Anthropic Principle Prep Work
Assignment Due Thursday, April 9th
Bring two copies to class!

Find three sources, written since the year 2000, that present the anthropic principle (or some form of it) as something that scientists and/or the author view in a NEGATIVE sense. Maybe the author thinks the anthropic principle is useless for scientists, or that it is fundamentally religious or philosophical (not a problem, but also not science!), or maybe the author doesn’t think it gets us anywhere to ask “why” about the Universe.

One of your articles should be from a scholarly journal, and the other should be aimed at the general public (the last one is up to you). Remember that there is an overwhelming amount of information out there! Find articles that you think are especially interesting, exciting, convincing, or controversial, and that have enough information in them to get you thinking or to use in an argument. This will help you with the assignments for the rest of the semester.

As part of this assignment, you must present full bibliographic information for each source, so that your fellow students as well as your instructor can find them again. For the scholarly journals, this information includes the database (if the source was found on the internet), the author(s), the journal, the year, the volume, and the page. For other sources, this may include the database, the title of the article, the author(s), the publication (the name of the newspaper or magazine), and the volume/date of publication. You may include links to make it easy to find, but THE LINK IS NOT ENOUGH. If you’re not sure how to do this, ask!

Private/personal webpages and Wikipedia articles are NOT appropriate sources for this assignment, although you may find their lists of references helpful and a useful starting point. Remember that you want to find sources that make an argument about the anthropic principle, not sources that simply explain it.

For each source, write a short paragraph summarizing its explanation of the anthropic principle, its attitude regarding the principle, and its main argument (in other words, how does this article try to convince you that the anthropic principle is a negative thing from a scientific point of view?), as well as the names of any “experts” named in the article. We will share our list of sources in class on Thursday and pool them to create a larger bibliography. (By the way, this assignment means you have to READ THE ARTICLES!) Bring two copies to class!