



ABANDONING ECO-ABLEISM AND EXCLUSIVE LITERATURE

A journalism portfolio by Andrea Salvador
Writing Fellow of the I-CREATE YOUTH Fellowship

Table of Contents

Elaborating on Eco-ableism	2
Extreme Events, Inequitable Impacts	5
‘Cli-Fi’: Our Planet’s Fate on Paper	9
The Haunting of Historically Ableist Fiction	12
The Front Lines of Environmentalism: Interviews with Organisations and Magazines	15
Changemaking Through Words: Interviews with Literary Magazines	32
Resources	43
Acknowledgments	58

Elaborating on Eco-ableism

The hunch that human activities could alter the Earth's atmosphere first came about in the 1800s, yet the gravity of climate change only made headlines in 1988 — roughly one hundred years later. Since then, the damage we have subjected our planet to has been given much-deserving attention, discourse, and penance manifested in accords such as the Montreal Protocol, Kyoto Protocol, and Paris Agreement. Despite these endeavors, individuals have joined in the fight to offset climate change's detrimental effects: biodiversity loss, greater health risks, diminishing water quality, and more extreme and prolonged weather catastrophes. Inspiring environmentalists including David Attenborough and Greta Thunberg have inspired everyday people, not just policymakers, to focus on conserving resources instead of unnecessarily consuming them. Unfortunately, while many people integrate eco-friendliness into their lifestyles with a fervent passion, their choices aren't always inclusive. When environmentalists pressure others to act the same way, regardless of their background, they fuel the fire of eco-ableism.

Ableism is the discrimination disabled people experience due to the world's systems and practices that inherently favor and cater to non-disabled people. With this in mind, eco-ableism is its environmentally-charged extension; as such, it occurs when reforms that concern the Earth's wellbeing are decided and mandated without disabled people in mind. Sustainable lifestyles are championed as the ideal way to reduce our personal and community-wide impacts on climate change, albeit without considering the challenges that disabled people encounter when adapting to them. Environmentally-friendly habits are approved and urged to become the norm, yet the impossibility for disabled people to practice them remains ignored. Similar to the way discrimination such as racism, ageism, and religious prejudice cause unequal suffering to a select group of people, the disabled community is harmed by the default thoughts and actions of the non-disabled — and for eco-ableism, when these are surmised and performed for the planet's sake. In the fight to save our rapidly deteriorating Earth, the frontline and celebrated solutions to enhance sustainability and resiliency are all convenient for the privileged and non-disabled. This leaves the disabled community on the sidelines, unable to actively and wholly participate despite their desire to do so. The lack of equitability and inclusivity that arises from these experiences is eco-ableism, making environmental activism flawed.

At its core, environmentalism is an admirable movement. It aims for greater awareness of the devastating and worsening effects of human activities on the planet, with advocates manifesting this objective through apparent protests like strikes and marches, alongside more subtle measures like dishing out reusables and swapping cars for bikes. Concern for the environment has become widespread; most people worldwide consider climate change as a 'major threat' in their respective countries. 'Reduce, reuse, recycle' has turned into a motto. Single-use plastics are stigmatized. Flight shame and the meat paradox have dictated our choices. While environmentalism is an undoubtedly strengthening movement, so is the pressure to participate in it wholly — to the point a phenomenon called 'eco-shaming' has been coined to hold polluters accountable. As campaigns to save the environment continue to be promoted as a standard and uniform approach — with "easy," "simple," and "no-brainer" changes to become environmentally-friendly peddled — disabled people are rejected and even criticized for their inability to commit to the movement fully.

While it may not be apparent to non-disabled people, eco-ableism is entrenched in many environmentalist decrees. Bans have been proposed and enacted to eradicate single-use plastics due to their inability to decompose, yet people with mobility impairments or chronic pain rely on plastic straws to drink beverages. Baby wipes assist disabled people in maintaining proper hygiene, especially when going for showers proves to be a difficult and dangerous task, although many desire to eliminate baby wipes as they contribute to fatbergs — fat and solid waste that accumulate in sewers. Pre-cut, portioned, and packaged food is frowned upon for contributing to waste buildup and pollution, even though they prevent pain and offer convenience to disabled people. The dietary needs of disabled people mean sometimes they cannot switch to veganism, which has been hailed as an effective way to reduce personal carbon footprints. People with visual impairments might find 'going paperless' and relying on digital screens instead as an impossibility. Simultaneously, those with mobility-related disabilities might be unable to tend to their own produce gardens. While useful in reducing accumulated waste due to menstruation, reusable menstrual cups and period-specific underwear require dexterity, muscle strength, and the upkeep to clean them, which some disabled women struggle with. Overall, converting to a sustainable lifestyle isn't as straightforward as environmentalism suggests. The items and

practices that non-disabled people can afford to do away with are instrumental in disabled people's lives — and if this notion continues to be unrealized, eco-ableism will be perpetuated.

Eco-ableism is an exceedingly prevalent and complex form of discrimination that many non-disabled people still need to come to terms with, as it is concealed in the shadows of environmentalism. Regrettably, similar to other prejudices the world continues to battle with, eradicating eco-ableism doesn't have a methodical solution or a blueprint of steps to take. Manufacturers and brands must hire disabled people and communicate with their disabled buyers, to produce and design products that are environmentally advantageous while also suitable for disabled people to use. Environmental organizations and advocates need to collaborate with disability groups, to ensure calls for a better care for our environment acknowledge disabled people's places in fighting against climate change. Non-disabled individuals should do their part to educate others about the harmful effects of exclusive product and service bans or reforms, while jointly inviting disabled friends and family members to share their own perspectives.

Sustainable shifts based on the preferences of non-disabled people shouldn't be the sole method to reach a zero-waste lifestyle. Disabled people shouldn't be subjected to further shame and guilt for being unable to wholly participate in the fight for climate justice, specifically in the ways non-disabled people deem them. In our race to save our planet and reverse our endangering actions, we can't run to the finish line at breakneck speed — we need to ensure everyone gets to join the race, too.

Extreme Events, Inequitable Impacts

The future has largely been uncertain, though in some ways predictable and cyclical, giving credence to the statement: “History repeats itself.” As human activities continue to aggravate the environment, this routine predictability is slowly withering away. Gone are the days of expertly stocking up for mild typhoons or tiding over timed seasonal droughts. Nowadays, nations brace themselves for temperamental weather events that only seem to grow more destructive and frequent, attributed to global temperatures topping all-time highs. An estimated 150,000 deaths are caused annually by drastic weather conditions, yet the number nor the fate aren’t equalizers. Most of these deaths and accompanying disasters occur in developing nations, despite being unable to sustain and defend themselves against climate change. Vulnerable populations — the impoverished, homeless, elderly, racial minorities, to name a few — experience the brunt of climate change’s consequences due to their disadvantaged positions, opportunities, and connections in society. One example of a vulnerable population is the disabled community, and they experience erratic weather events much more intensely and dangerously than non-disabled people.

Here are four extreme weather-associated occurrences that have wreaked havoc in recent years and how disabled people have been disproportionately affected by them:

1. Wildfires

Wildfires have naturally occurred in natural environments throughout history, yet global warming has rigged its variables to make this unplanned weather event occur more often and substantially. Higher temperatures fan wildfire flames, therefore enabling the snow to melt quickly, drying out soils and leaves faster, and amplifying droughts. These are components for wildfire disasters, which is why more swaths of land succumb to fire each year, leading to greater emissions of carbon dioxide and adverse losses in biodiversity.

The smoke produced by wildfires is hazardous for disabled people with accompanying respiratory impairments, particularly those who need ventilators to assist in breathing. Excessive inhalation of smoke can induce chest pain, shortness of breath, and asthma due to the harmful

particles and gases that comprise the substance — yet these effects are aggravated alongside an existing respiratory condition. Fires also travel quickly, at 6 mph in forests and 14 mph in grasslands, which can be exacerbated by the land's slope. To escape unscathed, one needs to have speed, agility, and clear access to paths towards safe shelters. Given this, people with chronic illnesses and mobility difficulties may struggle to evacuate. Furthermore, those with sensory disabilities may also be unable to pinpoint the wildfire's source and speed, putting them at risk of greater harm.

2. Drought

When areas fail to experience normal precipitation in the form of rain or snow, droughts are in store for the region's residents. Droughts span periods between weeks to decades, lessening soil moisture, damaging water-reliant crops, and sparking water shortages during their lengthy courses. As more greenhouse gases reach the atmosphere, temperatures increase, and moisture evaporates from bodies of water. This cycle has caused more enduring droughts in recent years, forcing people to survive and shift their lifestyles to accommodate uncomfortably dry conditions.

To cope with the water shortage and food crisis caused by droughts, rationing becomes prevalent. This poses complications for disabled people who cannot easily collect or conserve water given motor and sensory difficulties and require adequate water for proper sanitation. Furthermore, satisfactory nutrition strengthens immunity and reduces the disease susceptibility of disabled people, specifically those struggling with muscle weakness or weight management. Due to drought, food options may be limited and scarcely prepped, causing additional challenges for people with physical disabilities, given the rigorous steps involved in selecting and preparing meals. Beyond resource scarcity, the drylands cultivated by drought become havens for wildfires. Without enough water to extinguish them, wildfires can become notoriously tough to stop, leaving disabled people exposed to their harmful effects until these wildfires are suppressed.

3. Floods

Regrettably the most recurrent natural disaster, floods submerge typically dry land with excess water. Floods are often associated with other weather events, such as rapid rainfall,

melting snow, and offshoots of storm surges incited by hurricanes and tsunamis. Due to intemperate amounts of water, soils become oversaturated, crops drown, and seep into — or worse, sweep away — properties such as homes, buildings, and farms. Water-borne diseases like typhoid fever, leptospirosis, and cholera become widespread. If water remains stagnant, it becomes the ideal breeding ground for mosquitoes, enabling them to transmit fatal viruses such as malaria and dengue.

Many non-disabled people seeking shelter from flooded houses can easily be transported to drier land via rescue boats. Yet, boarding and riding boats pose complications for people with mobility impairments. Those with communication-related disabilities may also encounter challenges in signaling these boats in the first place, or be unable to measure and report the extent of flooding in their homes. Power outages mean disabled people cannot rely on electronic devices or equipment to assist them in navigating around their households. Physically-disabled people cannot simply swim or climb to escape rising water, increasing their chances of entrapment or drowning. As floods can rise at unforeseeable paces, and its water recedes at varying spans — anytime between hours to weeks — disabled people who require medications, assistance, and electrically-powered devices must play an excruciating waiting game in damaged houses or crowded shelters where they cannot receive the attention they are warranted to.

4. Hurricanes

Going by different names worldwide, hurricanes — also known as tropical cyclones or typhoons — are fueled by the energy of warm ocean waters, eventually forming into low-pressure systems that spell rain and wind upon landfall. Hurricanes often create storm surges and promote inland flooding, while others generate tornadoes and rip currents. With temperatures warming and sea levels rising, hurricanes are becoming more threatening and rampant. While regions globally adhere to specific hurricane seasons, the duration of these periods has been lengthening. As a result, communities experience cruel shocks when hurricanes turn out to be more vicious than forecasted, and more damage incurs due to these lax preparations.

When facing hurricanes, evacuation is key for those living in coastal or flood-prone areas. However, this is not always possible for people with physical disabilities; transportation to safety and emergency shelters are not primarily designed with lifts or space to accommodate those using wheelchairs and ambulation devices. Scheduled and sudden power disruptions become commonplace during a hurricane's landfall, posing obstacles for disabled people who use electrical equipment such as oxygen generators and medication refrigerators and need time to make the necessary arrangements to prepare for these outages in advance. The chances of floods and landslides also increase during hurricanes, requiring people to move quickly and flexibly through mud and debris-ridden paths and rapidly-rising waters — a task that requires more effort and stamina from disabled people than those who are non-disabled, rendering them receptive to injuries.

Beyond the four aforementioned weather events, many other climate change-related occurrences barrel the planet, such as heatwaves, blizzards, and dust storms. No matter the type of event, the consensus rings clear across all reports and accounts following ruinous aftermaths: disabled people need to be included in emergency preparedness plans that anticipate these extreme weather events. Their evacuation and resilience must be assured and fortified through inclusive readiness. Emergency resources, services, and shelters are oftentimes inaccessible, as these temporary fixtures are not adequately equipped to provide disabled people with the urgent care they require. These spaces may also prove to be too noisy and disorderly for those with sensory integration disabilities. Above all, though, disabled people — particularly those with communication impairments — should receive timely information in accessible formats so that they can remain updated and alert. Risk awareness is key to minimizing the damages of environmental disasters, and given the impacts that these catastrophes inflict on disabled people, the community deserves to know as much.

‘Cli-Fi’: Our Planet’s Fate on Paper

The vast expanse of fiction accessible to readers has prompted the formation of genres — categories that divide stories by character tropes, settings, and themes that promise to fulfill certain expectations. Readers looking to follow characters in danger and experience adrenaline turn towards thrillers, while those seeking to transport themselves into the past may reach for historicals. With literary boundaries being tested and perspectives being uplifted, trademark genres have made room for newer, up-and-coming categories. One such genre that is becoming increasingly relevant given the Earth’s weakening state is climate fiction, dubbed ‘cli-fi’ in short.

First coined in 2011 by writer Dan Bloom, the words ‘climate fiction’ were used to describe *Polar City Red*, a novel by Jim Laughter featuring climate refugees in Alaska in 2075. Since then, cli-fi has made strides in the literary world. Well-known authors such as Margaret Atwood and Paolo Bacigalupi have helped add credence to the genre’s popularity while also leaving bookshelf space to introduce readers to novels like *Gold Fame Citrus* by Claire Vayne Watkins (which invites readers to picture a drought-tarnished California) and the *SeaBEAN* trilogy by Sarah Holding (which utilizes time travel as a tool to discover the threats towards global ecosystems). The rise of cli-fi has also enabled backlisted books to resurface, with 2000’s *A Friend of the Earth* by T. C. Boyle (which depicts a collapsed biosphere and features an environmentalist as the main character) making waves alongside 1987’s *The Sea and Summer* by George Turner (which idealizes Melbourne as a flooded wasteland that traps families in poverty). Often set in the faraway future — or lack thereof — cli-fi novels creatively and alarmingly portray ecological disasters, climate change, and global collapses. Based on the ever-growing Goodreads and Amazon shelves, cli-fi continues to swell in the size of authorship and readership, with the world’s first Climate Fiction Festival streamed online from Berlin last December 2020.

Given the damages inflicted onto the Earth are rapidly reaching a point of no return, it’s easy to see why climate fiction has been greeted with so much support and enthusiasm, despite the genre’s bleak subject focus. Cli-fi stories are rooted in the real threat of climate change, which everyone has experienced the effects of — whether it be through a prolonged snowstorm or an unexpectedly long heatwave. The genre allows readers to gain and maintain environmental

awareness, prompting them to imagine scenarios spawned by what-ifs rooted in tangible consequences of resource-depleting and waste-generating activities. Instead of feeding information to readers in the form of graphs, surveys, and academic journal articles that may be inaccessible and feel detached, particularly to the youth, cli-fi delivers this knowledge in an engaging, humanistic manner. By picking up cli-fi books, readers put themselves in the shoes of characters facing devastating ecological perils, which can generate personal discussion on how people in real life will face and struggle with these dangers in the months, years, and decades to come.

In the present, though, cli-fi has been impactful in inciting concern towards climate change. A recent study entitled ‘Environmental Literature as Persuasion: An Experimental Test of the Effects of Reading Climate Fiction’ surveyed 1,294 participants, having them read one of three selected stories, two of which were centered around climate change: “In-Flight Entertainment” by Helen Simpson and “The Tamarisk Hunter” by Paolo Bacigalupi. Respondents who were assigned to either of the cli-fi stories immediately reported greater apprehension about the planet’s fate due to climate change through questionnaires. However, one month later, the respondents’ fervent climate concern had notably lessened, showing the temporary effect of reading cli-fi. The fleeting nature of the respondents’ climate concern is not the genre’s failing, though, or a feature it lacks; the study’s researchers noted that isolated messages are less effective than those shared repetitively — thereby expressing hope of enduring climate concern that is cultivated by consistent exposure to environmentalism, with cli-fi being one outlet to amplify people’s consciousness. This research was published in the journal *Environmental Communication*. Despite being one of the first empirical researches of its kind, it is a huge stride towards empirically proving the benefits of constantly reading and circulating cli-fi, and uplifting it as more than a worrisome pastime.

Another boundary that cli-fi continues to break is the homogeneity associated with typical science fiction. Sci-fi is notoriously known for being dominated by white male voices, on-screen and on the page. In 2014, of the top-grossing speculative fiction flicks, only 2% featured protagonists with disabilities, while only 8% starred protagonists of color. None of these movies featured an LGBTQ+ protagonist. A year later, of the 2,039 speculative fiction stories

published across 63 magazines, a mere 38 were written by black authors. A year later, it was estimated that 75% of science fiction writers were men, which, in turn, caused female characters to seem unrealistic and unrelatable. Thanks to the surge of the #ownvoices hashtag movement — coined by Corinne Duyvis, who sought to highlight diverse authors' works as a bisexual and disabled writer herself — more sci-fi novels such as *The Three-Body Problem* by Cixin Liu and *The Fifth Season* by N.K. Jemisin has been sweeping awards and gaining much-deserved critical acclaim. Cli-fi, on the other hand, has started its growth on the right footing, tackling diversity head-on. The genre hosts stories from all corners of the world, such as Scandinavia, Bengal, and Australia. Its front-and-center authors also have diverse backgrounds; Amitav Ghosh is Indian, Omar El Akkad is Egyptian-Canadian, and Nnedi Okorafor is Nigerian-American. Female writers such as Emily St. John Mandel and Barbara Kingsolver also join the fray. Climate change is a global issue, affecting everyone regardless of their race, sexuality, and religion, making it sensible and realistic for cli-fi to be aware of this and reflect this diversity in its pages.

As an emerging genre, cli-fi has the potential to become even more impactful and diverse — especially since it has started on the right foot thus far. Beyond sparking environmental consciousness, cli-fi has the unique opportunity to delve into how global warming can — and if the world isn't careful, will — affect women, the youth, the elderly, the impoverished, and the disabled. After all, climate change is a universal phenomenon; its effects on marginalized populations should not go unnoticed in fiction, a tool that can help us reflect upon and act in reality.

The Haunting of Historically Ableist Fiction

Literature plays a major role in understanding the values, social norms, and ideologies that governed our historical ancestors. In doing so, we also become attuned to how times have changed since then, discovering the discriminatory nature many historical stories perpetuated, unfortunately overshadowed by popularity and nostalgia. Currently, these inaccurate prejudices are being revealed, with rising diverse authors seeking to dismantle the thrones that biased stories have long been accustomed to sitting on. However, the roots of harmful tales have had enduring effects, shaping our default views towards race, gender, and capability — with the latter the focus of this analysis.

Children are widely regarded as impressionable, newly exposed to the huge world around them and every unique opportunity it offers. With this in mind, children's stories need to be influential and inspiring. Literature catered to their age range has the unique opportunity to give them digestible and engaging information about their culture and those of others, strengthen emotional intelligence, provoke creativity, and lay the groundwork for personality and social skills building. Parents have typically reached for fables and fairy tales to tuck their children under the covers, yet unaware — or worse, unbothered — by the ableism these bedtime stories convey. Villains are often denoted with markers such as crutches, hooks, and scars, walking hunchbacked with uneven or staggering gaits. To punish misbehaving characters, magic spells take away prized abilities or force physical features onto them — which are later decreed as horrendous, given other characters' reactions to their transformations. Once characters overcome obstacles, they are rewarded by having their original, non-disabled features restored. This alteration cues a happy ending, while the wrongdoers are cursed by similarly obvious physical changes, subjected to live the rest of eternity in humiliation.

As children grow older, more often than not, their English, Literature, or Language curricula include reading classics penned centuries ago. Similar to children's literature, classics have merit, too. They thoughtfully engage with timeless human topics, chronicling searches for identity and places in society, struggles for power, and the weight of our interactions and relations with other people and the world around us. They have stood the test of time, passed

down and inherited from generation to generation, proving classics' ability to strike emotions and ponder in readers. Regardless of their enduring captivation, a more critical eye turned towards the classics can reveal the startling ableism these stories contain. Doused with pity, disabled characters in classics are symbols of meekness and piety, relegated to victimized positions — assuming they are not written to be the exact opposite: connotations of evil and hostility. Bedridden characters are considered a source of mystery or shame, with some recovering in unexplained and astounding manners by the story's conclusion. If they aren't cured, they either die as martyrs or become institutionalized: tragic fates that are skimmed over or utilized to propel non-disabled protagonists' journeys further.

Beyond the constraints of educational literature, ableism permeates mainstream fiction. Science fiction and fantasy have rightly been criticized for ableism; in far-flung worlds and future civilizations, disabilities are considered stains to society that have been eradicated through supernatural powers or painstaking eugenics. In horror stories, disabled characters are banished to asylums or coerced to positions of crazed murderers that escape "madhouses" — upholding the harmful notion that mental illness is threatening. Romantic fiction also takes the short end; if even the protagonists of the story, disabled characters' significant others are lauded as morally righteous and saintlike for overlooking their love interests' disabilities. Even contemporary stories harbor ableist language; words such as "lame," "crazy," and "insane" have been used to describe characters. Sometimes, disabled characters become sources of 'comic relief,' with running gags throughout the story that highlight their disabilities and only their disabilities alone. Covertly ableist, disabilities are also employed as plot twists to share shocking truths about characters who have been non-disabled all along.

Literature's ableist track record is extremely harmful and disheartening, with today's authors recognizing this and actively working to dismantle the stereotypical and degrading notions of disability that have seeped through these ableist stories' cracks. To promote and continue the circulation of middle grade and young adult novels that portray disabilities realistically — and, to ensure legitimacy, have been "thoroughly vetted by disabled readers" — the Disability in Kidlit Honor Roll was created, featuring several books with accompanying reviews, such as Adam Silvera's *History is All You Left Me*, Holly Black and Cassandra Clare's

The Iron Trial, and Leigh Bardugo's *Six of Crows*. The American Library Association's Schneider Family Book Awards — established to recognize authors and illustrators for "[portraying] the disability experience" — were recently awarded to *Just Ask! Be Different, Be Brave, Be You* by Sonia Sotomayor, *A Song for a Whale* by Lynne Kelley, and *Cursed* by Karol Ruth Silverstein in the categories of young children's group, middle grade, and teen, respectively. Additionally, the very first Berbellion Prize — an award for writers whose "work has best spoken of the experience of chronic illness and/or disability" — was recently awarded to Riva Lehrer, the author of *Golem Girl: A Memoir*. Amit Patel's *Kika & Me*, Abi Palmer's *Sanatorium*, and Sam Mills' *The Fragments of My Father: A Memoir of Madness, Love and Being a Carer* accompanied Lehrer's work in the shortlist. The Berbellion Prize's shortlist contained works published from different presses, a testament to the growing platforms that disabled authors receive. However, to uplift authentic disabled voices, established authors with ableist platforms actively need to be denounced; this is a gap that blogger and reader Amber of *The Literary Phoenix* filled by curating a resource entitled 'Problematic Authors,' which outlines erring authors, their works, and the discrimination found in their writing and/or actions.

As a tool in spreading thoughts and cultures in society, literature has long sustained the ableism deeply entrenched in current times. Nowadays, though, readers and writers alike have cultivated a collective pervading sense of consciousness and intolerance of discrimination, yet there is still a long way to go before ableism is eradicated in every form and genre, swapped with nuanced disability portrayals for books catered to every age range. Thankfully, the writing and publishing industry is willing to put in the hard work. As author Rick Warren hopefully puts it: "We are products of our past, but we don't have to be prisoners of it." By recognizing the flaws of past ableist stories and letting them ignite the need for change, we can steer fiction in a more inclusive, revolutionary direction.

The Front Lines of Environmentalism: Interviews with Organisations and Magazines

Movements cannot form, take shape, or gain even the slightest hint of momentum by being constrained to an individual or a select group of people. Founded on the collective and enduring realization about the Earth's deterioration, environmentalism has become the engaging and change-oriented movement today. Similarly, the push for creative writing that defies a limited and discriminatory view has taken off, in part due to society's growing embracement of diversity. Regardless of these developments bringing positive traction, eco-ableism and exclusivity continue to permeate. This threatens the strength and influence that environmentalism and diverse writing have established, requiring greater discourse and consequent action. This curated interview article brings together founders, leaders, and members of environmental organizations and magazines worldwide, with varying initiatives and focuses. Through this gathering, they share their personal and/or collective thoughts regarding eco-ableism and the impact of diverse writing — specifically that which focuses on the environment.

1. In what way/s have you witnessed the power of words to incite social (if possible, environmental) change?

Apurva Iyengar, founder of Youth.ify: To me, Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* is always a great example of the power of words to incite environmental change, and I think it shines a light on how important messaging and language is to the success of the environmental movement. There are ways to make environmental activism fun and inclusive, such as the annual Plastic Free July campaign and ways to make it hard-hitting and emotional, like indigenous activists' powerful words at youth-led climate marches and strikes.

2. How do you believe writing — particularly literature and creative writing — can influence people's perspectives on topics such as environmental issues?

Derin Arat of The Green Voice Project: All of the information we receive — except those that are gained through our own senses — have been filtered by another person's point of view, so

when we read a new piece of literature for the first time, it is nearly impossible for us to be impartial in picking and choosing the facts and leaving out the biases. Therefore language in literature shapes our understanding of the issue as a whole. As for the environmental movement, we have to be especially cautious about how we frame information, as we are writing about an issue of survival. As such, exclusive literature may make people feel like they don't belong in this movement — which is absolutely not true, since we need everyone's help if we want to stop the climate crisis.

Maryam Arshad, editor-in-chief of *Floresta Magazine*: Writing on environmental issues has been — for a notoriously long time — heavily scientific, difficult to read and understand, data-based, and in the form of research papers and reports. As such, people's perspectives on the environment have been limited, and if influenced by anything, it's more than likely it has been from other more accessible and approachable forms of information such as social media, which is especially problematic as we have seen an exponential rise in misinformation, fake news and bigoted and/or biased news reporting. Literature and creative writing reach out to a whole different group, producing writing increasingly accessible and understood. Creativity allows disciplines to intersect and for issues that the environment faces to be brought to light differently. It's an extremely vital tool for communication and allows for a wider reach to groups who may face exclusion from traditional communication methods.

Andrew Blatt, founder of Project Planet A: Literature and creative writing can make people more aware of their own environmental impact in a variety of methods. It's hard to understand how you are impacting the environment, but reading about these topics helps one visualize the effects and their own relationship to them. Literature can be portrayed in a variety of ways, from poetry to articles, tailoring to the different interests of people around the world.

Lucy Hulton, poetry reader of *Floresta Magazine*: People may see points of view not previously accessible. Since not everyone can or wants to read scientific papers, writers can "do the research" for the reader. This is particularly relevant in reference to contemporary African literature, such as Ken Saro-Wiwa, for example.

Jasmine Kaur, founder of Global Initiative: Writing such as literature and creative writing can have a tremendous impact in influencing people's perspectives on topics such as environmental issues. These forms of writing allow writers to fully express their views towards a particular topic in their own way. In addition to informing the audience about a topic, creative writing really allows a writer to voice their opinion towards an issue — for example, environmental issues — and give their audience a different perspective towards the particular issue.

Heizal Nagginda, founder of Climate Operation: Literature is a big contributing influence to people's perspectives on many issues. Given Africa's case, many institutions still do not have access to the Internet, but they do have access to books. So when it comes to creative writing in the form of children's books and basically any literature that explains the current climate crisis, if these books are given to these institutions, the perspectives of so many young people about environmental issues will shift to a mindset of change and action.

EARTH Zine: Writing, with its various forms, often has the ability to convey ideas that can reach people in ways that resonate with them most. Creative literature can discuss topics like environmental and social justice issues with a more personal voice. Writing about lived experiences and creating intimate connections between the writer and reader can appeal to readers in ways that research or informational writing cannot. Telling personal stories pushes readers to make ties back to their own lives, which can help to shift their perspectives on complex issues. With this emotional connection forged, readers may begin to feel more strongly or deepen their current concern about the topics at hand.

3. What negative impacts have you seen when literature has been exclusive (misogynistic, homophobic, transphobic, racist, and especially ableist)?

Derin Arat of The Green Voice Project: There are many examples to give. However since we, ourselves, live in a country with a struggling economy, we can say that many people consider climate change as a relatively "rich people problem." Of course, it isn't easy to think about other issues when you're struggling to make ends meet. Yet the reason for this is largely due to the way the climate crisis has been framed. When we think of climate activists or climate researchers, we

immediately think of people from developed countries — while those who live in under-developed or developing countries will be impacted the most. Many sustainable options such as veganism are idolized, and those who cannot afford to live as such are demonized. When we as an environmental community create spaces that label people badly for their inability to afford sustainable practices, unfortunately, the people who need this movement the most will be pushed away.

Maryam Arshad, editor-in-chief of *Floresta Magazine*: Exclusion comes hand in hand with inaccessibility and reinforces barriers that marginalized groups have faced for a long time. Literature can be heavily biased and feed a certain narrative, and as such, exacerbate issues that groups face, especially those from ethnic minorities, regions outside of the West, and LGBTQ+ communities. Creative literature is definitely something that is noticeably more open and inclusive and is no longer restricted to the more popular forms such as poetry and creative writing. Visual storytelling and mixed media still represent forms of literature. Exclusion isn't limited to one type of literature; it can be seen across mediums, but the negative impacts are the same and are immense. Increased racism can translate into physical acts of racism by perpetuating and blaming individuals through careful and manipulated word choices in literature. Exclusion also appears to overlook the unique needs of certain groups, such as disabled communities.

Andrew Blatt, founder of Project Planet A: There is a lack of opinion and perspective in various aspects of society. Literature taught in public schools is oftentimes written by white males, which leaves out a large range of ethnicities and backgrounds in school. Exclusive literature ignores the perspectives of other people, creating difficulties in the communication of ideas to different people of society.

Lucy Hulton, poetry reader of *Floresta Magazine*: In terms of ableism, teachers get frustrated if a student does not read fast enough or struggles with public speaking. As for classist literature, there is the concept of "high" or "low brow" literature, like how people who read young adult books or comics might be put off literature for good if they are told it isn't "real" reading.

Jasmine Kaur, founder of Global Initiative: I have seen the effects of exclusive literature in our society. In my English class, we were told to write about an event or experience that sparked us to think and question if it was an isolated incident, or something indicative of a larger cultural issue. We were each assigned a classmate's culture critique to do a peer review on. As I read through my assigned culture critique, I found it heartbreaking that even in modern times, society still hasn't changed. My classmate talked about her struggles of having to always validate her culture, whether it was in school or on vacation. What truly caught my eye was when my classmate mentioned in her essay how she stood up for herself and her culture as a Native American by voicing out her opinion about the sugarcoating of historical events, which I completely agree with. Our school systems have a hand in the "sugarcoating of historical events". The majority of the curriculum I learned about Native American history in elementary and middle school was just about "Native Americans and settlers living harmoniously...working together...living happily ever after." Our teachers rarely went into detail about the mass racial genocides and forced assimilations. Exclusive types of literature fail to consider other views on the particular topic, which contributes to the "normal blueprint" that is already embedded in our society. Because of this, people end up seeing one side of the topic. This can also impact future generations. To some degree, parents influence their children, whether that is indirectly or directly. If literature fails to disregard views and instead promote discrimination such as homophobia or ableism, for example, this will influence children as they get older. This cycle then continues, and literature continues to be exclusive towards other groups.

Heizal Nagginda, founder of Climate Operation: I have personally seen the negative impact of literature being exclusive, particularly racist. The Ugandan education system is still largely colonized, so we still read colonized literature in our learning. This has a negative impact because it sets a mindset in a student's mind that black people didn't create or discover anything. It instills an inferiority complex in them, with notions that white people can only save them — and that black people cannot be innovative. I think these are negative effects of literature being exclusive, and it's only after one takes it upon themselves to really seek out inclusive literature that those limiting perspectives they grew up with start shifting.

4. What current environmental issue do you believe needs to be spotlighted, and how much awareness has it been given in writing, to your knowledge?

Derin Arat of The Green Voice Project: I believe that an attitude needs to be highlighted rather than a specific issue. Another reason why the climate crisis is considered a problem that only developed nations have to deal with is that our conversations around it are very centralized on few countries. This, of course, stems from how we have unconsciously normalized many problematic actions in developing countries. Without, in the true sense of the word, making our conversations more culturally diverse, we cannot expect the framing of this crisis to change. We have to start thinking locally first, starting with the questions: "What can I change about my lifestyle?" and "How can I environmentally help out my community?". Rather than judging certain people for their actions, approach with a sense of empathy and inclusivity by asking the question: "I understand your constraints; how can I make you feel more included in this conversation?". When we stop generalizing our own lifestyles on other people with very different lives, stop trying to push a narrative of a non-inclusive single solution onto them, and start approaching them with the knowledge that everyone has a place in this movement, is when we will succeed.

Maryam Arshad, editor-in-chief of *Floresta Magazine*: Environmental issues as a whole need to be placed at the forefront of discussions and communications. More so, they need to be inclusive and involve the individuals who are facing the harshest effects of them, amongst those are Indigenous communities, those in the global South, and Women. The climate crisis encapsulates the multitude of environmental issues that we are seeing unfold at exponential rates. It's tough to miss new updates, greenwashing scandals, negative news, and such daily. It seems writing is still too heavily focused on the negatives and is yet to take a turn towards highlighting innovative, successful, and inclusive practices, which will ensure we are working every day towards a sustainable and equal future. It's crucial to see where the writing is coming from, what sources are publishing them, and who the faces are behind these sources.

Andrew Blatt, founder of Project Planet A: Undoubtedly, climate change is the biggest environmental issue, especially seen through the perspective of Project Planet A. There are so

many components towards tackling climate change, and it is important to address them all cohesively. Unfortunately, climate change has recently been overshadowed by other societal issues right now, seeing a lack of direct focus in media and writing. Although all societal and political issues need to be addressed in order to tackle climate change properly, this is a topic that affects every citizen of the planet with its potentially catastrophic effects, and, therefore, there is no limit to the attention that the issue should be given in writing and media.

Jasmine Kaur, founder of Global Initiative: I believe plastic pollution is one of the current environmental issues that need to be spotlighted more. To my knowledge, I've seen many articles on the topic online. For example, I have seen some of the articles explain this topic, how it affects us, action steps, other countries' efforts, etc. Although this issue has been given awareness through writing, I believe more needs to be done. We are all aware of this issue, yet we still come home with all of those plastic bags from the grocery store or grab that same Aquafina water bottle. Anyone can read an article and get inspired to limit the plastic pollution in their home — but what about the companies that continue to produce plastic? Using plastic has been so normalized in our society that it's become second nature for us. It's hard to truly pay attention to the detrimental side effects that using plastic causes for our environment.

Heizal Nagginda, founder of Climate Operation: The issue of environmental justice and the concept that climate change impacts different groups of people and societies differently, still need to be highlighted. For example, the effects of climate change will affect a rich person differently compared to a poor person. Right now, this topic hasn't been highlighted as much in the literature that I have come across. The books I've read discuss melting ice caps and greenhouse gas emissions, yet they rarely talk about how certain communities suffer from massive air pollution caused by mass industrialization. In totality, environmental justice is a topic that still needs to be highlighted in today's literature.

5. In the fight to save the planet, changes have been proposed by environmentalists that are inherently ableist. How do you think environmentalists can learn to shift their attitudes and promote environmentalism more inclusively?

Derin Arat of The Green Voice Project: Just as it is with the cultural framing of this crisis, we also frame it in a way that excludes people with certain disabilities. Veganism, for example, is a great option if you have the financial means, if you have shops that sell vegan products in your area and if you are physically able to follow. But, it is not a realistic option for everyone. Many people who've suffered, or are suffering, from eating disorders could be impacted negatively by this shaming of non-vegans in the community. The idea that you shouldn't use private transportation often and instead choose to walk or cycle as often as possible can also be inherently ableist. It's not that these ideas shouldn't be promoted, or that not everyone should be expected to obey them. We shouldn't shame people for not taking actions that would negatively impact their lives. This creates an imposter syndrome amongst almost all activists since no one can abide by all sustainability measures. Instead, everyone should be encouraged to take action in however way they can.

Maryam Arshad, editor-in-chief of *Floresta Magazine*: I recently saw a tweet that succinctly stated that the goal we should be working towards is environmental justice, and intersectional environmentalism is the lens through which we need to work towards it. Although intersectional environmentalism is a relatively new term, it encompasses what we need to work for incredibly well. Environmental justice means racial justice, climate justice, indigenous justice, health justice. It means every group has equity. This lens needs to be adopted by everyone to understand the significance of inclusivity and sustainability thoroughly. As mentioned, proposals which are inherently ableist are not uncommon; the conversation needs to be centered on individuals who represent this group, otherwise changes for our future are no longer working towards environmental justice.

Andrew Blatt, founder of Project Planet A: We strongly believe that people have the ability to become more inclusive in their efforts and are learning everyday. Social media and writing allow us to connect with people from a multitude of backgrounds, learning different perspectives and addressing these differences towards a collaborative effort. This aligns with more tips and various information that can support people from a diverse range of social classes, gender, location, etc.

Lucy Hulton, poetry reader of *Floresta Magazine*: We need to move the "attack" from individuals onto corporations, hold them accountable, and have third parties publish their pollution data. For example, if a disabled person needs medicine, and the medicine comes in non-recyclable packaging, the disabled person is not at fault. Rather, it is the company's fault for prioritizing profit above the environment. Governments could grant tax-relief to companies who promote environmental sustainability and can prove that their commitment isn't simply for marketing by showing concrete evidence.

Jasmine Kaur, founder of Global Initiative: All environmentalists advocate for the protection of our environment, so to learn to shift their attitudes and promote inclusively, environmentalists should acknowledge each other's views toward environmental topics.

Heizal Nagginda, founder of Climate Operation: For one, the environmental space should become more understanding. There's this pressure that comes with being an environmentalist. One has to be perfect — for example, be a vegan, never use plastic, and only wear sustainable clothes — and if you don't follow these rules, you're not a true environmentalist. These changes are ableist, and they do not take into account people's physical disparities and one's economic standing. The first change that needs to be done is to make the environmental space more understanding and welcoming to all people. Another thing I believe can shift the mindset of environmentalists to promote a more inclusive environmental space would be to educate themselves. Ironically, many people do not recognize their privilege. It's only after they educate themselves about it, how this privilege is being used against the people that are different from them, and how they can become allies to the less privileged that their attitudes change. Overall, we need to educate ourselves on how to become better individuals who don't promote an exclusive culture.

6. Even though it's nowhere near enough to completely change the face of writing and publishing, we are finally beginning to see great changes in mainstream literature to uplift writers with genuine #OwnVoices work. How do you believe this has positively impacted marginalized populations?

Elane Kim, editor-in-chief of *Gaia Lit*: Up until recently, mainstream literature has excluded crucial voices: the voices of people of color and similarly marginalized populations. However, with the development of technology and social media, more open online platforms for art and literature have been curated. As a result, underrepresented voices have found a home in platforms like our own, and have slowly begun being reflected in mainstream literature — which is a long-awaited development.

Alie McDougall, senior director of The Tomorrow Project: Although I cannot speak for the POC population, I hope that by continuing to uplift historically marginalized people through changes in mainstream literature, the diversification of perspectives will become an inherent part of society in all aspects, including the climate movement.

Aoife McGrath editor-in-chief of *Par Contre*: The #OwnVoices initiative is a great way to bring diversity into literature. It is effortless only to read books from a select group of authors, but this movement uplifts POC authors, helping young children read material they can relate to. This movement is so great as it's really quite easy, and the effects are so massive. A child may be feeling isolated in their current situation, but reading a book by someone they can relate to eases that sense of separation they may be feeling. Furthermore, it allows white children to read a more diverse range of books, preventing people from viewing the world through a single narrative perspective. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie has an incredible TED talk on this subject, titled "The danger of a single story," which truly highlights the positive impacts of the #OwnVoices movement, creating a better, more diversely educated society.

Rebecca of *Sustain Magazine*: Things do not just happen through chance, there is a reason that marginalized groups are underrepresented in the media. It's all about controlling a narrative. If people are not allowed to represent themselves in the media and are instead represented by people who are not part of their community, it is easy for the public, and those who consume the media to hold only one view of that entire community in their minds. And we know that this leads to harmful stereotypes becoming the only way many groups are seen. Uplifting creators from those marginalized groups allows for them to tell their story themselves. It is also important to note that, for example, just one POC on a news team is not enough. Having multiple people

from marginalized groups shows the diversity of opinion and ideas within those communities. On an even broader scale, it is simply important for people to see themselves and their experiences reflected to them through the media.

EARTH Zine: The literature that is most accessible and that society is most exposed to aren't often diverse or inclusive in their perspectives. The lack of narratives written by, or even about, marginalized communities can be extremely damaging to individuals who are a part of these communities. Lack of representation in writing and publishing can make marginalized populations feel unseen and unheard, something that often has lasting impacts on their lives. This absence of diversity can also hinder progress as a society as there is a lack of empathy, respect, and open-mindedness being taught and discussed, especially from a young age. However, as marginalized voices and stories are uplifted and heard, we see an inclusive and equitable society on the horizon. With this shift in mainstream literature towards writing with genuine voices, there is hope for a better future.

Erudite: Marginalized populations now have a voice and opportunities to write about issues that impact them. They can use their voice to educate the non-marginalized populations about issues that affect them. This, in turn, creates a more aware society.

7. With environmental issues becoming more rampant and detrimental, why do you think it would be beneficial for writers to integrate this into their work?

Apurva Iyengar, founder of Youth.ify: With the current state of our planet, I think it's important to realize that being an environmentalist doesn't have to mean dedicating your life and career to environmental work. We need more environmentalists who are writers, nurses, teachers, and business people. We need more everyday environmentalists because this is a battle we can't win without everyone's help.

Elane Kim, editor-in-chief of Gaia Lit: Literature can often be a mirror of behavior, a still image of humanity. To enrich our understanding of the human condition, we cannot be ignorant

of the destruction of nature. Thus, it is deeply important to integrate the lessons of science into the world of literature, to illuminate our faults in a bid to correct and overcome them.

Alie McDougall, senior director of The Tomorrow Project: The Tomorrow Project believes that by implementing environmental education at a young age through various modes, including literature, sustainability and stewardship will become second nature. Those students will then become leaders in their fields and never have to think twice about putting the planet over profit.

Aoife McGrath, editor-in-chief of *Par Contre*: Books, both fiction and non-fiction, are remarkable educational sources. It's as simple as: the more authors discuss the climate crisis, the more people will be aware of it. The danger is that if people only read within their own views — like fueling an echo chamber — they will become very set in their ways and unable to change. If as many writers as possible weave the detriments of climate change into their narratives, even those who may not have picked up a book about environmental issues will have a chance to read and educate themselves.

Rebecca of *Sustain Magazine*: The human aspect of climate change is becoming vitally important. At this point, it is widely recognized that it exists. We have shown the impacts on the environment and animals, but for some people, it might be difficult to make sense of those ideas. Nowadays, we need to start demonstrating how people are affected in tangible ways. It really is quite easy to tie climate change into all aspects of life — this human aspect reminds everyone that climate change will directly affect their lives. Hopefully, this will open even more people's eyes to the urgency of climate change.

Erudite: It helps make readers more aware of environmental issues. Even if they cannot take action against environmental issues, they can still educate others on them.

8. What changes do you believe need to be made for the world to become more sustainable and resilient?

Apurva Iyengar, founder of Youth.ify: For the world to become more resilient and sustainable, the first thing we need to do is put sustainability literacy at the heart of our education systems. We need to equip teachers with the skills and resources they need to ensure that the next generation understands these issues that will never allow them to make the same mistakes as our parents and grandparents have in the past. To me, the biggest change that needs to occur is in our mindsets, and that can only happen through education.

Elane Kim, editor-in-chief of *Gaia Lit*: Art and writing reflect our triumphs and tribulations, as well as showcasing our potential for growth. It is critical to the development of a just, ever-evolving society that change only comes with awareness. A significant problem has to do with the denial of climate change, and the lack of accessibility of knowledge. Thus, education is crucial in fostering awareness and therein change. Resilience is critical to both science and the arts. Continuing to cultivate a global social movement dedicated exclusively to fighting climate change would contribute to protecting a planet that will be called home for generations to come.

Alie McDougall, senior director of The Tomorrow Project: If I could change the world tomorrow, the two things I would pursue regarding climate policy would be to charge the large companies who are responsible for emitting the majority of greenhouse gas emissions and by decarbonizing the industries those companies represent, implementing green job opportunities. Though in the long term, I believe that accessible environmental education is paramount to creating a lasting climate awareness.

Aoife McGrath, editor-in-chief of *Par Contre*: For there to be a future for humans on this planet, change needs to be made extremely quickly to create a sustainable living situation. While there are things you can do personally, such as becoming vegetarian or vegan, not contributing to fast fashion, or using public transport, the onus is on governments to create a lasting future for our planet. It is more important now than ever to vote for governments committed to reducing carbon emissions, searching for alternative energy methods, and aiming to reverse the damage we have caused our earth. If you cannot vote, try signing government petitions on causes you are passionate about, writing to your local government official, or sharing information on your social media.

Rebecca of *Sustain Magazine*: While living more sustainably on a personal level is important, I think that the main way to become more sustainable is holding corporations accountable. In my area, one company owns three polluters, which account for 70% of my area's pollution. In areas near those companies, cancer and asthma rates are higher, and that corporation has not been held accountable for the direct harm it is causing to the people. Personal actions are indeed important, as we have seen the impact trash has had on land and the oceans. However, some people stop there, and forget that policy changes are needed to hold these corporations accountable and face climate change.

***EARTH Zine*:** The incredible point at which we stand within human history is, in our eyes, defined by resiliency. We must collectively adapt our systems to ensure that not only our planet is habitable for us and future generations, but also that the future is sustainable, intersectional, accessible, and equitable. Countless initiatives and technologies are developed on a daily basis, but truthfully, there is no one set path to this better world. We believe an aggregate of changes must be executed including implementing new policies globally, designing clean and renewable energy-based infrastructure, and undergoing a collective paradigm shift. To get closer to the future we want to see, our policies must be designed with everyone on our planet in mind, but especially those historically marginalized. We must also be holding governments, corporations, educational institutions, and other influential bodies accountable. Our infrastructure (housing structures, transportation systems, etc.) must be redesigned to be carbon negative and accessible to all. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, a paradigm shift of our views on nature is a powerful leverage point in bringing about change. If we begin to view ourselves as a part of nature, not the dominant entity over it, the current systems we operate under are severely challenged and we are left with no choice but to redesign our current "normal".

Erudite: One change is to control the population. Educating people on birth control, improving sex education, and providing family planning will help reduce countries' overpopulation. This prevents a strain on oil, which ultimately helps the environment since fewer resources are being removed from the Earth. Furthermore, universal education is important, as education plants the seeds to a better world. Through education, people become more aware of a balanced diet, gain skills for jobs, and become more comfortable with technology. This impacts a country's GDP

since more people can become employed, which helps the world become more sustainable and resilient.

9. In relation to the previous question, how can these changes be implemented inclusively to ensure disabled people are incorporated into the conversation / without inciting more eco-ableism?

Apurva Iyengar, founder of Youth.ify: I think eco-ableism is by far one of the most overlooked detriments of the environmental movement. The anti-straw movement, in particular, is often incredibly insensitive to those who need straws at restaurants to be able to enjoy a meal. I think accessibility really needs to be at the heart of environmental work. Like I mentioned earlier, we can't do this without everyone's support, so we need to make the movement an inclusive and accessible place to succeed. A big part of this is making educational materials and resources available in various languages and formats. Currently, a lot of educational content is primarily in English, which makes it inaccessible to a large portion of the world, and is often only presented in one format, be that a video, article, or podcast, that can make it more time-consuming and tiresome for a disabled person to learn about a given issue. We need to create resources that can be viewed, listened to, read, and understood by disabled people and non-English speakers alike.

Elane Kim, editor-in-chief of *Gaia Lit*: Too often have marginalized voices been actively suppressed or excluded altogether. Again, it is extremely important to create a borderless space to foster open conversation, to give a voice to those unheard and a platform for those unseen.

Alie McDougall, senior director of The Tomorrow Project: The most important factor in managing a smooth transition to a sustainable economy would be to have all voices represented and heard. Green jobs have the opportunity to employ people of all different backgrounds with no geographic limitations. As for environmental education, it is paramount that all students have access to climate curricula.

Aoife McGrath, editor-in-chief of *Par Contre*: Environmental activism must be intersectional. I have recently seen non-disabled people shaming disabled people for using single-use plastics,

such as straws or plates, without considering that it is necessary for some disabled people to use them. This act of discrimination creates an air of exclusivity around the climate movement, which needs to be avoided at all costs. Environmental activism is for everyone, and it is important to create an atmosphere where everyone feels included. While plastic straws can be damaging to the environment, they are not the biggest issue we face. We must prioritize our activism and make sure we are not discriminating against anyone in the process.

Rebecca of *Sustain Magazine*: As I mentioned previously, it is important to include all voices in the conversation. Climate justice is about facing climate change through an intersectional lens. Therefore, I think that recognizing that sustainability looks different for everyone is needed. Some people cannot go vegan because of nutrition. Some people do not have access to good public transportation in their city. Some people cannot go plastic free because they cannot afford the more expensive products. And eco-ableism is a huge aspect of climate justice that many people do not think about. Therefore, recognizing that being sustainable in people's personal life looks different from person to person is so important. There is no gatekeeping in the climate justice movement. Everyone and everything is affected by it, so we need to value everyone's perspective. This is why stressing institutional changes is needed. Not only do we need policy changes to hold companies accountable for their contribution to climate change — with these contributions being much larger than any one person's — but policy changes to help those who are the most affected by climate change. This includes low-income communities, whose neighborhoods are closer to polluters because the land is cheaper. This also includes disabled people, whose health conditions are exacerbated by climate change. This is why we must include everyone in the conversation.

***EARTH Zine*:** Combating ableism in the environmental movement is an integral step in ensuring a sustainable future that is inclusive of and equitable for all. Governments, corporations, educational institutions, and other influential bodies must begin to center disabled narratives in their work. When disabled voices are uplifted and heard, it will become clear that many policies and practices meant to further sustainability are viable ways of life only for non-disabled individuals (i.e. the ban on plastic straws). We must understand that policies cannot be made to be “one size fits all” and continue to educate ourselves and each other to attack

ignorance. Recognizing that disability liberation not only benefits disabled individuals, but also non-disabled individuals, pushes for a shift in the thinking and practices of the bodies that have influence over society. This, however, should not matter for society to care about eco-ableism, as, it shines light on the crucial need to include and listen to more disabled voices in the conversation of sustainability and environmental justice. It is not enough to simply invite disabled individuals to the table — we must begin to build a new table.

Erudite: We need to ensure everyone can access education, including disabled folks.

Each environmental organization and magazine that so graciously and unabashedly shared their ideas are at the forefront of promoting inclusive environmentalism and/or writing. Their distinctive hopes, concerns, and suggestions on how to battle against eco-ableism and include the writing environment have made for an instrumental and provoking discussion. Moving forward, we should remember that we are not isolated in striving for a more inclusive world — right in front of our very eyes and also on paper. If this interview indicates who joins us in this mission, we shouldn't worry at all — and instead, feel empowered.

Changemaking Through Words: Interviews with Literary Magazines

Literary magazines make up an integral cornerstone of the writing world. Their variations — emerging or established, in print or online, poetry or prose-focused, themed or unthemed — enable writers to find one for their work to call home. In turn, readers are never at a shortage of discovering writings that inspire or provoke. Beyond publishing, though, many literary magazines are active and prominent in promoting social issues, recognizing their unique platform and subsequent responsibility to wield it properly. This curated interview assembles founders, editors, and members of literary magazines that are centered around inclusivity and accountability. Their daunting yet crucial missions to publish diverse writing, reinforce reader and writer consciousness, and retreat from harmful depictions of discrimination such as ableism in the written word are given center stage.

1. What makes diverse writing and publishing so important today?

Emma Chan, founder, and editor-in-chief of *The Hearth*: Diverse writing and publishing, especially BIPOC or LGBTQ+ designated spaces, is so important in celebrating our differences and our individuality instead of encouraging people to fit in. This is particularly relevant for the teen or young adult spaces, since hearing voices like your own in writing sends such a powerful message to those struggling with their identity. It reminds them that they're not alone, that they can be heard, and that they can pay this forward someday. Diverse writing on various topics also subverts the typical single-story that may exist in several communities.

Lauren and Adi of *Intangible Magazine*: Writing is an incredibly powerful tool. It allows us to express ourselves — how we feel, what we think, what makes us sad or angry or scared. By sharing these experiences, we're able to relate to and learn from others in a way that isn't replicated in any other media. This means that a collection of diverse writing— truly deep-level, diverse writing —has the potential to unite us during a time where we've never been more divided.

Renares of *The Vast Sky*: Well, the most obvious reason is that it boosts marginalized or suppressed voices that need to be heard. However, diverse writing not only creates an environment that uplifts voices but also grants more freedom and liberty to writers. Due to the restriction of topics and ideas that comes with literary education (for example: an essay on a certain book) many experience a general dislike towards writing. Opening up the idea of diverse writing, or writing what you want to write, creates a welcoming surrounding to writers. This, in turn, gives more opportunity to a wider spectrum of writers that want their voices, opinions, and ideas heard.

Alana Saltz, editor-in-chief of *Blanket Sea Magazine*: For too long, we've had an emphasis on a limited amount of perspectives, primarily ones coming from privileged groups. That lack of diversity in publishing is harmful to marginalized populations who would benefit from more awareness and empathy in our society. Publishing diverse writing with the goal of advocacy and awareness-building is incredibly important right now, especially because there's so much ableism, medical bias, and lack of research and funding. The more non-disabled people can see and understand those issues by reading about lived experiences, the more likely they will be to care and help fight for equality and change for us.

Jhermayne Ubalde, founder, and editor-in-chief of *Say It In Color*: Diverse writing and publishing are so important as it gives back to all of the underappreciated and underrepresented cultures in our world today. It is so valuable to acknowledge and celebrate the existence of people from all walks of life (all races, genders, sexualities, etc.) and remind them that they do not need to change to fit the ideals seen in much of mainstream media. It also inspires the next generation to be more accepting of others.

***Limeoncello Magazine*:** Everyone has a story to tell, but for much of history, not everyone has had the ability to tell their own stories. Even today, as accessible as it has become, the publishing world is still very white, allocishet, neurotypical, and non-disabled. "Diverse" stories are still considered more valuable when coming from white cishet voices. That's why diverse writing is so important, and promoting such writing is as well.

Morpho Magazine: We believe that representation serves as an umbrella term for all the reasons that diverse writing and publishing are so important today. The outcome of representation in the publishing industry is two-fold: readers and consumers of media see themselves represented in the content, as well as in the individual who wrote it, and the creator can connect with a common community. Additionally, diverse writing sheds light on stories that often go untold. There is power in diverse storytelling: stories lead to knowledge, and knowledge leads to action.

The Giving Room Review: It's vital that we uplift a diverse range of voices and provide publishing opportunities to these communities because they have been historically silenced while white, cis, straight men have always been prioritized. The Giving Room Review is dedicated to creating a space in the publishing industry to represent these silenced voices specifically. I think the question shouldn't focus so much on what makes diversity in the literary world important today. Rather, it should be more pointed at asking how these voices have been devalued by the industry today and every other day, and how we can take progressive steps towards decolonizing and diversifying the industry. Working to provide accessible opportunities to marginalized communities means we're up against a patriarchal system that will do anything to shut us out, so taking care of ourselves and our community is essential to having the ability to spend so many volunteered hours dedicated to creating this space. TGRR wants to see a world where every publishing house inherently accepts our mission—that should be the norm.

2. How do you think environmental writing can help bring more attention to current and pressing environmental issues?

Emma Chan, founder, and editor-in-chief of The Hearth: I think that most people have a general understanding of overarching environmental issues like global warming, climate change, and rising seas, but there are lots of other issues that affect our environment, our lives, and our worlds in ways that are just as important, such as the amount of plastic in the sea or the effect of human intervention on wildlife. Environmental writing, especially those that merge fact with opinion, can be really beneficial to highlighting lesser-known issues and reiterating the importance of concrete change on large-scale environmental issues.

Lauren and Adi of *Intangible Magazine*: Similar to our previous response, writing is a form of an emotional appeal. Environmental writing — with strong characters and compelling plots — allows someone to not only be told about current environmental issues but to experience them. This forces us to acknowledge and face these pressing issues, which is imperative at the moment.

Renares of *The Vast Sky*: I believe that environmental writing, just like writing about any issue, is such an important and crucial way to get people's attention. With so many people trying to gain attention for certain issues, I believe there is no better way to do so through writing. With many distrusting news broadcasters, especially ones with such obvious biases, it's hard to understand and perceive the actual issues at hand — from news about marginalized communities to environmental problems. While there are obviously biased writers who seek to persuade others towards their opinions, many officials can also inform the public of the real environmental issues at hand. This isn't to say that articles and editorials are more trustworthy than your everyday news, but rather that there are much more research and in-depth details that create less of a bias, and more of an informative voice of reason, when it comes to writing.

Jhermayne Ubalde, founder, and editor-in-chief of *Say It In Color*: I think environmental writing can help spread the urgent message to protect the environment in a much more accessible way. It is all good and well to share facts and statistics on the impact we have on the environment. Still, the realization of this impact's scale is much more profound if writing is used as a medium to persuade, inspire, and emotionally move us.

***Limeoncello Magazine*:** The climate crisis is the greatest crisis humans are currently facing, yet much of the conversation surrounding it, especially in the US, makes the crisis feel like a danger to come that we must prevent. Environmental writing can make it clear that the danger is here, now, and it is most present in the most marginalized faces among us. It will not present itself like a major apocalyptic event, which is how the narrative has been framed for a while (think films like *2012*). The climate crisis presents itself in Texas freezing out its power and water, and the deadly flood in Northern India caused by a melted glacier earlier this February. Environmental writing can help people understand that these are not unlinked tragic events. They are the results

of the climate crisis that is unfolding before us. These stories can push people, especially those in power, to greater action and demonstrate the urgency with which we all must act.

Morpho Magazine: Writers have the unique opportunity to add a human interest angle to pressing environmental issues, which can at times become quite technical for the average reader. Environment writers should ask themselves: “How do we mix environmental issues with those who live in those environments the most?”

The Giving Room Review: I think environmental writing is truly at the crux of environmental awareness and education. One of the best ways to spread critical information is to write about it — whether it's a scientific paper about climate change research or a blog post about intersectional environmentalism. In today's political climate, so many issues are competing to make headlines, so it's important that environmental writing stays current and relevant. A trend I've seen lately is that larger bodies of writing will be distilled into simple, easy-to-digest social media posts, which I think helps expand reach and accessibility. But of course, it all starts with writing thoughtfully and thoroughly.

3. What advice can you give to writers who want to write more inclusively and ensure their writing helps, not harms, marginalized identities?

Emma Chan, founder, and editor-in-chief of *The Hearth*: My biggest piece of advice is always to write what feels true to you. As a side note, this includes writing from an #OwnVoices perspective. In general, I would try to stay away from writing from an identity that doesn't belong to you, or seek the guidance of someone who does identify that way to make sure you're not perpetuating harmful stereotypes or a very singular, one-sided story. That being said, allyship and uplifting marginalized voices, including one's own, are so important in this day and age. Tell your truth in a way that feels right to you. Show us a side of you that the world's never seen before.

Lauren and Adi of *Intangible Magazine*: Try and portray the world around you accurately in terms of minority representation. Seek to not only do research, but also to question and talk to people with experience with the marginalized identities you want to explore.

Renares of *The Vast Sky*: First of all, do your research — from my experience of running *The Vast Sky*, I've seen writers who have done tons of research on a topic to inform the general public, to writers who provide more opinionated and thoughtful ideas into their pieces. With that being said, obviously, writers who do their research tread more carefully around marginalized identities. It's a simple yet commonly overlooked step to do heavy research over a certain topic rather than go off what you've seen or have heard of. Next, see both views. Another very overlooked step in writing pieces, specifically nonfiction or informational ones, is to understand both views before discussing a topic that can unintentionally harm a certain marginalized identity. Furthermore, think about the restriction of topics. Specifically in fictional writing, it is important to keep a very specific idea for how you want to represent this marginalized identity. Examples are race (your character is Asian — what specific ethnicity are they? How does this affect their home life, social life? etc.) or religion (your character is Muslim — what type of Muslim are they? How are they with their religion? etc.) This once again goes hand-in-hand with the importance of research — you have to understand and form a solid idea of your marginalized identity and then do thorough research. Finally, be careful with how you inform. In many situations, where people try to talk about a certain marginalized identity, they unintentionally seem to be talking for these people or talking over these people. Writers have to be aware of how their pieces may come across and speak about these people and their issues, shed light on these issues, and inform the public about what is going on. If you aren't a part of the marginalized identity, then it is incredibly important to not only do your research, but also to consider how your own words may do the exact opposite of your intentions.

Alana Saltz, editor-in-chief of *Blanket Sea Magazine*: If you're going to write about a population you're not part of, first ask yourself whether you're the right person to tell that story or whether it would be better to promote people with lived experience doing that kind of work already. If someone does decide to write about a marginalized group or wants to include diversity

outside of their own experience, they need to have sensitive readers from that group review the work to make sure it isn't harmful or perpetuating problematic stereotypes.

Jhermayne Ubalde, founder, and editor-in-chief of *Say It In Color*: Do your research! Speak to people from those marginalized groups, and avoid stereotyping or generalizing. Also, be wary of writing about issues outside of your own experience. If you want to be more inclusive towards, say, the Asian community when you are not Asian, it is good to include Asian characters in your writing (while avoiding tokenism!) - but probably not as good to write specifically about the experience of being Asian, as you are speaking over those marginalized voices who should be given the opportunity to tell their own stories.

***Limeoncello Magazine*:** The first thing a writer wanting to write more inclusively should do is ask: “Can I do this story justice?”. Sometimes the answer is no, and that's okay. Wanting to see more inclusive writing is a wonderful thing, but consider uplifting marginalized writers' voices before jumping ahead to write their stories for them. Also, realize that writing a marginalized identity takes more than just creating a character. It takes a great amount of research to write outside of your own experiences. Oftentimes, the representation of marginalized groups can feel watered down, and the characters and stories can include microaggressions that the writer is not aware of. This is usually due to a lack of research. One can create more inclusive stories, but it takes preparation, such as using — paid! — sensitivity readers, to ensure that the stories are truly inclusive rather than just caricatures of different identities.

***Morpho Magazine*:** Criticism is your friend, and not just criticism of your grammar and punctuation usage, but most importantly of your representation of marginalized communities. Note that it is just as harmful to leave out marginalized communities in a narrative that they are intrinsically tied to as it is to write about them in a misleading way. Additionally, don't fall prey to the egotist culture that surrounds the writing industry. Remember that you as the writer are not on the receiving end of your work; rather, your audience is. Learn as much as you can about marginalized communities, especially those you do not identify with, and let your writing be a byproduct of that learning.

The Giving Room Review: This is a really great question! It's important to come to our work and specifically ask: “Is the product I've just created damaging in any way? And if so, who is it hurting?”. If your writing is hurting a marginalized community, this needs to be addressed before publication. As members of a patriarchal society, everyone is impacted in some capacity by its damaging standards and ideals, so it's okay to make mistakes, but it's how you notice and rectify these mistakes before the damage is done that is incredibly important. Regarding inclusivity, it really depends on the context of the work, but no matter what, even if your novel is not actively addressing, let's say, race or gender or class, I can't imagine that someone would want to read a book if every written voice sounds the same. That sounds boring! Our voices are one of the clearest reflections of our identities: it's how we think, how we feel, how we sound, and how we interact with the world that creates a narrative worth telling. Even in the absence of voice, that speaks volumes. But you can't have a novel or a piece of work that has no voice; otherwise, you really have no work. In every piece of art, there is a voice that can be contrived, and the more specific that voice is articulated by the creator, the less likely it is to be misconstrued. But this brings up another important aspect of inclusivity, which is ensuring the accuracy of your portrayed communities, especially if they are marginalized. Some of the worst damage that can be done is lazily doing the work and inaccurately portraying a voice that is already, every day, being misconstrued and challenged by our predominantly patriarchal world that's been specifically built to enact this type of damage. If you're working on something and you're worried that the voices in your project aren't diversified, then they're probably not. Remember to take your time, do the research, and keep those key questions in mind.

4. What type of future will be in store for us, when ableism — especially eco-ableism — is eradicated?

Emma Chan, founder, and editor-in-chief of *The Hearth*: Obviously a more inclusive, accepting, and unified community. Of course, environmental issues are pressing, and small steps, like banning plastic straws, are a step towards progress, but we need to examine our biases and make sure we are making reforms that benefit all instead of a privileged few. I think when we end up eradicating ableism, it'll allow us to create more universal solutions and don't just treat

surface problems about the environment while simultaneously perpetuating damaging social inequality.

Lauren and Adi of *Intangible Magazine*: Disabled people often have unique perspectives and ideas about the world as a result of the challenges they face and have to overcome. If they are included in environmental causes, while taking into account individual physical or mental limitations, innovative strategies that allow more diverse groups to participate could be more easily implemented.

Renares of *The Vast Sky*: I think the future in store for us would be a future where everyone is aware of how their efforts to help the environment aren't attainable for everyone else to do. With that said, the future in store for us would definitely be a boost forward in the movement to help the environment be better and healthier. The idea of eradicating ableism would not only be a big step as a society; it would also be a huge step towards living in a healthier world. The removal of eco-ableism would mean that society has become more aware of the defects in their contribution to creating a better environment and done something to fix those defects. This would mean a beneficial future for not only our environment but also a beneficial future for those who are yet to be taking care of it - for future generations who are one day going to be the ones to care for and look after the health of our world.

Alana Saltz, editor-in-chief of *Blanket Sea Magazine*: I'm not sure we should assume it will be eradicated. I think we should work toward informing and educating people, so they're less likely to believe in and enact ableism. There's a lot of resistance to disability equality because it can challenge some people's core beliefs from living in a capitalistic society where the emphasis is on "bootstraps" and productivity, not human life as having its own value and rights. In terms of eco-ableism, that basically pins two social justice issues against one another and makes them falsely and unnecessarily compete. For example, there was a proposed ban on plastic straws to help the environment. Of course, that's important. But disabled people say some of us need straws to live, and banning them could be harmful to us. One thing doesn't need to be deemed more important than the other. We can find a solution that doesn't harm or invalidate that need. Since disabled folks are a marginalized minority population, we often get drowned out and

overlooked when advocating for our needs. If the public begins to think in more nuanced, less ableist ways and challenges the false beliefs around disabled people not being a priority or worth helping in our society, I believe a lot of this will improve. But it's been an uphill battle, historically without much commitment or interest from non-disabled people, and that's where the work is now. I believe a society where human rights are valued and all people have access to the support and resources they need to have a good quality of life is possible. The wealth is there. It's not being distributed equally due to factors like greed, harmful politics, racism, and ableism. If those things were eradicated or even significantly improved, I think we could have a more fair and equitable society that leads to people living better, happier, more secure lives.

Jhermayne Ubalde, founder, and editor-in-chief of *Say It In Color*: It will be a much brighter future as people with disabilities will have the same opportunities as able people do. I believe that as eco-ableist environmental 'solutions' are recognized, the focus will shift towards creating more effective solutions to environmental issues that target the bigger causes - major companies/corporations rather than individuals.

***Limeoncello Magazine*:** A future with no ableism would be an incredibly bright one. A world without eco-ableism doesn't just benefit the disabled — although it should be enough that it does! — nor does it empower the disabled at the expense of others. A world without ableism would be a world framed by and rich in mindfulness—that is, existing in a state where thoughtfulness and empathy are the guideposts and expectations. If we can eradicate ableism, this means we are closer to doing the same for racism, sexism, homophobia and transphobia, and systematic suppression in general. Ableism holds back many people from reaching their full potential. Our school systems are not equipped to educate kids with learning disabilities. Our infrastructure is not equipped to allow those with physical disabilities to move as freely as non-disabled people. It's a shame to see how many are suppressed by the system. A world without eco-ableism is a world that much less racist, that much less misogynistic, that much less intolerant.

Morpho Magazine: When thinking of a future eradicated of eco-ableism, we envision a future where the West's exploitation of the Global South (and beyond) ceases. Some examples we considered were "poor traveling," trash dumping, etc.

The Giving Room Review: I think we have lots of work to do before we can confidently say that eco-ableism is eradicated. Sometimes it feels like around every corner, there's another example of how disabled people are discriminated against. Those examples are easy for non-disabled people to overlook or ignore because they aren't subject to the same discrimination. I think the first thing we'll see in a world without eco-ableism is a holistic awareness of how ableism shows up in the everyday lives of disabled people. This goes hand-in-hand with having constructive dialogue about it and asking questions like, "What would a disabled person need from our society, politics, economy, and infrastructure to have the same quality of life as non-disabled people?". Aside from that, a world without eco-ableism will include constant activism to ensure that these issues are being addressed and dismantled. Once society is solving problems not just for non-disabled people but for every single person regardless of ability, we'll be one step closer to eradicating eco-ableism.

Every literary magazine included in this interview has provided meaningful and intentional reflections, visions, and precautions for writers to broaden the scope of inclusive writing. The convergence and divergence of their perspectives added additional depth to their dialogue, allowing us readers to better understand their notable magazines' unique and committed backgrounds. Hopefully, their dreams of the environment being integrated into writing will be realized by those who dare to pick up their pens and let their climate-conscious streams of thought flow.

Resources

To write the first four articles that comprise this portfolio, I relied on a number of online resources. I highly recommend them for further reading, as they are all incredibly engaging and informative.

The four resources listed below were incredibly instrumental in educating me, acting as springboards for my articles:

1. ‘Climate change, disability, and eco-ableism: Why we need to be inclusive to save the planet’ by Elizabeth Wright (Published in *UX Collective* on February 19, 2020 — <https://uxdesign.cc/climate-change-disability-and-eco-ableism-why-we-need-to-be-inclusive-when-trying-to-save-the-88bb61e82e4e>) - This article, written by a disabled writer, activist, and Paralympic Medalist, Elizabeth Wright, succinctly analyzes recent environmental initiatives and pinpoints their eco-ableism. Wright’s work also provides current and intentional statistics to strengthen arguments and expounds on the need of environmental inclusivity in a thought-provoking manner.
2. ‘Disability and disaster response in the age of climate change’ by David M. Perry (Published in *Pacific Standard* on December 21, 2017 — <https://psmag.com/environment/fixing-americas-disability-disaster-response>) - This article is an illuminating blend of interviews, statistics, and reflections on American disability disaster responses. It breaks down the importance of efficient responses by citing the needs of disabled people during natural disasters, simply yet urgently.
3. ‘A brief history of cli-fi: Fiction that’s hooking readers on climate activism’ by Theodora Sutcliffe (Published in *Means & Matters - Bank of the West* on December 3, 2020 — <https://meansandmatters.bankofthewest.com/article/living/brief-history-of-cli-fi-fiction-thats-hooking-readers-on-climate-action/>) - This article encapsulates *everything* about climate fiction. It was my first and foremost resource in writing my third article. I constantly returned to it given Sutcliffe’s particular way of explaining the development, features, surprising (though well-founded and admirable) diversity, and importance of cli-fi.

4. ‘The alienating lack of disability representation in literature’ by Grace Lapointe (Published in *Book Riot* by March 6, 2018 — <https://bookriot.com/disability-representation-in-literature/>) - Disabled writer Grace Lapointe reflects on growing up as an avid reader, citing well-known works and their impact on how she perceived disabled representation. This write-up, though brief, is exceptionally hard-hitting and essential reading for anyone who wants to understand the unfortunate effects of exclusive, specifically ableist, fiction — and be motivated by Lapointe’s passion for increasing genuine disabled representation.

Beyond the four mentioned above, the following resources were also essential for me to read and digest before compiling all the information into my articles:

Reference list for article ‘Elaborating on Eco-ableism’:

- BBC. (2020, March 17). *What is the problem with plastic?*
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/42810179>
- Brulle, R. (2018, June 19). *30 years ago global warming became front-page news - and both Republicans and Democrats took it seriously.* The Conversation.
<https://theconversation.com/30-years-ago-global-warming-became-front-page-news-and-both-republicans-and-democrats-took-it-seriously-97658>
- Cho, R. (2019, December 27). *10 climate change impacts that will affect us all.* Earth Institute: Columbia University.
<https://blogs.ei.columbia.edu/2019/12/27/climate-change-impacts-everyone/>
- Fagan, M., & Huang, C. (2019, April 18). *A look at how people around the world view climate change.* Pew Research Center.
<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/04/18/a-look-at-how-people-around-the-world-view-climate-change/>
- History. (2017, October 6). *Climate change history.*
<https://www.history.com/topics/natural-disasters-and-environment/history-of-climate-change>
- Imani. (2018, June 6). *Being disabled isn’t eco-friendly: Get off our backs and put in the work.* Crutches and Spice.

<https://crutchesandspice.com/2018/06/06/being-disabled-isnt-eco-friendly-get-off-our-backs-and-put-in-the-work/>

Imgrund, M. (2018, August 8). *Eco-ableism: What it is, why it matters, and how it affects disabled people*. Eco Warrior Princess.

<https://ecowarriorprincess.net/2018/08/eco-ableism-what-it-is-why-it-matters-how-affects-disabled-people/>

Laurance, B. (2014, April 7). *Boycotts are a crucial weapon to fight environment-harming firms*. The Conversation.

<https://theconversation.com/boycotts-are-a-crucial-weapon-to-fight-environment-harming-firms-25267>

Lovelady, D. M., & Shrestha, S. (n.d.). *Environmentalism*. Learning to Give.

https://www.learningtogive.org/resources/environmentalism?_cf_chl_captcha_tk=ab147cad402131c473782ca52dfdcd7a0add5d6c-1614478913-0-AdtgaN_GAZq8rP9rd7KNarH6ia8NdexCGHvioGXH-c7BpNvPKM0sxp8z3MV4xTVGOeNxFFfRNrHApuoAJtHqfA49WGbBEclw9CRukIPAPwLmvCxihAgtIha8pOMmpX2yCvSskjzPvHzKolFXFar2J5CzCsYOADEiH_qysO3zFigSvj_Na9nxZMM7W-1Xy3YP2gCuOFF44KPxe0tcj6_zb8mI6QEOJKuKzYyiFMr7b_Ac1ecY26ChHo-wx-Al2DwoQjp554ruBdN64ojaMSDf4PigPFIx7xCmK_Bv9MKqy1djHqZt9arDsDLZs0867alxPGD2swDduAVpiuxFqKih5zRFjYKH22ba52e3hljyrAnJoCcAyJj-cWDRhAjVZ05ALHGO-eHgDkcQeOiUIegcDCbN9SKNeG0lz67-TPMV-JS6CDMQzcr8Fj-D7fB-Td2n4_TaCNeW_gyLo1xiXsbOVA3YqKEeX8U8xeH64FwcwedAKIii-4HJE98vh57h6wk-LGkHWps4wyORI9iwZ82dL-4sxOVc9NbNgHVPnM7PUeIw7raXGbZCT7DBP8T-D-ZFtyzddFUhPW9_xJK9BbGRyJbdGfOicbjyTH4Fn5SL_4FywBx6_HUOLEPHsQwAPiJA

Petter, O. (2020, September 24). *Veganism is 'single biggest way' to reduce our environmental impact, study finds*. Independent.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/veganism-environmental-impact-planet-reduced-plant-based-diet-humans-study-a8378631.html>

Smith, S. E. (2017, February 16). *On veganism and disability*. this ain't livin.

http://meloukhia.net/2017/02/on_veganism_and_disability/

The University of Alabama at Birmingham. (2018, October 10). *The last straw: Ableism in environmental campaigns*. UAB Institute for Human Rights Blog.

<https://sites.uab.edu/humanrights/2018/10/10/the-last-straw-ableism-in-environmental-campaigns/>

- Thelen, E. (2019, July 18). *'Eco-shaming' is on the rise, but does it work?* World Economic Forum.
<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/07/eco-shaming-is-rising-but-does-it-work/>
- Vallely, E. (n.d.). *Grasping at straws: The ableism of the straw ban*. Center for Disability Rights.
<https://cdrnys.org/blog/disability-dialogue/grasping-at-straws-the-ableism-of-the-straw-ban/>
- Wright, E. (2020, February 19). *Climate change, disability, and eco-ableism: Why we need to be inclusive to save the planet*. UX Collective.
<https://uxdesign.cc/climate-change-disability-and-eco-ableism-why-we-need-to-be-inclusive-when-trying-to-save-the-88bb61e82e4e>
- Wright, E. (2020, March 13). *Moon cups are not for me: The reality of period products for disabled women*. Medium.
<https://medium.com/conscious-life/moon-cups-are-not-for-me-the-reality-of-period-products-for-disabled-women-eff2847e17e9>

Reference list for article 'Extreme Events, Inequitable Impacts':

- American Journal of Managed Care. (2006, November 1). *Vulnerable populations: Who are they?* <https://www.ajmc.com/view/nov06-2390ps348-s352>
- Center for Climate Change and Energy Solutions. (n.d.). *Hurricanes and climate change*.
<https://www.c2es.org/content/hurricanes-and-climate-change/>
- Collins, S. (2019, October 23). *US power outages endanger people with disabilities*. Human Rights Watch.
<https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/10/23/us-power-outages-endanger-people-disabilities>
- Delacroix, D. (2019, November 22). *What effects do typhoons cause on animals, humans, and plants?* Sciencing. <https://sciencing.com/effects-typhoons-6060279.html>
- Devaney, E. (2018, April 19). *The effects of typhoons*. Sciencing.
<https://sciencing.com/effects-typhoons-6060279.html>

- Disabled World. (2020, March 27). *Disability fitness: Nutrition and health*.
<https://www.disabled-world.com/fitness/>
- Frieden, L. (2006, August 3). *The impact of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita on people with disabilities: A look back and remaining challenges*. National Council on Disability. <https://ncd.gov/publications/2006/aug072006>
- Galeza, K. A., & Raja, D. S. (2017, September 6). *How can we make water and sanitation more inclusive and accessible?* World Bank Blogs.
<https://blogs.worldbank.org/water/how-can-we-make-water-and-sanitation-more-inclusive-and-accessible>
- Government of Canada. (n.d.). *Climate change in developing countries*.
https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues_development-enjeux_developpement/environmental_protection-protection_environnement/climate-climatiques.aspx?lang=eng
- Kishore, K. (2016, March 24). *Floods turned out to be a great deal harder for people with disabilities*. The Hindu.
<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/fix-our-cities-chennai-floods-turned-out-to-be-a-great-deal-harder-for-people-with-disabilities/article8005418.ece>
- McCarthy, J. (2020, February 19). *Why climate change and poverty are inextricably linked*. Global Citizen.
<https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/climate-change-is-connected-to-poverty/>
- Mika, A. (n.d.). *Extreme weather on Earth*. National Geographic.
<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/activity/extreme-weather-on-earth/>
- National Geographic Society. (2020, January 21). *Drought*.
<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/drought/>
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. (2020, May). *Hurricanes*.
<https://www.noaa.gov/education/resource-collections/weather-atmosphere/hurricanes>
- Negus, T. (n.d.). *How long does it take to dry out a flood?* Kade Restoration.
<https://kaderestoration.com/how-long-does-it-take-to-dry-out-a-flood/>

- New York State. (n.d.). *Nutrition and weight management for people with disabilities, volume 10*.
https://www.health.ny.gov/community/disability/on_target/target10.htm
- Perry, D. M. (2017, December 21). *Disability and disaster response in the age of climate change*. Pacific Standard.
<https://psmag.com/environment/fixing-americas-disability-disaster-response>
- Santos-Longhurst, A. (2018, July 9). *What to do when you or someone you know may have breathed in too much smoke*. Healthline.
<https://www.healthline.com/health/smoke-inhalation>
- Schulte, C. (2020, May 28). *People with disabilities needed in fight against climate change*. Human Rights Watch.
<https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/05/28/people-disabilities-needed-fight-against-climate-change>
- Shalby, C. (2019, October 25). *Power outages leave those with disabilities especially vulnerable. Help remains a work in a progress*. Los Angeles Times.
<https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2019-10-25/problems-disabled-help-power-outages>
- Siegel, E. (2017, September 6). *The terrifying physics of how wildfires spread so fast*. Forbes.
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/startswithabang/2017/09/06/the-terrifying-physics-of-how-wildfires-spread-so-fast/?sh=746bcfb27791>
- The Climate Reality Project. (2016, June 15). *The facts about climate change and drought*.
<https://climaterealityproject.org/blog/facts-about-climate-change-and-drought>
- The Hindu. (2019, June 10). *Stagnant water breeds malaria, dengue*.
<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/telangana/stagnant-water-breeds-malaria-dengue/article27706815.ece>
- Union of Concerned Scientists. (2020, September 8). *Infographic: Wildfires and climate change*.
<https://www.ucsusa.org/resources/infographic-wildfires-and-climate-change#toc-take-action>

United States Environmental Protection Agency. (n.d.). *Climate change indicators: Weather and climate*. <https://www.epa.gov/climate-indicators/weather-climate>

World Health Organization. (n.d.). *Climate change*.
<https://www.who.int/heli/risks/climate/climatechange/en/>

World Health Organization. (n.d.). *Flooding and communicable diseases fact sheet*.
https://www.who.int/hac/techguidance/ems/flood_cds/en/

World Health Organization. (n.d.). *Floods*.
https://www.who.int/health-topics/floods#tab=tab_1

Reference list for article “Cli-Fi’: Our Planet’s Fate on Paper’:

Abraham, J. (2017, October 18). *CliFi - a new way to talk about climate change*. The Guardian.
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/climate-consensus-97-per-cent/2017/oct/18/clifi-a-new-way-to-talk-about-climate-change>

DeWeerd, S. (2020, September 22). *Climate fiction shifts readers’ beliefs - but not for long*. Anthropocene Magazine.
<https://www.anthropocenemagazine.org/2020/09/climate-fiction-shifts-reader-beliefs/>

Forthomme, C. (2014, June 16). *Climate fiction, why it matters*. Impakter.
<https://impakter.com/climate-fiction-why-it-matters/>

Holding, S. (2015, April 23). *Sarah Holding’s top 10 cli-fi books*. The Guardian.
<https://www.theguardian.com/childrens-books-site/2015/apr/23/sarah-holdings-top-10-clifi-books>

Lee & Low Books. (2014, July 29). *Where’s the diversity, Hollywood? Sci-fi and fantasy blockbusters overwhelmingly white, male*.
<https://blog.leeandlow.com/2014/07/29/wheres-the-diversity-hollywood-sci-fi-and-fantasy-blockbusters-overwhelmingly-white-male/>

Liptack, A. (2016, August 4). *Science fiction publishing has a major race problem, new report shows*. The Verge.
<https://www.theverge.com/2016/8/4/12374306/science-fiction-diversity-numbers-fireside-report>

- Lovell, B. (2016, September 16). *Friday essay: Science fiction's women problem*. The Conversation.
<https://theconversation.com/friday-essay-science-fictions-women-problem-58626>
- Nairn, C. (2018, March 8). *13 female "cli-fi" writers who are inspiring a better future*. Sierra.
<https://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/13-female-cli-fi-writers-who-are-inspiring-better-future-science-fiction-climate-change>
- Penguin Random House. (n.d.). *So you want to read cli-fi: Here's where to start*.
<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/the-read-down/want-read-cli-fi-heres-start>
- Schneider-Mayerson, M., Gustafson, A., Leiserowitz, A., Goldberg, M. H., Rosenthal, S. A., & Ballew, M. (2020). Environmental literature as persuasion: An experimental test of the effects of reading climate fiction. *Environmental Communication*.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17524032.2020.1814377>
- Sutcliffe, T. (2020, December 3). *A brief history of cli-fi: Fiction that's hooking readers on climate activism*. Means & Matters - Bank of the West.
<https://meansandmatters.bankofthewest.com/article/living/brief-history-of-cli-fi-fiction-thats-hooking-readers-on-climate-action/>
- Vanderhage, G. (2019, August 21). *What is #ownvoices?* Brodart.
<https://www.brodartbooks.com/newsletter/posts-in-2019/what-is-ownvoices>
- Writers Write. (2016, January 15). *The 17 most popular genres in fiction - and why they matter*.
<https://www.writerswrite.co.za/the-17-most-popular-genres-in-fiction-and-why-they-matter/>

Reference list for article 'The Haunting of Historically Ableist Fiction':

- Amber. (n.d.). *Problematic authors*. The Literary Phoenix.
<https://theliteraryphoenix.com/problematic-authors/>
- Crippen, M. (2012). *The value of children's literature*. Luther College.
<https://www.luther.edu/oneota-reading-journal/archive/2012/the-value-of-childrens-literature/>
- Disability in Kidlit. (n.d.). *Honor roll*. <https://disabilityinkidlit.com/honor-roll/>

- Foster, L. (2017, October 4). *On horror, disability, and loving both at once*. Tor.
<https://www.tor.com/2017/10/04/on-horror-disability-and-loving-both-at-once/>
- Hawley, E. (2017, February 20). *Ableism in fiction - a guest post by Erin Hawley*. Books by Intisar.
<http://booksbyintisar.com/2017/02/20/ableism-fiction-guest-post-erin-hawley-disability-fiction/>
- Heasley, S. (2020, February 5). *Children's books win awards for disability storylines*. Disability Scoop.
<https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2020/02/05/childrens-books-win-awards-for-disability-storylines/27769/>
- Karantzis, C. (2018, October 6). *A most impressionable age*. Adolescent Learners in Urban Contexts.
<https://wp.nyu.edu/urbanyouthnyu/2018/10/06/a-most-impressionable-age/>
- Lapointe, G. (2018, March 6). *The alienating lack of disability representation in literature*. Book Riot. <https://bookriot.com/disability-representation-in-literature/>
- Lapointe, G. (2019, December 6). *Finding alternatives to ableist language*.
<https://gracelapointe.medium.com/finding-alternatives-to-ableist-language-627f86808103>
- Masad, I. (2016). *Countering the classics*. Read it Forward.
<https://www.readitforward.com/essay/article/countering-the-classics/>
- Nussbaum, S. (2013, November 19). *Disabled characters in fiction*. Huffpost.
https://www.huffpost.com/entry/disabled-characters-in-fiction_b_4302481
- The Barbellion Prize. (n.d.). *The winner of The Barbellion Prize 2020 is 'GOLEM GIRL: A MEMOIR' by Riva Lehrer (published by One World/Virago)*.
<https://www.thebarbellionprize.com/winners-shortlists-longlists>
- Winkle, C. (2017, April 7). *Five signs your story is ableist*. Mythcreants.
<https://mythcreants.com/blog/five-signs-your-story-is-ableist/>
- Winters, B. (2019, November 18). *Why disabled romance is important: A guest post by Brooke Winters*. All About Romance.

<https://allaboutromance.com/why-disabled-romance-is-important-a-guest-post-by-brooke-winters/>

Woollard, B. (2017, July 4). *The importance of learning the classics*. The Artifice.
<https://the-artifice.com/learning-the-classics/>

Wong, A. (2020, February 10). *Q&A with Amanda Leduc on fairy tales and disability*. Disability Visibility Project.
<https://disabilityvisibilityproject.com/2020/02/10/qa-with-amanda-leduc-on-fairy-tales-and-disability/>

Aside from collecting online resources for my four articles, I engaged in extremely captivating and enlightening online correspondence interviews with the following environmental organizations and literary magazines to curate my final two articles:

[**Blanket Sea Magazine**](#) is a magazine and small press devoted to sharing art and writing by chronically ill, neurodiverse, and disabled creators. When Alana Saltz started the magazine, she didn't see many opportunities for disabled creators to share their work in a safe space, run by editors with lived experience who would be respectful and have the intent of the work also serving as a means towards advocacy. *Blanket Sea* aims to continue that work through its small press, hoping to bring that same ideology to publishing books.

[**Climate Operation**](#) is a youth-led organisation based in Uganda, whose mission is to educate young people about the current climate crisis and its intersection with other social issues, as well as involve them in climate related activism. Currently, they are running the "GREENER SCHOOLS CAMPAIGN" where they educate school-going children about climate change and give them educational resources about the current climate crisis that they can go through with their peers and teachers. Finally, Climate Operation also involves them in tree planting activities. The organization believes that through this campaign, they will not only nurture more climate conscious individuals, but also children who will innovate the climate solutions that the developing world needs. Climate Operation has planted 210 fruit trees and educated 500 school-going children to date.

[*EARTH Zine*](#) is a platform that highlights and uplifts the voices of marginalized individuals and communities through an array of creative climate justice media. Its members want to build community and form networks through *EARTH Zine*, to be a space where people can learn from, share and connect with, and educate others about social and environmental justice issues. *EARTH Zine*'s main values are to emphasize intersectionality within the environmental movement, center marginalized voices and the lived experiences of those fighting environmental injustice, and to be mindful of accessibility throughout their platforms. Their zine issues are released biannually, and they are currently working on their second issue: 'Seeds & Sprouts'!

[*Floresta Magazine*](#) is centred on the intersection between art, design and the environment. The platform was created as a space specifically dedicated to projects and work which adopts a creative lens to focus, address, incorporate and respond to elements of the environment - fusing the two crucial areas together. *Floresta* is especially interested in exploring multidisciplinary work, mediums and 'artists' - encompassing all those who are creating and designing, and not limited to 'artists' solely in the traditional sense. *Floresta* showcases - through words, exhibitions, workshops, collaborative projects and visual series - nuanced artistry and perspectives which push us to think about the environment in a more dynamic, innovative and impactful way.

[*Gaia Lit*](#) is an online literary magazine founded by students who are deeply concerned about the welfare of the planet. Made by youth, for youth, *Gaia*'s origins trace back to 2018, when a group of students envisioned a space for marginalized voices to be uplifted and for change to be made. Now a reality, *Gaia* wants to keep their readers informed and inspired. They wish to spotlight underrepresented voices and encourage action. Their goal is to educate, empower, and engender change, as they believe that change can only come with action, and *Gaia* is their way of making their voices heard.

[*Global Initiative*](#) emerged out of a pursuit to support the community and take a stand for those who can't. With over fifty members from across ten different time zones, the goal of this organization is to educate the general public about the various issues that exist in the world through social media posts, blogs, articles, research papers, videos, podcasts, magazine issues

etc. The organization has the opportunity to network with others and spread awareness about overlooked global issues through different projects and collaborations. One of Global Initiative's most recent projects is the Global issues Educational Curriculum. The curriculum highlights global issues that they have focused on so far. Each of the global issues have a basic overview component, interactive components (videos, podcasts, informative graphics, etc.), and articles written by its members. Established in 2020, Global Initiative is an organization driven by progressive ideas, bold actions, and a strong foundation of support. Contact them to learn more and get involved. You can reach Global Initiative at their Instagram: [@_global_initiative](#) or view their website.

[Intangible Magazine](#) seeks to include as many perspectives as possible. They market to individuals of all ages, genders, sexual orientations, races, ethnicities, etc. and want their magazine to be accessible to everyone, so everyone is encouraged to submit. *Intangible Magazine* also reads submissions blind, so they judge the work instead of the person.

[Limeoncello Magazine](#) was started because the OwnVoice story is an important one. It is true that there are many productions that will publish diverse writers and diverse stories. But sometimes it feels like you can't do both, especially in fiction. Many of the OwnVoice stories that gain recognition are creative nonfiction. And while these stories are incredibly important, the value of diverse fiction cannot go unnoticed. We want to see ourselves represented in romance novels and fantasy epics, in sci-fi and horror. Our stories don't *just* have to be creative nonfiction essays on oppression. We are thinking of writers who want to include their own identities in their work, but are afraid that there is no demand for it, or no platform for them to share on. We are thinking of the young readers who need stories where they can see themselves as the main characters, having adventures, and not just the victims of bigotry and hate. *Limeoncello Magazine* is here to encourage more writers to write themselves into the genres they love and to underline the value of inclusive fiction.

[Morpho Magazine](#) is an independent print and digital publication created to serve as a platform for marginalized creators to reject an unspoken sentiment toward self-discovery within the creative space; that is, we must conform to a false version of ourselves to, at the very least, be

heard. *Morpho* seeks to be more than to be just another zine. In addition to showcasing the creative work of marginalized communities, *Morpho* also hopes to serve communities through mutual aid opportunities and awareness, as well as professional assistance and guidance in the arts and creative field.

[*Par Contre*](#) is a zine based in London about all types of activism. They are currently promoting their first issue, ‘New Beginnings’, but in around March, they will be accepting submissions for their second issue, ‘Our Earth’, with a focus on the environment. Sustainable fashion, vegetarianism, and education on the climate crisis are just some of the topics *Par Contre* plans to feature. Check out their Instagram @parcontrezine, for more details on when and how to submit.

[*Project Planet A*](#), a youth-led environmental organization, works to provide youth with the resources, opportunities and education to take climate action. This has been done through their educational posts on social media and our events they hold, including webinars, conferences, and easy ways for youth to get involved. Project Planet A works to create an engaging and open community in order to encourage conversation and exchange of ideas. Their network of 15 chapters around the globe create a united community of environmentalists helping their respective communities be more sustainable.

[*Say It In Color*](#) was created to help fill the gaps in media where BIPOC people are underrepresented. *Say It In Color* aims to pass the mic to BIPOC people everywhere and give them the opportunity to speak out about important issues as well as their own stories and experiences. They publish art and writing by BIPOC people with no entry fee - and make their art as accessible as possible by putting it up for free online, so that as many people as possible can listen to their voices. Their Instagram is @sayitincolorzine.

[*Sustain Magazine*](#), previously *Re Collective Magazine*, rebranded to focus more on environmental justice. With this rebrand, *Sustain* is looking for anyone to submit articles about environmental justice or sustainability, and art and creators to submit work for their zine. They are also launching a podcast that talks about sustainability. It is called the Sustain Podcast, and readers can feel free to reach out and join for an episode. To get in contact, *Sustain*'s email is

sustainmagazine1@gmail.com, their Instagram is @sustain_mag, and their Discord server is Sustain Magazine.

[*The Giving Room Review*](#) is a literary magazine, founded in November of 2020, to provide a platform for BIPOC, LGBTQ+, disabled, and women writers and artists. It's no secret that the current state of our country (and the world) has made it increasingly difficult for people in those communities to exist and thrive. *The Giving Room Review* aims to cultivate a space for marginalized voices to be heard — through vulnerability, through adversity, and through creativity. Their editorial board is currently in the process of reviewing submissions for their very first issue, which has been an incredible experience. They're thrilled to be releasing that issue in May of 2021.

[*The Green Voice Project*](#) is a student-led organization that aims to highlight various environmental issues especially concerning developing nations. They encourage people to start their environmental journey by thinking locally. The Green Voice Project aims to give a platform to the activists, the professionals, and the scientists from these regions and their goal is to uplift communities in a sustainable manner whilst combatting the climate crisis.

[*The Hearth*](#) is dedicated to sharing stories of mental health and illness. *The Hearth* recognizes that mental health can affect marginalized communities in different ways, so they're committed to publishing work especially from BIPOC and/or LGBT individuals. Their goal as a literary magazine is the opposite of exclusivity - *The Hearth* wants to become an inclusive space that affirms and uplifts the stories of marginalized communities, and offer a place for teen artists and writers to be unapologetically themselves, including sharing about their identities.

[*The Tomorrow Project*](#) is a national, youth-led nonprofit organization working to inspire sustainable practices in future generations through education and experiential learning. They have developed their own climate curriculum, which they distribute to teachers and lead in classrooms. The organization is committed to an equitable climate movement and work to make their curriculum as accessible as possible using text-to-speech and targeting Title I schools.

[The Vast Sky](#) is focused on the people's voices as a whole, and therefore many have used it as an opportunity to talk about issues that have been/are neglected. The organization focuses around lifting the voices of those who want to be heard, so of course many marginalized voices will take this opportunity to talk about ideas that are suppressed from the general public.

[Youth.ify](#) is a platform for youth from around the world to share ideas, opportunities and build relationships with their peers. The organization does this in a number of ways, including action-based workshops, networking sessions, coalition building with other youth-led organizations, activation resources and peer mentorship. To give youth the tools they need to make a difference, Youth.ify has fostered an active digital community and open space for collaboration over Slack (connecting driven youth from countries spanning every continent except Antarctica), hosting virtual networking events that allow passionate young people to meet and build connections with their peers, building a networked coalition of youth-led organizations in the environmental space and running virtual workshops and speakership events that teach real-life skills (such as creating a resume, writing for press/media, creating a social media presence, speaking with legislators, etc.). Get involved with Youth.ify by joining their virtual global community, attending one of their virtual events, or applying for a position on their team. By joining Youth.ify's Slack Community, youth are plugged into a network of other Gen Z activists, where they can learn from advice, ask questions and hear about opportunities. Youth.ify regularly host events, including monthly workshops, that empower young people with actionable skills and connect them to a network of other youth changemakers. They are also currently recruiting team members; all interests and levels of experience are welcome! There is no experience or expertise needed to take part in any of Youth.ify's programs, just a passion for our planet and a desire to get involved.

Acknowledgments

My experience as an I-CREATE YOUTH Writing Fellow was seven weeks of constantly learning, establishing connections, and strengthening my passion for the environment, disability awareness, and writing. For gaining this experience and platform to share my work, I have to thank the entire I-CREATE YOUTH organization for creating and running this Fellowship Program — and more importantly, for inviting me on board as a Fellow in the first place. I would also like to thank my mentor, Dhwanee Goyal, for her support. Throughout the Fellowship Program, her guidance motivated me to continue producing the best work possible and approach it with thoughtfulness and professionalism.

A meaningful portion of this portfolio would not have existed if not for the assistance extended to me by environmental organizations and publications from all over the world: Derin Arat of The Green Voice Project, Maryam Arshad and Lucy Hulton of *Floresta* Magazine, Andrew Blatt of Project Planet A, Apurva Iyengar of Youth.ify, Jasmine Kaur of Global Initiative, Elane Kim of *Gaia Lit*, Alie McDougall of The Tomorrow Project, Aoife McGrath of *Par Contre*, Heizal Nagginda of Climate Operation, Rebecca of *Sustain* Magazine, *EARTH* Zine, and Erudite. There's a lot of work for us to do to offset the impacts of climate change, but your inspiring environmental initiatives and unwavering dedication for them assure me that we're headed in the right direction. I am so grateful that I live on a planet with people who recognize its vitality and refuse to be complacent as others continue to degrade it.

Another equally significant part of this portfolio exists thanks to the perspectives of inclusive literary citizens and publications, including Emma Chan of *The Hearth*, Lauren and Adi of *Intangible* Magazine, Renares of *The Vast Sky*, Alana Saltz of *Blanket Sea* Magazine, Jhermayne Ubalde of *Say It In Color*, *Limeoncello* Magazine, *Morpho* Magazine, and *The Giving Room Review*. Growing up passionate about writing, I'd always thought that my work would never be read nor published unless it conformed to mainstream media. Now, I have hope that future generations won't have to feel the same way because of your tireless fight to celebrate diverse voices and uplift writing that breaks boundaries. Your commitment to making creative

writing a safer, more inclusive medium through publications and programs is remarkable — and precisely what the industry needs right now.

I would also like to express my gratitude towards the following organizations and magazines that supported this project with their kind and encouraging sentiments: Keith Ancheta of the *Climate Wonderer*, Yamila Frej of Eco Gen Zine, Larry Shi of The Unread Initiative, Nandana Surendran of *Illuminating Voices*, Tia Vasudeva of The Restoration Project, Earth Burned, and The *Forerunner* Magazine.

Finally, thank you for taking the time to read this portfolio. I hope that my words, the ideas of my interviewees, and the knowledge gleaned from my resources have resonated with you and given you the inclination to speak up about disability awareness in the contexts of the environment and literature.