

# The New York Times

MEDIA

## ***Suit Accuses New York Times Executives of Bias***

By **SYDNEY EMBER** APRIL 28, 2016

Two women filed a federal lawsuit on Thursday against The New York Times, its chief executive and its chief revenue officer, saying that the company “has been engaging in deplorable discrimination.”

In the lawsuit, Ernestine Grant and Marjorie Walker, both black women in their 60s employed in the advertising department at The Times, contend that the workplace under [Mark Thompson](#), the chief executive, “has become an environment rife with discrimination based on age, race and gender.”

A spokeswoman for The Times called the suit “entirely without merit” and said “we intend to fight it vigorously in court.”

The women are seeking class-action status for the lawsuit. Ms. Grant has been employed at The Times for 16 years, and Ms. Walker for eight years. Both are listed in the company directory as account managers.

“Unbeknownst to the world at large, not only does The Times have an ideal customer (young, white, wealthy), but also an ideal staffer (young, white, unencumbered with a family) to draw that purported ideal customer,” the lawsuit says.

The suit also contends that the plaintiffs “have experienced discrimination, and were retaliated against, when they complained about such discrimination.”

In the suit, which was filed in Federal District Court in Manhattan, the women say that, when she joined The Times in 2013, Meredith Levien, now the company’s executive vice president and chief revenue officer, “made it very clear that she was looking for a very particular work force, one that was filled with ‘fresh faces,’ i.e., younger employees without families, and who were white.” The suit also contends that Ms. Levien made references “to the need for employees to be ‘people who look like the people we are selling to’

and even going so far as to say ‘this isn’t what our sales team should look like.’”

In a statement, Eileen Murphy, The Times’s spokeswoman, said: “This lawsuit contains a series of recycled, scurrilous and unjustified attacks on both Mark Thompson and Meredith Levien. It also completely distorts the realities of the work environment at The New York Times. We strongly disagree with any claim that The Times, Mr. Thompson or Ms. Levien have discriminated against any individual or group of employees.”

Douglas H. Wigdor, a lawyer for the women, said in a statement: “It is astonishing that a news organization that regularly promotes liberal social viewpoints could have a double standard when it comes to blatantly discriminating and retaliating against its own hard-working and dedicated employees.”