

FACE SURVEILLANCE AND RACIAL BIAS

FACE SURVEILLANCE REINFORCES RACIAL AND GENDER BIAS.

Numerous studies have shown that face surveillance technologies are racially biased, particularly against Black women.

Supporting data and anecdotes include:

- **MIT research:** A study by Joy Buolamwini at MIT found that Black women were 35% more likely than white men to be misclassified by face surveillance technology.
- **MIT research:** Face surveillance technology from leading companies failed to classify correctly the faces of even Oprah Winfrey, Michelle Obama, and Serena Williams.
- **ACLU test:** Using Amazon's Rekognition software, the ACLU scanned every member of Congress, looking for matches with a mugshot database. The software produced 28 false matches, including a disproportionate number of Black and brown lawmakers.
- **Real lives of real people:** A Brown University student was recently misidentified by face recognition as a bombing suspect in Sri Lanka. After the police put her picture on TV, she was sent death threats by vengeful strangers.

Face surveillance technology replicates the **wider racial biases and prejudices** of the criminal justice system.

- Face surveillance technology **fails to accurately analyze** people with darker skin, often misclassifying Black women as men and assessing Black men as aggressive, even when they have neutral expressions.
- Most software is trained on datasets that overwhelmingly represent white men, and then deployed on datasets that often disproportionately represent Black men (e.g. mugshot databases).
- **Misidentifications** and inaccurate assessments threaten the safety of people of color who are already subject to disproportionate surveillance, over-policing, and violence at the hands of law-enforcement.

Face surveillance is **entirely unregulated**, denying due process to Black and brown people whom the government misidentifies or harasses using this technology.

- Police and prosecutors have not disclosed their use of face surveillance technology. This leaves people in the dark about evidence that could have been used to detain, arrest, or incriminate them.