

# Re: The Anti Science Art Of Evasion

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*Source:* <http://sci.tech--archive.net/Archive/sci.bio.evolution/2005-06/msg00451.html>

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- *From:* "John Edser" <edser@xxxxxxxxxxx>
  - *Date:* Tue, 21 Jun 2005 22:37:11 -0400 (EDT)
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"Perplexed in Peoria" <jimmenegay@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>

> JM:–  
> snip<  
> ReMine CLAIMS that Felsenstein proposed zero  
> costs.  
> Felsenstein considers this a distortion.  
> snip<

JE:–

Felsenstein could easily clear up such a basic point but he refuses to do so. He can only be proposing total gross cost which cannot be zero or a relative net cost which can be zero. Everything that I have read here that has been written by Felsenstein including the papers of his that I have access to, only employ relative propositions. He never states what any of his relative propositions are actually relative to. It appears this is the "modus opperandi" of gene centric model builders who are primarily mathematicians. Of course what they are all relative to is the BIOLOGICAL propositions of the theory the mathematical model was simplified/oversimplified from. Specifically: BIOLOGICAL FITNESS as it can be EMPIRICALLY measured within NATURE on a REFUTABLE basis.

The reason why Felsenstein will never discuss the critical difference that does exist between a theory and any model derived from it is because he does not wish to define the proper limits of the models he employs within the biological sciences. It appears to me that he and many others here, perhaps including yourself, wish to write themselves a blank cheque for model usage even to the extent of misusing the model to usurp the theory the model was simplified/oversimplified from.

>> JE:–  
>> ... so Felsenstein and not myself is  
>> required to clarify if that cost is just a zero gross total payment  
OR a  
>> cost that represents a net resultant zero relative cost where

without

> > exception, more than a zero payment has to be paid. However,  
Felsenstein

> > \_consistently refuses\_ to define what his proposed zero relative net  
> > cost remains relative to.

> JM:–

> And once again, Edser, by pure logic, without any data at all, has  
come

> to the conclusion that Felsenstein's cost concept is a "relative net  
cost"

> concept.

JE:–

Yes. Unless Felsenstein is foolish enough to claim a total gross cost as  
his zero cost of substitution then he can only be claiming a net  
relative cost to be zero. This being the case he is \_required\_ to state  
what the net zero relative cost he is proposing is actually relative to.  
His track record speaks for itself. Felsenstein has always refused to  
state what his relative propositions are actually relative to. You do  
not have to believe me, simply ask him yourself. He will either not  
respond at all or he will provide an ambiguous answer, i.e. yet another  
relative proposition as an answer. In such a situation sbe reader's can  
\_reasonably\_ conclude that Felsenstein is simply playing political  
evasion within the sciences on this issue.

>snip<

Regards,

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