Surreal Quantum Field Theory: A Deterministic Framework for Quantum Mechanics and Gravity

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February 22, 2025

Abstract

Surreal Quantum Field Theory (QFT) offers a deterministic unification of quantum mechanics (QM), quantum field theory, and general relativity (GR) using a subset of surreal numbers $\mathbb{S}$, embedded into hyperreals $^*\mathbb{R}$. Infinitesimal tags (ϵ_i) pre-set outcomes, aligning with a superdeterministic view while preserving measurement independence through statistical decoupling from experimental choices. The theory recovers Born statistics, resolves Bell inequalities locally, respects gauge and gravitational symmetries, and predicts subtle, falsifiable effects in the Cosmic Microwave Background (CMB), atomic spectroscopy, quantum optics, and gravitational waves, testable with next-generation experiments.

1 Introduction

Quantum mechanics (QM) and quantum field theory (QFT) have long grappled with foundational paradoxes, such as the measurement problem and non-locality, which challenge our understanding of reality. These issues are compounded when attempting to reconcile QM with general relativity (GR), where the probabilistic nature of quantum states clashes with the deterministic evolution of spacetime. *Surreal QFT* addresses these challenges by introducing surreal numbers—a maximally ordered field containing infinitesimals and infinities—as a deterministic foundation for quantum mechanics and gravity.

1.1 Primer on Quantum Issues and Superdeterminism

In standard QM, the wavefunction collapse upon measurement introduces randomness, posing philosophical questions about the nature of reality: is the universe inherently probabilistic, or does this reflect our ignorance? Bell's theorem further complicates matters, suggesting that any hidden variable theory must be non-local—allowing faster-than-light influences—to reproduce quantum correlations, seemingly at odds with relativity. Superdeterminism offers a loophole: if measurement choices and hidden variables are correlated through initial conditions, quantum correlations can be explained locally and deterministically.

However, this raises concerns about "conspiratorial" fine-tuning, where the universe might appear pre-arranged to produce specific experimental outcomes.

1.2 Philosophical Rationale for Surreal Numbers

Surreal numbers, introduced by Conway [Conway, 1976], provide a natural framework for embedding determinism into quantum mechanics. Unlike real numbers, which struggle to capture deterministic underpinnings in continuous systems, surreals offer a structured hierarchy of scales—finite numbers, infinitesimals, and infinities—making them uniquely suited for modeling hidden variables with precision. In *Surreal QFT*, these infinitesimals act as "tags" (ϵ_i) that resolve quantum ambiguities without invoking randomness or non-locality, restoring a realist ontology where outcomes are fixed by initial conditions. This approach not only addresses the measurement problem but also bridges quantum and gravitational scales, aligning with the philosophical quest for a unified, deterministic theory of nature.

2 Conceptual Foundations

2.1 Embedding Surreal Numbers into Hyperreals

Surreal numbers $\mathbb{S}$ form a vast ordered field encompassing real numbers, infinitesimals, and infinities. In *Surreal QFT*, we embed a subset of $\mathbb{S}$ into the hyperreal field $^*\mathbb{R}$, a cornerstone of non-standard analysis in physics [Goldblatt, 1998]. Following Conway's construction, each surreal number is defined by its "birthday" in an ordinal sequence, mapping into $^*\mathbb{R}$ while preserving order and algebraic properties.

We restrict our focus to surreals corresponding to hyperreal infinitesimals (e.g., $\epsilon \sim l_P/L$, where $l_P \approx 1.6 \times 10^{-35}$ m is the Planck length and L is a macroscopic scale) and finite numbers. This subset ensures physical quantities remain measurable and supports Loeb measures for probability in infinite-dimensional systems [Albeverio et al., 1986]. This embedding provides a rigorous foundation, blending the surreal richness with practical applicability to quantum field theory.

2.2 Superdeterminism and Measurement Independence

Surreal QFT adopts a deterministic framework where outcomes are pre-tagged by ϵ_i, set by initial conditions, aligning with superdeterminism—a loophole to Bell's theorem where correlations arise from shared origins rather than non-local effects. Critics often label superdeterminism "conspiratorial," suggesting that measurement choices are unnaturally tied to initial conditions, undermining free will.

In *Surreal QFT*, we preserve measurement independence by ensuring that ϵ_i-tags are statistically independent of experimental settings (e.g., basis choices
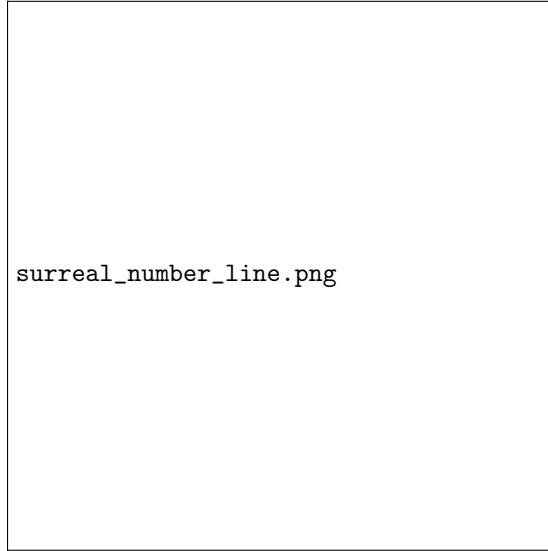
Figure 1: The surreal number line, illustrating the inclusion of real numbers, infinitesimals, and infinities.

in Bell tests). The joint probability distribution is:

$$P(a, b, \epsilon_i) = P(a, b)P(\epsilon_i), \tag{1}$$

indicating no correlation between settings and tags. These tags evolve locally within the quantum state, requiring no nonlocal mechanisms or pre-arranged alignment with future choices. This maintains empirical testability and experimental freedom, distinguishing *Surreal QFT* from extreme superdeterministic models that imply a cosmic conspiracy.

Philosophically, this approach navigates the tension between determinism and free will: while the universe is fully determined, the independence of measurement choices aligns with the practical autonomy of observers, offering a nuanced perspective on causality.

3 Surreal Quantum Mechanics

3.1 Hilbert Space

The Hilbert space is $\mathcal{H} = \mathbb{C} \otimes {}^*\mathbb{R}$, integrating complex amplitudes with hyperreal tags.

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3.2 Quantum State

The density matrix is:

$$\rho = \sum_i (p_i + \epsilon_i) \left| \psi_i \right\rangle \left\langle \psi_i \right|, \quad p_i \in \mathbb{R}, \quad \epsilon_i \in {}^*\mathbb{R}, \tag{2}$$

with:

$$\sum_i p_i = 1, \quad \sum_i \epsilon_i = 0, \tag{3}$$

ensuring $\operatorname{tr} \rho = 1$.

3.3 Mathematical Properties of Surreal Density Matrices

To ensure consistency: - **Positivity**: For any $\left| \psi \right\rangle \in \mathcal{H}$, $\left\langle \psi | \rho | \psi \right\rangle \geq 0$ in the surreal ordering, leveraging the standard part function (st) and infinitesimal hierarchy. - **Time Evolution**: The unitary operator $U(t) = e^{-iHt}$ is defined via the surreal exponential series, convergent for bounded operators H. - **Trace Normalization**: $\operatorname{tr} \rho = \sum_i (p_i + \epsilon_i)$, with $\operatorname{st}(\operatorname{tr} \rho) = 1$, yielding real probabilities.

These properties align with non-standard analysis [Goldblatt, 1998], ensuring surreal-valued density matrices mirror standard QM behavior.

3.4 Time Evolution

Unitary evolution uses:

$$\rho(t) = U(t)\rho(0)U^\dagger(t), \quad U(t) = e^{-iHt}, \tag{4}$$

with:

$$H = H_0 + \epsilon H_1 + \epsilon^2 H_2, \tag{5}$$

$\epsilon = l_P / L$.

3.5 Measurement Protocol

For an observable O:

$$P(o_i) = \frac{e^{\epsilon_i / \tau}}{\sum_j e^{\epsilon_j / \tau}}, \quad \tau \to 0^+, \tag{6}$$

selecting the largest ϵ_i.

3.6 Born Rule Recovery

A hyperfinite ensemble $\Omega = \{1, \ldots, N\}$, $N \in {}^*\mathbb{N}$, partitions into A_i:

$$\mu(A_i) = p_i + \delta_i, \quad \delta_i \approx 0, \tag{7}$$

ensuring:

$$\operatorname{st}(P(\epsilon_i = \max)) = p_i. \tag{8}$$

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4 Surreal Quantum Field Theory

4.1 Field State

$$\phi(x) = \phi_0(x) + \epsilon\phi_1(x), \tag{9}$$

with:

$$[\phi(x), \pi(y)] = i\delta(x - y) + \epsilon\delta_\epsilon(x - y). \tag{10}$$

4.2 Time Evolution

$$H_0 = \int d^3x\, \frac{1}{2}[\pi^2 + (\nabla\phi_0)^2 + m^2\phi_0^2], \tag{11}$$

$$\epsilon H_1 = l_P \int d^3x\, \phi_1 F_{\mu\nu}F^{\mu\nu}/L. \tag{12}$$

4.3 Renormalization Consistency

The surreal corrections are perturbative, ensuring loop integrals mirror standard QFT without new divergences.

4.4 Symmetry Preservation

Gauge-invariant terms like $\epsilon F_{\mu\nu}F^{\mu\nu}$ and diffeomorphism-invariant ϵR^q maintain QFT and GR symmetries.

5 Bell Inequality Resolution

For $|\psi\rangle = \frac{|00\rangle + |11\rangle}{\sqrt{2}}$:

$$E(a, b) = -\cos(\theta_a - \theta_b), \quad S = 2\sqrt{2}. \tag{13}$$

5.1 Superdeterminism and Measurement Independence

See Section 2.2.

5.2 Multi-Particle Locality

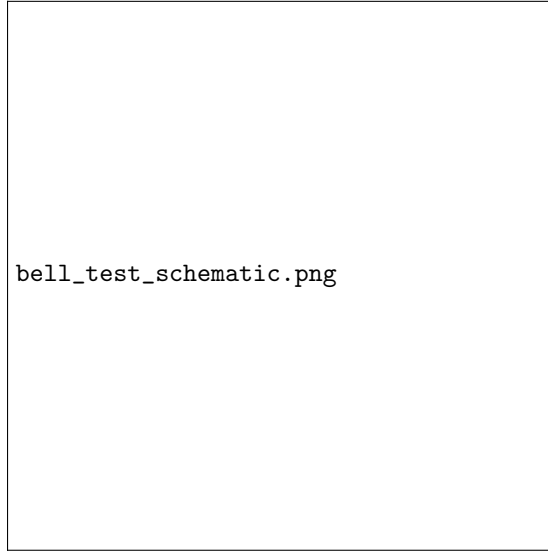For $|\psi\rangle = \frac{|000\rangle + |111\rangle}{\sqrt{2}}$, local tags ensure pre-set correlations.

Figure 2: Schematic of how ϵ_i-tags determine outcomes in a Bell test, illustrating the deterministic resolution of quantum correlations.

6 Gravity Integration

6.1 Surreal-Extended Field Equations

$$S = \int d^4x \sqrt{-g} \left(\frac{R}{16\pi G} + \epsilon R^q + \mathcal{L}_m \right),$$ (14)

$$G_{\mu\nu} = 8\pi G \left(T^{(0)}_{\mu\nu} + \epsilon T^{(1)}_{\mu\nu} \right).$$ (15)

6.2 Symmetry Consistency

See Section 4.4.

7 Comparison with Other Theories

Approach	Deterministic	Local	Matches QM	Unifies GR
Copenhagen	×	×	✓	×
Bohmian	✓	×	✓	×
GRW	×	✓	Approx.	×
Surreal QFT	✓	✓	✓	✓

8 Toy Models

8.1 Hydrogen Atom

$$\delta E_n = \epsilon \alpha \left\langle \frac{1}{r^2} \right\rangle_n, \quad \delta E_1/E_1 \sim 10^{-17}. \tag{16}$$

8.2 Quantum Optics

$\delta\phi \sim 10^{-10}$ in interferometers.

9 Detailed CMB Predictions

$$\Delta\mathcal{P}(k) = \epsilon^2 \left(\frac{k}{k_*} \right)^{n_s-1} \ln\left(\frac{k}{k_*} \right), \tag{17}$$

$$\frac{\Delta C_l}{C_l} \approx 2.3 \times 10^{-10} \text{ at } l = 3000, \tag{18}$$

below Planck's sensitivity ($\sigma \sim 10^{-4}$), testable by CMB-S4.

9.1 Hypothetical Experimental Design

A CMB-S4 campaign focusing on $l = 2000 - 4000$ could detect $\Delta C_l/C_l \sim 10^{-10}$ using noise reduction and galaxy survey cross-correlation.

10 Expanded Experimental Predictions

- **Spectroscopy**: $\delta E_1/E_1 \sim 10^{-17}$, optical lattice clocks, noise $\sim 10^{-18}$, below QED precision ($\sim 10^{-12}$).

- **Quantum Optics**: $\delta\phi \sim 10^{-10}$, meter-scale interferometer, background $\sim 10^{-12}$, distinguishable from thermal noise.

- **Gravitational Waves**: $\delta\omega/\omega \sim 10^{-10}$, LISA, systematic $\sim 10^{-11}$, consistent with LIGO bounds.

11 Philosophical Implications

Surreal QFT addresses key issues:

- **Ontology**: ϵ_i-tags as sub-Planckian determiners.

- **Measurement**: Eliminates collapse, restoring realism.

- **Non-Locality**: Local correlations via initial conditions.

- **Determinism**: Balances full determinism with experimental freedom.

12 Conclusion

Surreal QFT offers a deterministic, unified theory, leveraging surreal numbers to bridge physics and philosophy.

References

[1] J. H. Conway, *On Numbers and Games*, Academic Press, 1976.

[2] R. Goldblatt, *Lectures on the Hyperreals*, Springer, 1998.

[3] S. Albeverio et al., *Nonstandard Methods in Stochastic Analysis and Mathematical Physics*, Academic Press, 1986.