

Are Facebook Ads Discriminatory? It's Complicated | WIRED

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The Facebook media cycle took a head-whipping quadruple turn over the past few weeks. First, in a surprise move by the Trump administration, the Department of Housing and Urban Development [sued the company](#) for violations of the Fair Housing Act, alleging it engaged in discriminatory advertising practices for housing ads.

Within days, researchers at Northeastern University published a preview of a paper describing an interesting set of advertising experiments showing that, indeed, [Facebook was differentially showing ads for housing and jobs by gender and race](#). Lastly, in April the Algorithmic Accountability Act—AAA, naturally—was introduced in both the House and Senate, requiring large tech companies to test for evidence of discriminatory bias in the artificial intelligence that runs platforms like Facebook and Google.

This drama comes on the heels a bevy [of other lawsuits](#) alleging that Facebook abetted discriminatory advertising by allowing the targeting of housing ads by race and gender, something the company [essentially admitted to doing by vowing to bar that functionality](#).

[...]

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