Why is the phrase "that size isn't a thing" considered a dangerous misconception in poker?

The phrase "that size isn't a thing" indicates a fundamental misunderstanding of poker strategy, particularly against recreational players. While equilibrium solvers might not frequently use certain extreme bet sizes, real-world poker (especially live games) involves exploiting opponent tendencies. Players who believe certain sizes are irrelevant ignore the fact that these unconventional sizes can be highly profitable when leveraged against opponents who make predictable mistakes, such as calling too much or folding too often to specific sizing.

How can an 8x check-raise on the flop be highly effective against recreational players?

An 8x check-raise on the flop, especially in deep single-raised or three-bet pots, is effective against recreational players because they are often inelastic on the flop and have not encountered such aggressive sizing before. Mass data analysis shows that fish tend to fold top pair 50-70% of the time and flush draws 25-50% of the time to such a large raise. This allows the aggressor to play for all the money, maximizing value when they have a strong hand and generating significant fold equity with bluffs, as recreational players tend to over-call initially but fold more on later streets.

When should you use a 1/3 pot-sized river bet as a bluff, particularly against a "sticky" opponent?

A 1/3 pot-sized river bet as a bluff is advantageous against sticky opponents who are unlikely to fold strong-but-not-nutted hands (like top pair Queen-X) to larger bets. By choosing a small size, you maximize the fold equity against weaker hands (like missed flush draws or marginal pairs) that would otherwise call a small bet but might fold to an overbet, without sacrificing much against the hands that call regardless. This ensures you still win money with your bluffs by targeting the bottom of your opponent's calling range, while simultaneously using large sizes with your value hands against the same opponent.

Why is a small 1/3 pot-sized river bet beneficial with value, even if solvers don't often use it?

A small 1/3 pot-sized river bet with value, particularly in multi-street pots, exploits the tendency of live poker players not to check-raise the river as a bluff. While in equilibrium this size might open up the action for opponent check-raises, in practice, opponents are unlikely to do so. This allows you to extract maximum value from slightly weaker hands (e.g., King-Queen, Queen-Jack) that might fold to a larger bet on a board where an Ace has hit, effectively "squeezing" more chips from a wider range of your opponent's hands.

What is the strategic advantage of a 10% pot-sized C-bet on an Ace-high board in a 4-bet pot?

A 10% pot-sized C-bet on an Ace-high board in a 4-bet pot is highly effective because it forces opponents to call at least once with hands like Kings, Queens, Jacks, and Tens, even though these hands are often drawing dead. This maximizes value from a wide range of hands that would otherwise be difficult to extract more streets of value from with larger sizing. When bluffing, this small size also allows weaker hands to continue, which can then be folded on later streets. In a 4-bet pot, the SPR (Stack-to-Pot Ratio) is already low, so even with small initial bets, strong hands like Ace-King will likely get stacked eventually.

Why is a 1.5x overbet C-bet on Ace-high static boards effective as the pre-flop raiser?

On Ace-high static boards, an overbet C-bet (e.g., 1.5x pot) as the pre-flop raiser is effective because it maximizes value against the strong Ace-X and 9-X hands that are unlikely to fold to any single bet. Unlike wet boards where small bets incentivize raises, dry boards with few draws mean opponents are less likely to raise their strong hands if you bet small. An overbet ensures you're playing for all the money, and your opponents won't fold top pair or sets to such a bet. For bluffs, it's crucial to use hands that "block" your opponent's strongest holdings (e.g., hands with a Deuce or Nine), making them more "capped."

How does understanding opponent tendencies (e.g., "capped" ranges) influence bet sizing?

Understanding whether an opponent's range is "capped" is crucial for bet sizing. A capped range means the opponent likely doesn't have the strongest hands (e.g., if they only call on a wet flop, they probably don't have sets or two pair). When an opponent is capped and you are deep, you have more fold equity, meaning you need less actual equity in your hand to bluff profitably. This allows for larger bluff sizes. Conversely, if an opponent's range is uncapped, you need to be more cautious with bluffs and might choose smaller sizes to incentivize them to continue with weaker hands or larger sizes with value to get paid by their stronger holdings.

What is the core principle of exploiting opponent mistakes in poker, and how does it relate to "equilibrium"?

The core principle of exploiting opponent mistakes in poker is to identify deviations from optimal (equilibrium) play and adjust your strategy to maximize profit. Equilibrium is a balanced state where neither player can unilaterally improve their outcome. However, in real-world poker, opponents frequently make sub-optimal decisions (e.g., calling too much, folding too little, not raising enough). When one side of this "seesaw" (your opponent) consistently makes mistakes, it creates an opportunity to "pluck hairs off their tail" by using unconventional or "non-equilibrium" bet sizes that exploit their specific leaks, leading to higher expected value compared to strictly adhering to equilibrium play.