INCREASING BIPOC REPRESENTATION IN SUSTAINABLE SHOPPING

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Background
- Environmental spaces have operated largely with the exclusion of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)
- This exclusion is in the sustainable shopping industry too, with many brands facing backlash for racism in the last year (Fig 1)
- But there is a lack of research on the mechanisms behind it and how to address it

How can Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) be better represented in the sustainable shopping industry as business owners and customers?

Internship/Methods
- Interned with Enweave where I designed a supplier diversity strategy
- Conducted a literature analysis and surveyed the perspectives and experiences of online sustainable shoppers

Research

Climate Concern by Race

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Concerned</th>
<th>Alarmed</th>
<th>Careful</th>
<th>Diversified</th>
<th>Divulged</th>
<th>Divulged</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Survey

Frequency of Offensive Imagery on Sustainable Shopping Websites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>BIPOC</th>
<th>White</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm not sure</td>
<td>5.75%</td>
<td>27.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA</td>
<td>5.75%</td>
<td>11.25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Almost twice as many respondents disagree or strongly disagree that sustainable online sites carry a large selection of BIPOC-owned brands (Fig 4)

Summary
- BIPOC environmental interest misperceptions need addressed (Fig 2) through quality representation in the communication of online sustainable stores (Fig 3)
- More BIPOC owned brands and products are needed at stores (Fig 4) and companies can pursue this using supplier diversity strategies
- Seeing more diversity across all facets of online sustainable shopping can reduce misperceptions and exclusion that contribute to underrepresentation

Significance
- Businesses must be held accountable to create spaces where all consumers can see themselves and their needs reflected
- This research may suggest that there is a lack of BIPOC in decision making positions at sustainable shopping companies, like environmental organizations (Fig 5) further perpetuating exclusion

Acknowledgements
Thank you to my site supervisor, Jacob Huskey, my faculty advisor, Kristi Straus, my cohort, and friends and family.

Notes:
- [Figure 1] Social Media apologies on Instagram from sustainable brands, Everlane (left) and Reformation (right) after being called out for racism
- [Figure 2] April 2019, November 2019. Survey of 2,386 U.S adults showing percentage of concern for global warming (White n=1,833; Hispanic/Latino n=305; Black n=4,249) by the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication and George Mason University Center for Climate Change Communication.
- [Figure 3] Respondents were asked to rank how often they experienced offensive portrayal of their ethnic group within the imagery (photos, drawings, logos etc) of sustainable shopping sites. (For example, a presentation of stereotypes or cultural insensitivity/appropriation. (n=81, BIPOC=42, White=38, NA=1).
- [Figure 4] Respondents ranked their agreement level to, “the level of BIPOC representation on a sustainable shopping site affects how likely you are to shop there” and “sustainable shopping sites generally carry a large product selection from BIPOC-owned brands.” (n=81, BIPOC=42, White=38, NA=1).
- [Figure 5] A 2014 study showed that racial diversity in U.S. conservation and preservation organizations tends to be lowest on boards and highest among relatively new employees and intern. Source: Taylor, D.E. The State of Diversity in Environmental Organizations. Chart by Sean Quinn.

We started Everlane with a vision of empowering positive change for the planet and humanity. I am proud of how we have been able to change the retail industry. However, with the help of our community, I have come to realize how I have fallen short of addressing issues of institutional racism both inside the company and in how we present ourselves to the world.

I take full responsibility for these shortcomings and apologize to current and former employees who have experienced harm while working at Everlane. Such experiences must end and I take accountability for the actions necessary to end them.

Almost twice as many respondents disagree of strongly disagree, 40% (vs. agree or strongly agree, 23.5%) that sustainable shopping sites generally carry a large selection of BIPOC-owned brands.