

INTERSECTIONAL ENVIRONMENTALISM

JOIN THE ALLIANCE.

Intersectional Environmentalism is an inclusive version of environmentalism that advocates for both the protection of people and the planet. It identifies the ways in which injustices happening to marginalized communities and the earth are interconnected. It brings injustices done to the most vulnerable communities, and the earth, to the forefront and does not minimize or silence social inequality.

Thank you for supporting this movement.



OUR MISSION.

Injustices done to the most vulnerable communities are often left out of environmental movements and implementations which results in the minimization of or failings to address social inequalities.

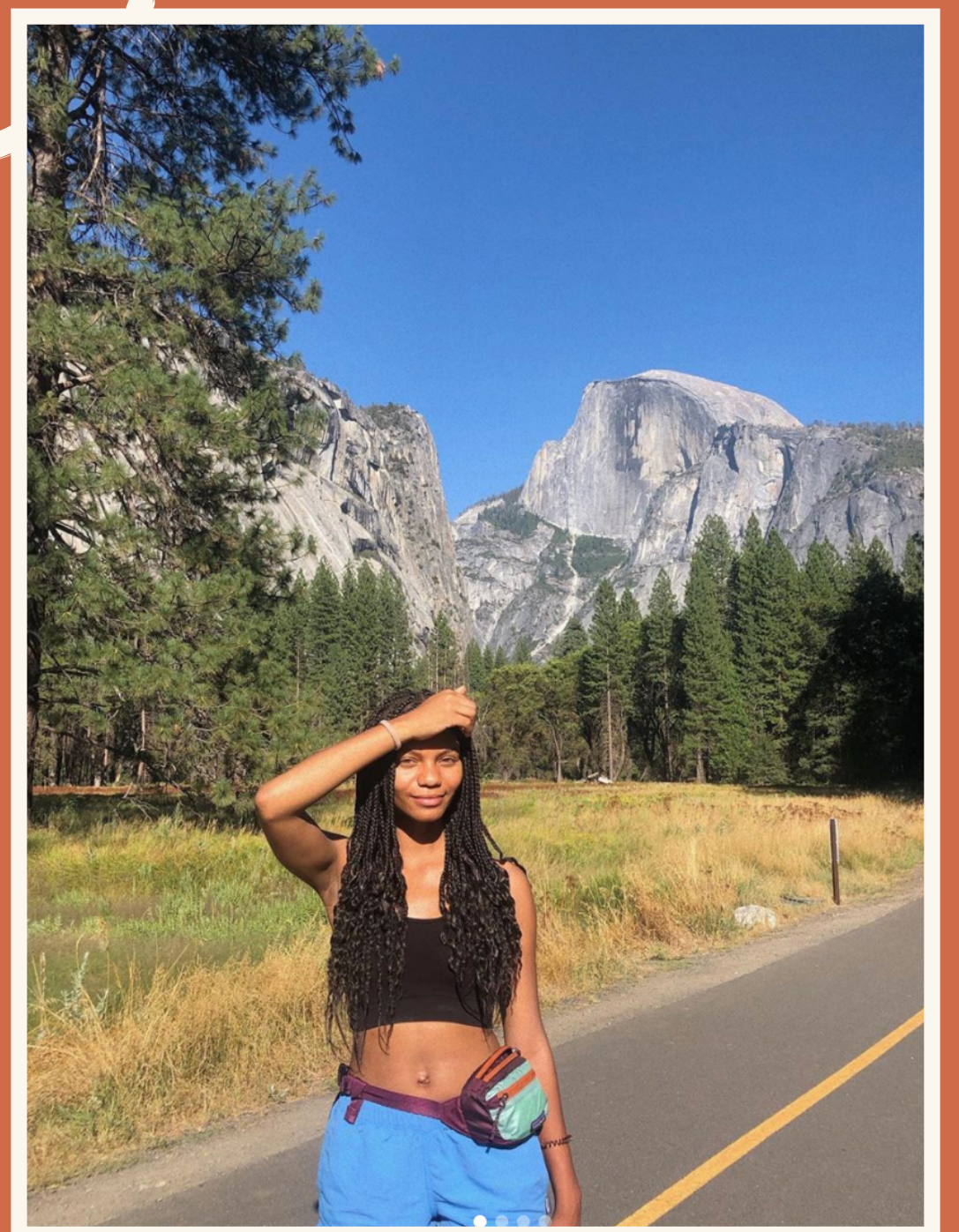
Intersectional environmentalism recognizes marginalized voices by bringing them to the forefront of each segment of sustainability. Our mission is to serve as a resource to empower organizations and individuals through education, community, and action steps.

AN INTERVIEW WITH LEAH THOMAS.

Before you dive in, here is an interview with founding member and intersectional activist, Leah Thomas.

Leah is a sustainability writer and advocate sharing her perspectives on IG to inspire people to make the world a little more equal for everyone and a little nicer to our home planet. She's an environmentalist, a writer, and an eco-communications guru.

We hope by bringing you this Digital Download, you can better navigate how difficult this topic can be.



"IT PLAYS SUCH A LARGE ROLE ON WHO ACTUALLY FEELS THE BRUNT OF ENVIRONMENTAL INJUSTICE"

Q: When did you first start connecting the dots between sustainability and diversity?

A: I realized that environmentalism and sustainability can also be intersectional, just like feminism or other movements. When I learned about environmental justice I realized how people of color and

at risk communities were more likely to be exposed to the negative impacts of climate change first and are currently exposed to the most environmental degradation and I realized how social justice is embedded within sustainability even if it isn't mentioned as often.

Q: You got a B.S. in Environmental Science & Policy. What aspects of that degree were you most passionate about?

A: It was really great learning the science behind climate change, ecosystems ecology and having basic chemistry knowledge so I could understand the climate crisis more from a scientific perspective. All of that info is easier to swallow once you get an in-depth breakdown on what exactly is going on with the environment and it's easy to get fired up and passionate about saving the environment once you're armed with all that data.

Q: How has exploring sustainability made you a better environmental justice advocate?

A: I started to realize how much race and class were left out of discussions about the environment and it started to make me really frustrated because it plays such a large role on who actually feels the brunt of environmental injustice. I have never heard of a typical suburban community having to drink lead in their water or fracking fluid. That wouldn't happen. So the more I learned, the more the inequality became evident and made me more of an advocate for EJ.





Q: What are some current environmental justice issues people can stay on top of happening now?

A: Food inequality and food deserts, water inequality (like Flint, MI), and air pollution and respiratory illnesses in children.

Q: Holding space for positive & negative aspects of history can be challenging for some. What is an issue you've struggled to balance the nuances of?

A: I value the lives of wild animals, but I also value black and brown human lives and it can be challenging when people try to minimize the loss of human lives due to injustice but expect me to march for the polar bears. They can opt out of caring about black and brown lives, but don't understand that as a person of color I cannot. Blackness isn't just an "add-on" it's my livelihood and that is a hard concept for someone to grasp sometimes and I'm often met with "Why do you have to make this about race?" instead of them looking internally and asking "Why can I opt out of talking about race, what privileges do I have that allow me to do that."

Q: What do you want people to know before diving into this topic?

A: Listen and amplify the voices of activists of color vs. trying to dominate the space and speak on their behalf. Always ask someone what they need vs. assuming.

Q: What's your best piece of advice for someone who might be feeling out of place researching this topic & doesn't have a lot of people in their community exploring this topic with them?

A: Please bring it up in discussions, you'll be surprised how a few conversations about this issue can actually inspire others to start caring too.

WHERE DID "INTERSECTIONALITY" COME FROM?

Kimberlé Crenshaw is a professor of Law at Columbia University and the University of California, Los Angeles. The Ohio native has been studying civil rights, race, and racism for over 30 years.

In a 2016 Ted Talk, Crenshaw discusses coining the term intersectionality to address the dismissal of a case where our system failed to recognize prejudice happening at the intersection of gender and race for Black women.

Without a proper way to identify what occurs at the intersection of various issues, our systems fail to address blind spots that permit the perpetuation of injustice. It is because of this work that the future of social justice and environmental advocacy within our communities can pledge to address intersectionality together.



WATCH THIS VIDEO

THE DIGITAL DOWNLOAD

We brought in conscious curator, Diandra Marizet, to provide you with a digital download that dives deeper into the connections made across culture, preservation, education, and inclusivity.

1. NATURE SHOULD BE THE FIRST TOUCH POINT.



If people of color were the original stewards of the land, then why are outdoor activities predominantly enjoyed by white people? BIPOC have been systematically pushed out and we need leaders to understand the interconnectedness of all the reasons why. Here's a recap from The Atlantic on why & how we can encourage more diversity.

2. HOW EDUCATION CAN HELP BUILD DIVERSITY.



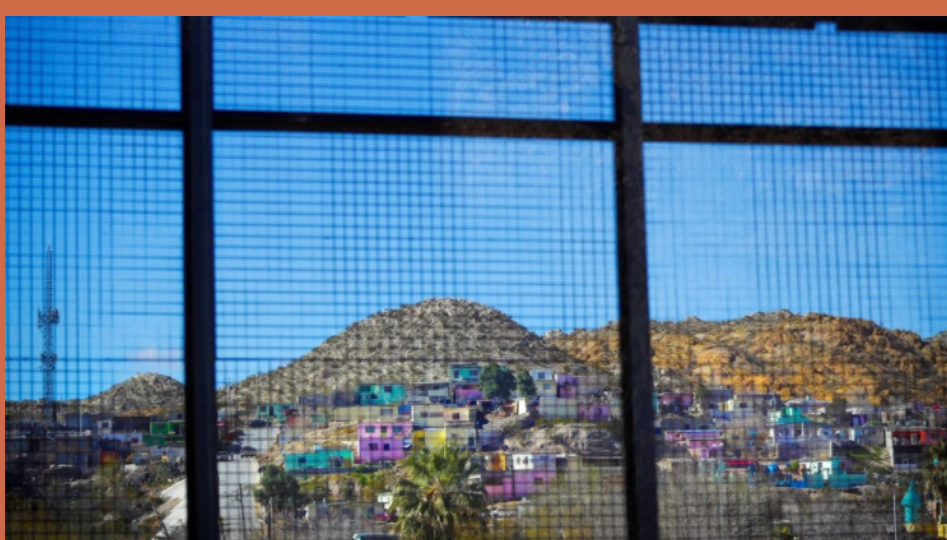
Having access to quality education plays a huge role in how communities collectively develop. In this video, we're trying to understand the various ways education systems & campus life has been designed for those with more privileged backgrounds and how we can empower more students.

3. OUR ECOHISTORY IS RACIST.



We hope you understand by now that our history largely informed the structures we exist in today and was the foundation with which our country was built. There has never been a dismantling of these systems. We need partners to actively explore how their communities, organizations, and personal actions uphold white supremacy through racist policies and the mere existence of status quo.

4. DOES ECO RACISM STILL EXIST TODAY?



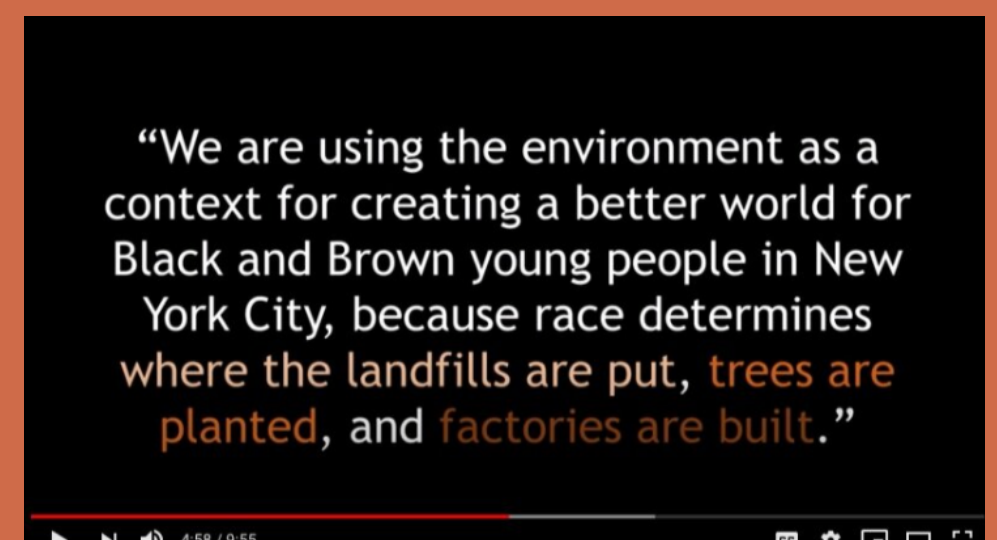
We understand the difficulty of facing the many ways in which people attempt to justify and perpetuate racism today. However, articles like these are so important. This article helps paint the minds of people who wrongly justify eco-racism.

5. PRESERVING CULTURE HAS GLOBAL VALUE.



Preserving culture means preserving thousands of ways of seeing the world. A professor of human dimensions of natural resources gives examples of how deep rooted relationships with nature have historically built roadmaps for healing & prosperity. After watching this video, you can personally explore the many vital indigenous practices being threatened by white supremacy in the form of capitalism.

6. WHY IS SUSTAINABLE DIVERSITY IMPORTANT?



In this video, we're given an idea of why diversity in sustainable conversations matters through a brief introduction to environmental justice and the painting of pictures some never get to see.

THE WORK IS NEVER DONE.

This is simply a starting point. Your digital downloads don't have to end here. You can continue downloading on the daily by following people who talk about the intersections of sustainability x diversity as it pertains to justice, education, nature, and more. Our goal is to help provide you with resources along the way as you continue your journey.

TAKE THE PLEDGE.

We're excited to bring together resources and grow this platform so that IE can serve everyone in the sustainability community. And we hope you'll continue to follow along as we dive into more topics that intersect with environmentalism. Take a pledge today to bring these learnings into your own life - whether that's by speaking up and being an ally, or by following and promoting the incredible work of intersectional activists. Thanks for your support in creating a more inclusive planet.