

Re: JSH: Learning consensus

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- *From:* "Proginoskes" <CCHeckman@xxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* 30 May 2006 22:37:56 -0700
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jstevh@xxxxxxxx wrote:

Rupert wrote:

jstevh@xxxxxxxx wrote:

Reality of "pure math" is that you depend on some other person saying an argument is correct.

That's just fact.

Absolute nonsense. Anyone with any intellectual integrity checks for themselves that the argument is correct.

But human nature is that you can fail to see your own mistakes, and those of others you believe in.

I know, I've been there.

I've looked at arguments over and over again, wanting them to be true, and hoping they were true, unable to see for myself that they were wrong for long periods of time, but thankfully, I have always escaped the trap of wanting something false to be true.

But only after calling people "liars" for months because they've found a mistake.

The problem with "pure math" is that you ultimately rely on human judgement, which means you ultimately rely on human fallibility.

Remember the main point I have isn't that mathematicians lie to themselves and others, but that by not having computer checking they

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show that on some level they KNOW that there are major errors that no one wants to know about, or accept.

Computers offer the promise of objectivity and escape from human fallibility.

Computer science people can listen with amazement as mathematicians and other math people go on and on about how computers can't comprehend mathematics, knowing what I know, computers can do it—but math people don't want to be checked objectively.

And explain again why computer programmers -- who are human beings who are just as fallable as human mathematicians -- can't possibly make mistakes.

They want to rely on other people—people they trust, people who will protect their own.

They don't want their fate decided by an emotionless machine that will just tell the truth about whether a "proof" is a proof.

If one of your proofs was fed into a machine, and it found a mistake, would you call it a liar for 3 or 4 months?

Come to think of it, have you checked any of your results by computer?

Well, I can answer for you: No. For instance, the surrogate factoring "algorithm", which fails for numbers as small as 15. Even though it only involved programming 4 lines in any computer language.

--- Christopher Heckman

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