The Quantitative Area Presents the 2019 Wherry Lecture:

Sharon McGrayne, Ph.D.

"Bayes' Rule: An underground theory that took over the world"

Thursday, October 3rd, 3:00-4:00pm
209 W Eighteenth Ave, Room EA170

Bayes' rule is ubiquitous today in many fields of endeavor, from underwater sea searches to predicting the outcome of elections. But for most of the 20th century, it was used only in desperation because of the withering opposition of mathematical statisticians. Dr. McGrayne's talk will take us through some of the highlights of this early period, including Turing's decoding of the German Enigma messages during World War II and what changed to bring about its popularity today.

Sharon Bertsch McGrayne is the author of several books about the history of science and scientists. Her last book was a history of Bayesian probability: The Theory That Would Not Die: How Bayes' Rule Cracked the Enigma Code, Hunted Down Russian Submarines & Emerged Triumphant from Two Centuries of Controversy. It was published by Yale University Press. Her latest book, A Lab of One's Own, written with Rita Colwell, the first woman director of the National Science Foundation, is scheduled for publication by Simon & Schuster in summer 2020. Her first book, Nobel Prize Women in Science, biographies of 15 leading women scientists, is published by the National Academy of Sciences Press.
McGrayne is a former newspaper reporter and a graduate of Swarthmore College. She lives in Seattle. Her webpage is at McGrayne.com

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