Combinatorics Seminar

Dr. Rebecca Milley
Grenfell Campus,
Memorial University of Newfoundland

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HH-3017, 1:00p.m.

Open problems in misere game theory

Abstract:

Combinatorial games are pure strategy games of perfect information and no luck. Under normal play, a player wins by making the last legal move. Under misere play, a player wins by "losing" on purpose: forcing the opponent to take the last move. Normal-play games form a partially-ordered abelian group with a natural addition operation and nontrivial relations of equality and inequality; but under misere play, most of this structure falls apart. This talk will give a general introduction to combinatorial game theory and discuss recent breakthroughs and current open problems in misere games.