Suppose I have several polynomials \( p_1(x), p_2(x), \ldots, p_n(x) \), which for small negative values of \( x < 0 \) satisfy

\[
p_1(x) > p_2(x) > \cdots > p_n(x),
\]

so their graphs are neatly stacked in order. Then at \( x = 0 \), catastrophe happens: all of the polynomials satisfy 

\[
p_i(0) = 0
\]

and their graphs all collide at the origin in spectacular fashion. A moment later, for small \( x > 0 \), the graphs split apart once again but in some new order

\[
p_{a_1}(x) > p_{a_2}(x) > \cdots > p_{a_n}(x).
\]

What can we say about this new ordering? What does this have to do with the Paris Metro?

at 4pm in EH1360
Pizza and pop outside afterwards!