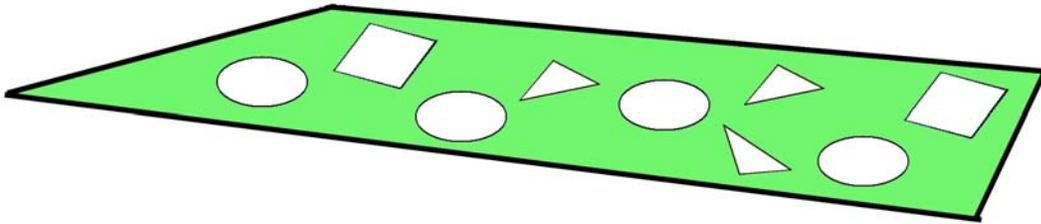


RISE ABOVE FLATLAND!

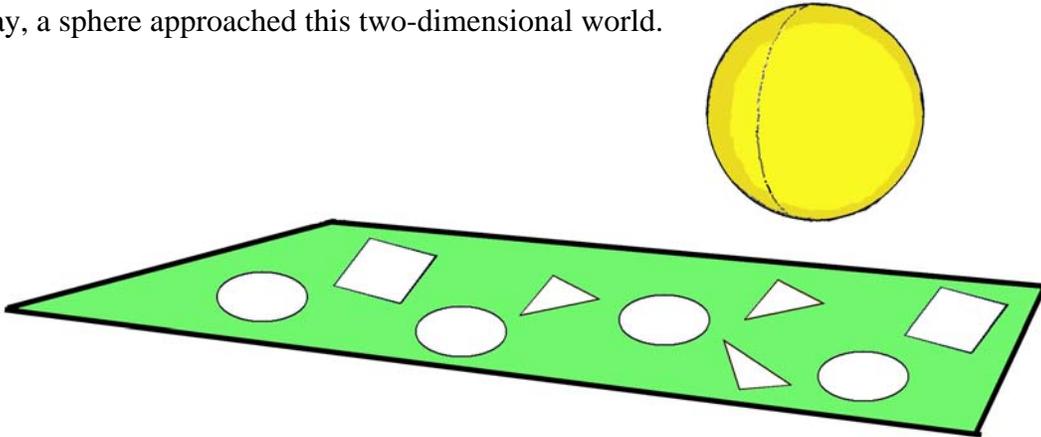
By Arnie Dahlke

When I was seventeen, I read a little book called Flatland, written by a monk who called himself "A. Square." It was an intriguing little book that has stuck with me over the years. It gave me a perspective on life that is particularly appropriate today, in this new millennium.

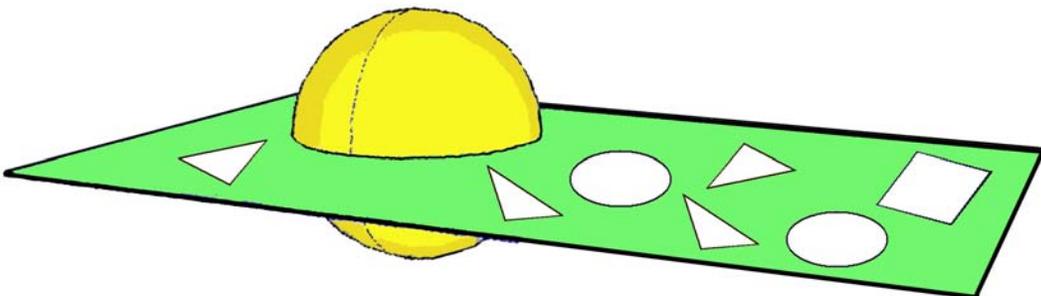
Flatland is a two dimensional world, where creatures only have length and width, but no depth. Instead of the three dimensional human beings that we see in our world, Flatland inhabitants are squares, circles and triangles. Enjoying a comfortable life in their flat world, they know nothing of the third dimension.



One day, a sphere approached this two-dimensional world.



Being a curious creature, he decided to visit the Flatlanders. But since Flatland has only length and width, *they* saw him as a circle, where he intersected the plane of their world. It is as if you sliced a piece of paper through a ball: only a circle would appear on the paper, not the entire three-dimensional ball.

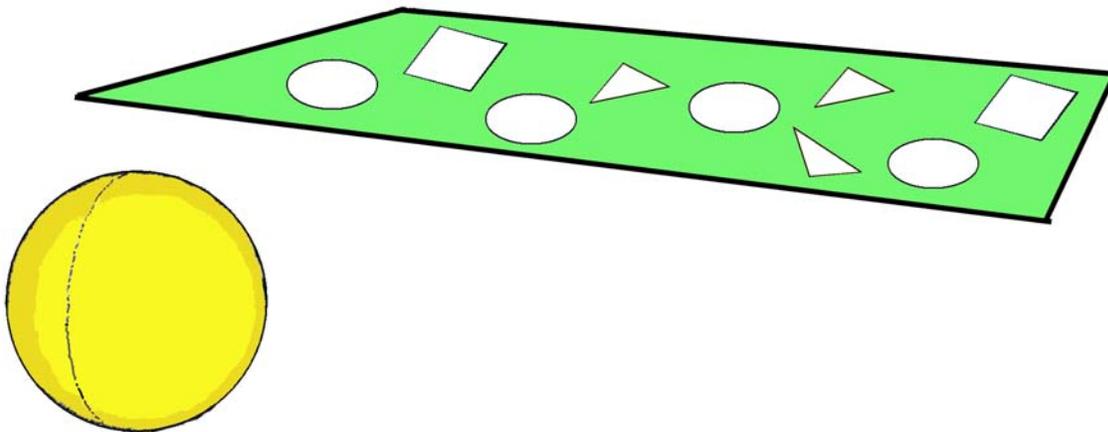


And, of course, as the sphere moved up or down through the plane of Flatland, the size of the circle changed—when the tip of the sphere entered Flatland, he was seen as a small circle; when the middle, wider part of him passed through Flatland, he was seen as a larger circle.

The sphere explained this phenomenon to the Flatlanders. He told them about the third dimension and tried demonstrating it by moving in and out of their two-dimensional plane. He described to them how his actual shape in the third dimension would account for his changing size in their world.

Alas, the poor Flatlanders could not grasp what he was saying. Their two-dimensional perception gave them two-dimensional beliefs. They could not see him as a sphere. They could only see him as a circle that kept changing size. This frightened them. They thought they were witnessing a circle performing witchcraft. In their panic, they sought to destroy him.

Try as he might, the sphere simply could not get the Flatlanders to see his own three dimensional world. He finally gave up and left.



To me, the message of that little book is very clear:

**Bound By Our Own Belief Systems,
We Find It Very Hard To See Our World
From A Radically Different Point Of View.**

**Like The Two-Dimensional Beliefs Of Flatlanders,
Our Truths Often Become Our Blinders.**

In order for us to see new ideas, new concepts, and new ways of thinking and doing, we need to look at the world from another perspective, another point of view. We need to develop new mental models for seeing our existence.

We need to rise above Flatland!