

Don Hoffman
Professor
Cognitive Science
University of California, Irvine

Title: Symmetry Does Not Entail Veridicality

Abstract: Our perceptions exhibit a variety of symmetries. Do these symmetries logically entail anything about the structure of objective reality? According to the Invention-of-Symmetry Theorem, the answer is no. Moreover, according to the Fitness-Beats-Truth Theorem, natural selection does not favor veridical perceptions, but instead drives them to extinction. I propose instead that the symmetries of perception reflect data-compressing and error-correcting codes for information about fitness. Spacetime is doomed—it is not a fundamental aspect of objective reality. Instead, it is simply a species-specific data-formatting scheme, a user interface that hides objective reality and guides adaptive behavior.