How Important Are We

By
Richard Sorokin

You live in a town, and there are many towns. The town is in a state, and there are 50 states. The state is part of a country. There are hundreds of countries. The country is on a continent. There are seven continents. The continent is on a planet, our planet, called the Earth, and is part of our star system called the Solar System after our star. There are eight planets in our solar system (Pluto got demoted). Our solar system is one of billions of stars in our galaxy. Our galaxy is one of billions in our Universe.

The Earth is about 25,000 miles long at its equator. Light travels so fast that is it can go around the equator 7 times in one second. The size of our solar system, the Sun to Pluto, is 3.6 billion miles. Earth to sun at the speed of light takes eight minutes.

The distance from our sun to the nearest star is about 4 light years (9.5 trillion miles times 4). Our galaxy is about 100,000 light years across. The size of the Universe (minimum size) is 156 billion light years wide. And it is expanding.

When you think of the size of the Universe and the size of our dear planet Earth you may be right in thinking we are not much. Size isn't everything. We are, as far as we know, the only planet with life on it. Is it possible that in all those billions of star systems in all those billions of galaxies that life may have developed? Yes, but will it be like ours. Probably not! Our life forms developed on this planet meeting the needs of this environment. No other planet will be just like our Earth. Life forms will be different. Could they be more advanced than us? In galaxy time, our life form is very young. Other planets could have cooled earlier and life could have started millions of years before ours. Will we ever meet them?

The problem with space travel is the tremendous distances. Every science fiction writer had to invent some kind of space travel to cover the vast distances. Warp drive for Star Trek.   Anything is possible but is it probable? Who knows? I just would like to be there when it happens.

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