

WRITEUP on the Meetup Experience

Recently, I attended a DS meetup on 14th Dec 2017 at 5:30 PM in New York City organized by a group called New York Open Statistical Programming. It was attended by Data scientists, Academic researchers, AI professionals, Blockchain executives and NGOs. There were also job posting announcements at the venue which I found helpful. The talk was about Detecting and Reducing Social Discrimination in Machine Learning Models and the presenter was Niels Bantilan who is a data scientist at Arena. His research interests include reinforcement learning, artificial neural networks, and fairness-aware machine learning. The main point was how to make the instantiated model fairness aware. If an instantiated model(ML) for approving a loan, criminal sentences, job application is biased then the Model tends to favor a particular group resulting in discrimination. He took an attempt to address this social issue using a ML package called Themis-ML.

I asked Niels, the presenter whether he can validate the bias of the data before building the model as an intentionally biased data will lead to biased algorithm. We chatted after the presentation and exchanged our contact information.

It was a great experience there to know the people who are doing a great work in the field of Data Science.