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October 10, 2017

To Whom It May Concern

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you on behalf of the authors of the attached article which we are submitting to *The Journal of Computational and Graphical Statistics* describing a new model-based variable importance statistic suitable with any supervised learning algorithm.

The attached article describes how to use Friedman's concept of *partial dependence functions* to characterize the relative influence of each predictor in a fitted model on the predicted outcome—while taking the the other predictors in the model into account. We also discuss how this approach can be used to characterize the strength of interactions effects. The utility of this method is illustrated via examples and comparing to other existing methods.

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Thank you for your time and consideration.

I look forward to your reply.

Kind regards,

Brandon Greenwell