Mathematics Colloquium

Can Zombies Do Math? OR Humanism as a Philosophy of Mathematics

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Friday, May 26, 2017
4:10 – 5 p.m.
Building 53 Room 206

Abstract

Skimming through recent book and movie titles, one might imagine that we are headed for a zombie apocalypse. Many have written about what this would entail for our civilization, for our culture, and even for our consumerist tendencies. In this talk we will look at yet another facet of this phenomenon: What would happen to our mathematics? Guided by the history and the philosophy of mathematics, we will pose and search for answers to fundamental questions about the nature of mathematics and how it relates to our humanity. It is this speaker’s main goal that by the end of the talk, the audience will be able to answer the question on the title, along with a few other, possibly more respectable, philosophical questions, such as “What is 3?”

About the speaker: Gizem Karaali (gizem.karaali@pomona.edu) received her Ph.D. in mathematics from the University of California, Berkeley. She is currently an associate professor of mathematics at Pomona College, which, together with her work on the Journal of Humanistic Mathematics, the Mathematical Intelligencer, and Numeracy, keeps her busy. When she is not Professor Karaali, she enjoys discovering new places and new books, walking alone and with friends, and cooking with her two young children. She is simultaneously thrilled by and terrified of the possibility that some day her poetry in Turkish will find a reader other than herself.