on the shoulders of giants”



Newton was reluctant to publish, disliking criticism.
This eventually led to priority disputes.



Calculus:

- Archimedes and method of exhaustion
- John Wallis and the infinitesimal
- English Newton’s fluxions - to flow, an interval flowing to 0 “what matters is what it flows toward, not that it actually gets there”
- But Newton used geometry in Principia (published at the request of Halley), not calculus (although he had created it, and discussed it with colleagues)

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- German Leibniz’s used infinitesimals, a nonzero quantity that can get arbitrarily small. (He published his works first)
- The Royal society got involved, Leibniz eventually backed down, “I won’t argue with an idiot”.

$$\frac{dy}{dx}$$



The economist John Maynard Keynes called Newton

“the last of the magicians … the last wonderchild to whom the Magi could do sincere and appropriate homage.”

Today, we ignore Newton’s mysticism, but it’s important.

Before Newton, human understanding of Nature was entwined with the supernatural.

After Newton, we recognize that the universe runs on deep mathematical patterns.

Newton was a transitional figure with a foot in each world, leading humanity from mysticism towards rationality.