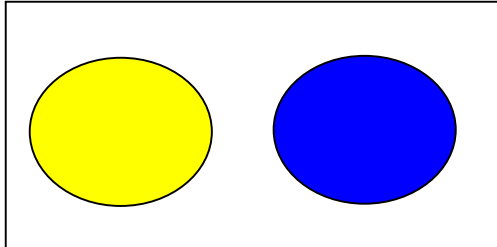


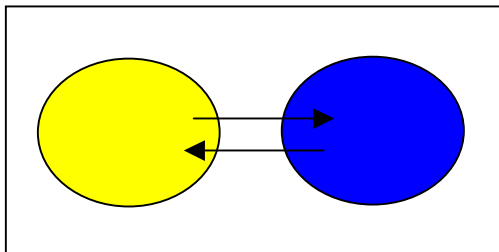
Rather than clog up other people's blogs any more than I already have done, or contributed to, I'll put this on my own.

There is a bit of a thread going at the moment looking at intellect, imagination and revelation and how they are related – or at least that's how it feels to me. There's been a bit of stuff about whether or not people can be taught imagination or at least enable to unlock their imaginative skills, and a bit about which is the necessary precursor, intellect or imagination (which to me seems a chicken and egg argument. Actually the answer to both is probably the same – Q: which came first a or b? A: Jesus!). There has been a little bit of attempting to identify things that inspire individuals (which I'm not convinced is the same as revelation, but may be a step towards it (and I don't think the bloggers are saying it is, by the way), lots of it very 'arty' – literature, film music, painting etc. For me with my scientist brain, mathematics is a great way 'in' (and if you want some supporting accessible literature, how about *Mr God this is Anna* or *Anna and the Black Knight*) and even though I don't have any suitable mathematical software, I'm attempting to present my ideas using primary school level Venn diagrams drawn in Word!



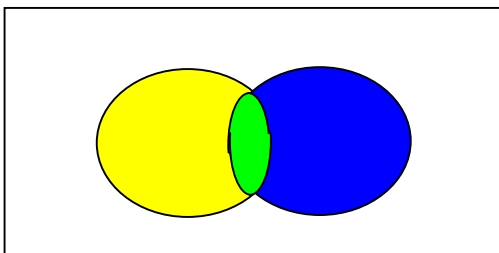
One way that this question can be explored is by thinking of a closed set (which might represent an individual or even the whole of creation I guess) – a universal set (a box) within which two distinct sets can be identified – intellect (blue) and imagination (yellow).

Are these equal in size? Probably it varies from person to person. Do they interact? If so, how?



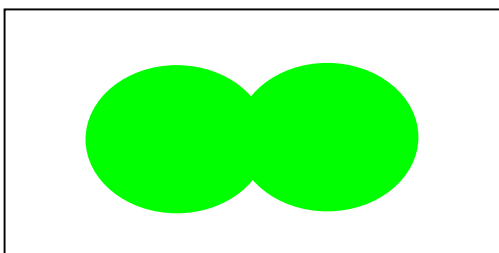
Might it be that there is a flow of 'stuff' between the two? Which way does it go? Where does it start? Should one of the arrows be larger or longer than the other? Does this vary from person to person? I suspect it does.

Does this result in revelation? I'd argue not, though it may be a catalyst towards it. What it can do, I think ('cos I'm a thinker type) is generate insights and nurture openness.

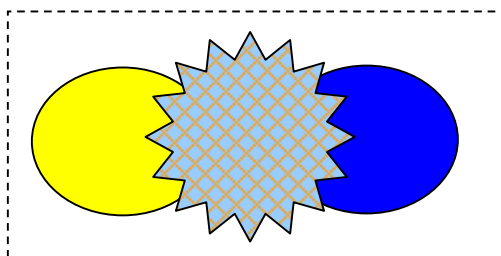


Might it be that there is actually in intersection (overlap) of the two, and that the green bit is the creative interplay of these parts of our being? In this model the 'chicken and egg' or 'a drives b' enigma/dichotomy is avoided. This feels more healthy, more holistic than saying we are left brain or right brain people.

I still don't think it gives us revelation though, just a more integrated way of being creative and open.



No, this isn't the 'should've gone to Specsavers' advertisement. It is the logical(or creative) extension of the previous version. Here rather than merely intersecting, intellect and imagination are united. Presumably, if this could be achieved, without loss of the useful attributes of either, there would be enormous creativity possible – but I'm still not sure this means revelation – the united blob of greenness is still contained within the boundaries of the closed set – it is simply not possible to think (or imagine) outside the box.



Revelation requires that the boundaries of the box to be broken open to allow something new to come in – hence the dotted outline. The new spark that emerges may find itself expressed through intellect, imagination or both in some weird and wonderful combination. It seems highly probable that unless they are engaged in some way, the inbreaking of revelation is not going to happen – but the whole thing about revelation is that it defies all this left brain, right brain, intellect, imagination stuff and lets God surprise us.

If I had my way, which I don't, theologians would learn from scientists to use more diagrams! But then I, for my part, learn loads from the wonderful, artistically talented folk with whom I engage in conversation and friendly argument.