Proving Kazhdan's Property (T) with Sums of Squares Techniques

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I dedicate my talk to the memory of Murray Marshall.

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The random walk on G converges much faster than expected to a normal distribution.

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Our new approach uses a sums-of-squares approach and semidefinite programming.

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Fix elements $b_1, \ldots, b_r \in A$. Checking whether some element $a \in A$ is a sum of squares of elements from $\mathrm{span}_{\mathbb{R}}\{b_1, \ldots, b_r\}$ means finding a positive semidefinite matrix $M \in \mathrm{Sym}_r(\mathbb{R})$ with

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Finding a positive semidefinite matrix with linear constaints on the entries is a semidefinite program. Such programs admit quite efficient numerical algorithms.

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It can be checked with semidefinite programming!

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For $G = \mathrm{SL}_3(\mathbb{Z})$ *the element*

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- shows that numerical methods can attack the abstract group theoretic question

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- Other groups of course....
- Other spectral-gap problems via sums of squares.

Thank you for your attention!