

UCI researchers' equations get a role on 'The Big Bang Theory' episode Thursday



Jonathan Feng, a UC Irvine professor of physics and astronomy, stands on the set of CBS' "The Big Bang Theory," which will feature notes from two research papers written by him and UCI post-doctoral scholars Iftah Galon, Felix Kling and Sebastian Trojanowski. (Courtesy of David Saltzberg)



By **Priscella Vega**

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If you tune in to Thursday's episode of TV's "The Big Bang Theory" and look closely, you'll see scientific equations and notes from UC Irvine researchers.

The CBS sitcom, about a group of socially awkward physicists, features various whiteboards throughout the characters' living areas in case they have an idea they want to write down.

On Thursday, those boards will include notes from two research papers written by Jonathan Feng, a UCI professor of physics and astronomy, and UCI post-doctoral scholars Iftah Galon, Felix Kling and Sebastian Trojanowski.

"We consider it an honor," said Feng, a fan of the show.

Though the episode may have little to do with their papers, Feng said the researchers' notes propose a new experiment that could help them understand dark matter.

"One thing scientists figure out is what the universe is made out of," he said. "We know about certain things like protons, electrons. Turns out there's this stuff called dark matter, which is more prevalent, but we don't know what that is."

UCLA physics professor David Saltzberg, the show's science consultant, invited Feng to be the "Geek of the Week," sitting in on the live recording of the show. He also got to talk with the cast, crew and writers.

"It's remarkable how it's able to capture some aspects of life as a physicist and academic," Feng said. "Some of it is, of course, overblown in Hollywood, but it's still funny and there is some ring of truth to it. Among scientists, I think we all think David is amazing because he manages to get all science right on the show, even with Hollywood restrictions."

"The Big Bang Theory" airs at 8 p.m. on KCBS-TV/2.

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