Bibliographic citation

D'Ignazio, C., & Klein, L. (2020). Introduction: Why Data Science Needs Feminism. In Data Feminism. Retrieved from https://data-feminism.mitpress.mit.edu/pub/frfa9szd

Summary

- This book reveals how companies have used and continue to use data as a weapon to reinforce their power over minority groups of people
- This book also suggests how to challenge this misuse of power by outlining seven principles
- Principle 1: Examining the operation of power to understand the subjects behind it, its medium and its target.
- Principle 2: Challenging the power requires knowing its history and then changing the narrative to that of equity and co-liberation.
- Principle 3: Elevating emotion and embodiment means accepting all forms of knowledge
- Principle 4: Rethinking existing systems of hierarchies because of how they inform the processes of the technical system.
- Principle 5: Embracing pluralism means allowing time and space for a range of participants to contribute at all stages of that project.
- Principle 6: Considering context refers to looking at the big picture of all the individuals involved in a dataset or project.
- Principle 7: Making labor visible requires that efforts of every individual is recognized and receives the credit they deserve.

Quote: "Rebalancing emotion and reason opens up the data communication toolbox and allows us to focus on what truly matters in a design process: honoring context, architecting attention, and taking action to defy stereotypes and reimagine the world."

Personal Response: We learnt in class about the different ethical theories and how we as Christian data scientists must integrate our faith in the decisions and choices we make. So, reading through this book, the first thing that stood out to me was how the authors emphasized on allowing all forms of knowledge in the process of a project or in the datasets. I think that this inclusion of diversity ties in with the utilitarian theory, looking at the greater good of humanity. Additionally, as Christians, we are called to love and serve those around us and what better way is there to do this than by supporting and uplifting those who are discriminated against.

Interesting parts: I loved the book's definition of feminism as "a shorthand for the diverse and wide-ranging projects that name and challenge sexism and other forces of oppression, as well as those which seek to create more just, equitable, and livable futures." Oppression is experienced in different ways by many people and addressing all such forms really speaks to the culture of inclusion that the authors are incorporating. I love how the authors, in their drive towards transparency, ask questions that reveal hidden aspects of any dataset/project. In our daily lives, we sometimes take information for granted but this book helped me realize how important it is to ask questions and look out for missing pieces to recognize the bias that exists so freely around us.