Colloquium Series

MACQUARIE University

School of Mathematical and Physical Sciences 29 August 2022

Date: Monday, 29 August 2022

Time: 12noon – 1:00pm

Speaker: Professor Dianne Cook (Monash University)

Venue: Hybrid – in-person at Macquarie University and Zoom

Title: Myth busting and apophenia in data visualisation: Is what you see really there?

Abstract: In data science, plots of data become important tools for observing patterns, discovering relationship, busting myths, making decisions, and communicating findings. But plots of data can be viewed differently by different observers, and it is easy to imagine patterns that may not exist. This talk will describe some simple tools for helping to decide if patterns are really there, in the larger context of the problem. We will talk about two protocols, the Rorschach, which can help insulate the mind from spurious structure, and the lineup, which places the data plot in the context of nothing happening. There will be an opportunity for the audience to try out these protocols in examining data from current media.