

The Process Book

Table of Contents

Diane Adote

5

Prefix

8

Introduction
to Project

10

Coming up with
the idea

12

Research/Pop-up
Exhibition

19

Prototypes

26

Design Choices

28

Final Outcome

35

Sources

Prefix

**How might we
promote
inclusive Black
representation
in the media
and self-love?**

Introduction to Project

My topic talks about the importance of Black representation in the media and how it affects one's self-love/self-esteem. Specifically colorism in the media and how it affects the Black community. Colorism stems from slavery and it is the prejudice against people who have a darker skin tone as well as giving better treatment to those who are of the same race but lighter skinned. Throughout history, the media and our immediate environment, has controlled our self-image, especially now since we are in the age of technology.

For my proposed solution, I created an organization called the Black Media Society which focuses on changing Black Media representation positively. One of the ways of doing that is organizing a panel where the members can have a conversation about the problems that Black people face in the media, especially colorism.



BLACK MEDIA SOCIETY

Coming up with the idea

While completing my 30 annotated bibliographies, I noticed a pattern throughout my research. Two words kept coming up which were "Black people" and "Representation." As a young black women, I can relate to the struggle that Black people endure in our society. Which is why, I knew that it was important for me to stay true to who I am when approaching this project. I changed my idea so many times from "Why aren't there alot of Black designers?", "The fashion industry isn't as inclusive as it should be," "The history of Photography is racist," to "The representation of Black people in the media."

Once I decided to go with that idea, I had an issue because within that topic, there were so many examples behind it, such as stereotypes/tropes of Black characters, misconception of Black people in the media, or getting a better job in the industry as long as you're of lighter skin complexion. I started realizing how all of these topics were affecting me personally and that's when the idea of self-love came to play.

I had to revisit my past and experiences to realize how much the media has affected me as a Black women. What stuck to me the most was how growing up, I used to hate my skin color because the people that were in the media barely looked like me. I'm of a darker skin complexion than most of the actresses and models at the time and not to mention that I came from an African background where some people in my family will bleach their skin because having a lighter skin complexion is the beauty standard.

With all of that in mind, I decided to focus on Colorism in the media and how it affects one's self-love/self-worth.

Research/Pop-up exhibition

While developing my topic, I wasn't really sure on how to deliver it. The goal was to educate people about the situation and honor those who experienced it. Feedback from my peers allowed me to come up with three possible ideas to complete my project.

- 1.** The first option that I was going for was to create a community based app that allowed Black people to network with each other, share their experiences and struggles, and also educate others. There will also be a self-care portion on the app that will provide inspirational quotes, positive messages and helpful information to improve one's self-love.
- 2.** The second option was more provoking in a sense that I would have used photography to showcase my topic. Based on my research, I would have created my own advertisements that would have redefined the media. I would have also have provided

examples of colorism in the media. This would have hopefully been an eye-opening experience.

3. The third option focuses on how one sees themselves represented in the media. I would have focused on social media, specifically installing a mirror, creating an Instagram layout for it and providing makers for people to write on the mirror or take a picture.

For the Pop-up exhibition, I decided to show the first and second option to get some feedback and it really paid off. I provided some examples for both options and a couple of advertisement examples that demonstrated colorism in the media. I was told that the app felt a bit professional. Especially with the networking portion, it seemed more like a job app instead of what I was going for. People really liked the photography option but it didn't affect them emotionally like I wanted it to. It only pointed out the problem.

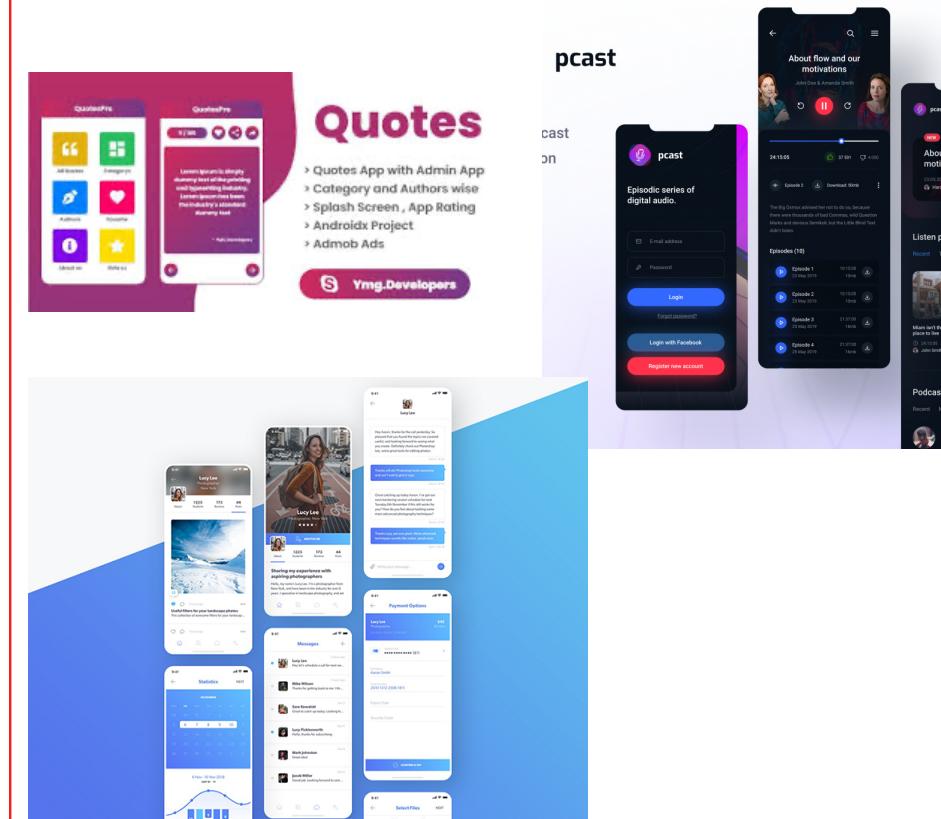
With that feedback, I was able to decipher what was working and what wasn't. I decided to create the app but it will just be a platform for people to learn, help each other, and share experiences. After a conversation with a professor, he pointed out that since this topic is very personal, interviewing and sharing other people's stories on my project could enhance the emotional experience that I was trying to achieve. Hence why I decided to include personal narratives of people that had

HOW MIGHT WE BUILD AN INCLUSIVE PLATFORM FOR MINORITIES?

HOW MIGHT WE PROMOTE INCLUSIVE MINORITY REPRESENTATION IN THE MEDIA AND LEARN TO LOVE OURSELVES?

Mission Statement

Creating a supportive and reliable community where you can share your experiences, educate and learn from others to make an impact.



Early Brand statements and app samples.



Examples of colorsim in the media.



Example of reinterpreting ads.

Why representation matters.



Prototypes

While figuring out how to create my app, I was faced with two options. Either creating a mockup that will show people what to expect on the app and how to use it or develop it from scratch. Another option was to pay and use a program that would facilitate its development.

Inspired by community organizations such as the NAACP and Color of Change, I created my own fictional organization, Black Media Society, that could create a community based and educational environment. The app would be the platform that the organization uses to communicate with people. To tie in with the issues of colorism and self-love, I decided to also create a fictional panel, organized by the organization, that will focus on those specific issues. The panel will have celebrity guest speakers to share their experiences and people will get to learn about the issues.

Thanks to that idea, I got the opportunity to design a brand for my project by creating the logo of the organization and also promotional pieces for the event. For the personal narratives that I wanted to include, I asked people on Instagram questions regarding colorism in the media. From there, I had some great conversations with the people that were willing to share their experiences and further validated why I wanted to share this topic.

Sketch/Brainstorming

WHAT

- _____ would like to create a supportive and reliable community where ~~of~~ people of color can share their experiences, educate and learn from others to make an impact. Also fight the lack of equal representation in the media

HOW

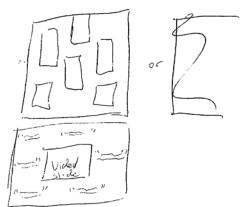
- Providing a platform for shared information (app/website)
- Organizing workshops/events to educate. (^{media representation}
~~self-love~~)
-

WHY

- There is still some kind of division among the Black community so it's important to start that can improve ~~#~~ such problem. Together we can empower each other
- It is important to educate people about self-love and the importance of ~~no~~ equal representation in the media.

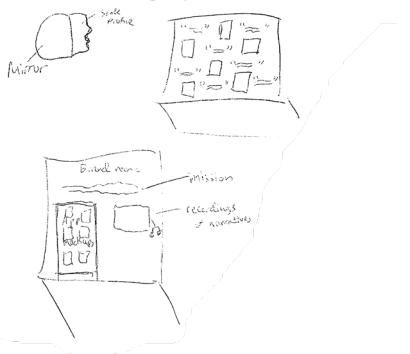
Redesigning media

- set up photoshoots of regular people dressed as how they would like to be perceived or
- set up photoshoots of regular people with or without filters



Quotes of first round = ...

- On the wall
- On website
- On mirrors



20

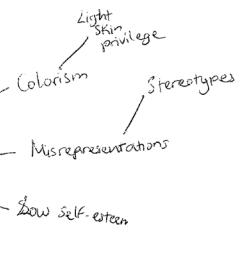
Brand names

- ~~BE~~ ~~GO~~ ~~BLSOCIETY~~
- HARMONY
- WE RULE
- EQUITY
- Black Society of Media Fighters (BSMF)
- ~~Re~~ading Beyond the Screen
- Color/Action/Love (CAL)
- Beyond the SKIN
- Color of Action (?)

Where are
the
Black designers

Colors

- RED (Action)
- BLUE (Success)
- PURPLE (Justice)
- ORANGE (Optimism)



Design

Lack of diversity
in fashion design
/ Cultural appropriation

Logo Iterations



BSM

BMS

BSM

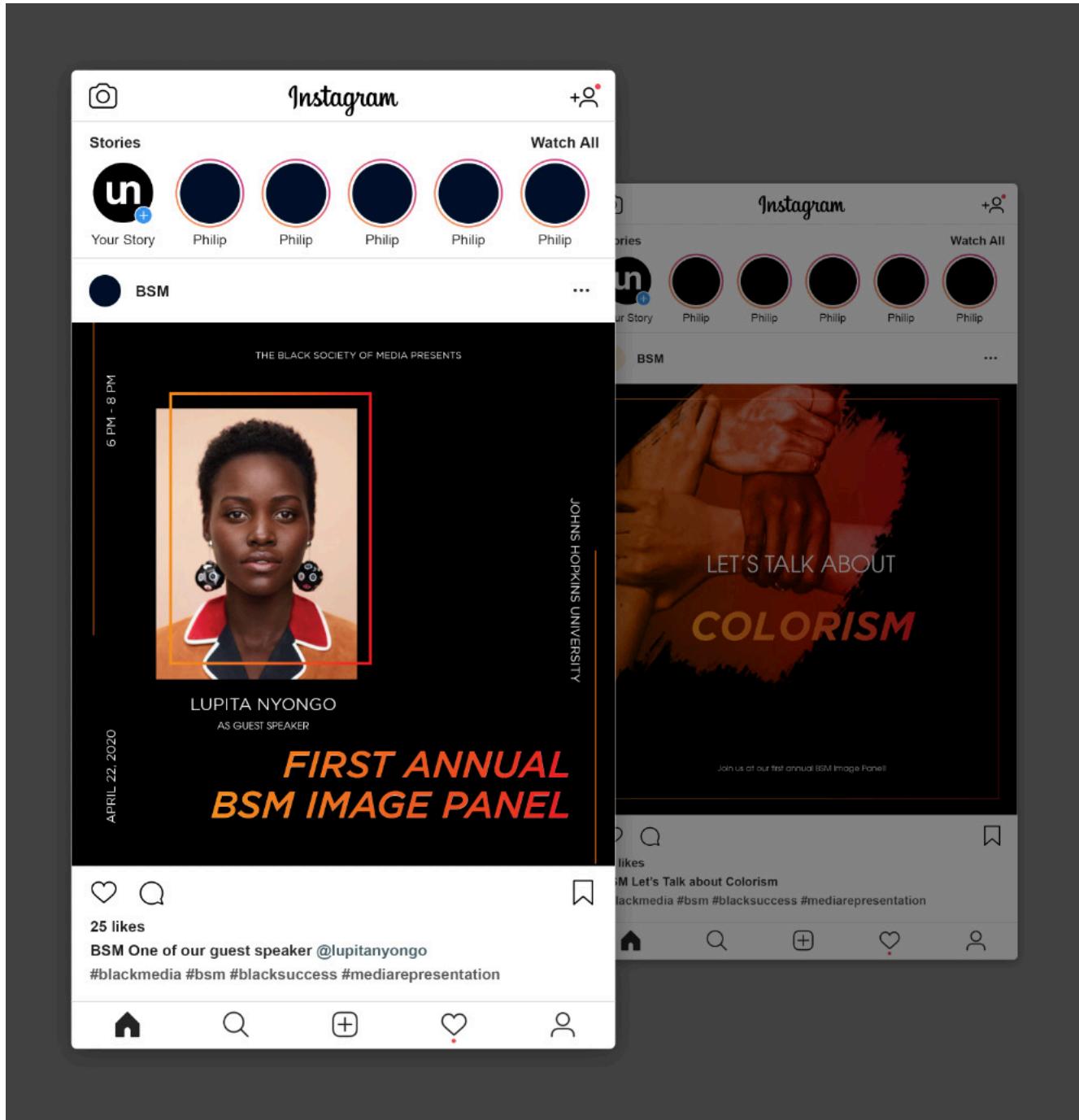
ACTION

OPTIMISM



Social Media presence





Due to covid-19, our capstone exhibition was cancelled and it was decided to be a digital experience instead. This was interesting because it had never happened before but here we were, faced with this challenge and as a designer, there is always a solution to something.

I realized that creating an app might be overly ambitious , especially due to the time constraint. So I opted to create a website instead. That way it is easily accessible to everyone and I could further work on my career goals of becoming a web designer. This became my final solution after countless refinements.

Design Choices

Colors



#ed2b26



#f58320

Font

Raleway

-**Extrabold**

-Regular

-Thin

I was going for a minimal but powerful approach for my capstone. My color choices were based on a research that I did about color meanings. By simply searching on Google the common meanings of colors, I found out that red symbolized passion and action and orange symbolized optimism and freedom.

Those meanings behind the colors resonated with the goal that I was trying to achieve for my capstone. Also, part of the mission statement of my organization is to make a change for the Black community. The font choice is a sans-serif.

There is something about an all caps and bold text that demonstrates a sense of power. Although it is simple, it's straight to the point and allows people to read easily.

Final outcome

bms.dianeadote.com

I coded a website that promoted the panel that my organization was organizing. The first page gave an overview of the event, included a historical timeline of colorism in the media and the personal quotes. The second page is about colorism in the media. The page provides it's history, examples from the colorism in the media, and an educational section about self-care. The third page talks about the background of my organization and my personal experience dealing with colorism.

BLACK MEDIA SOCIETY COLORISM ABOUT

FIRST ANNUAL BMS IMAGE PANEL

COL

EXAMPLES OF COLORISM IN MEDIA

"You're pretty for a darkskin."

PERSONAL NARRATIVES

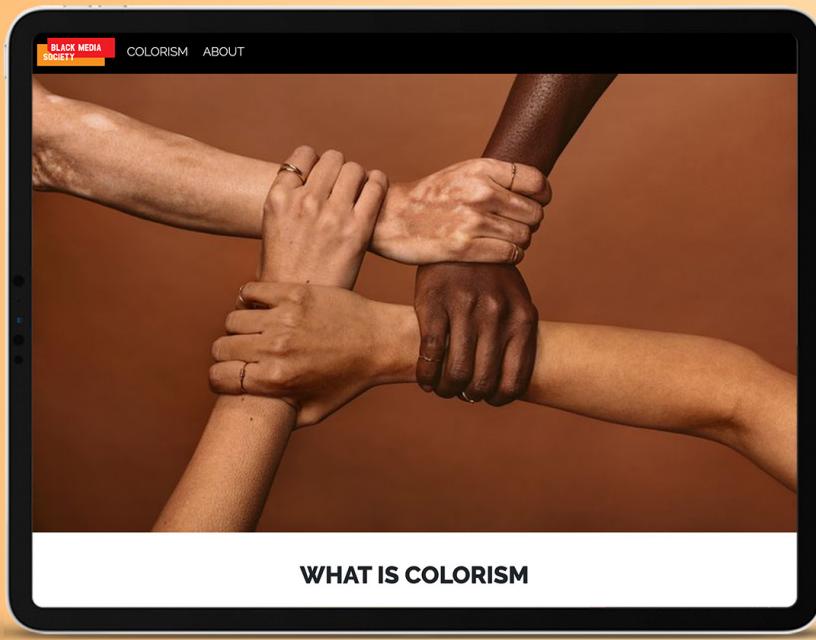
LUPITA NYONGO

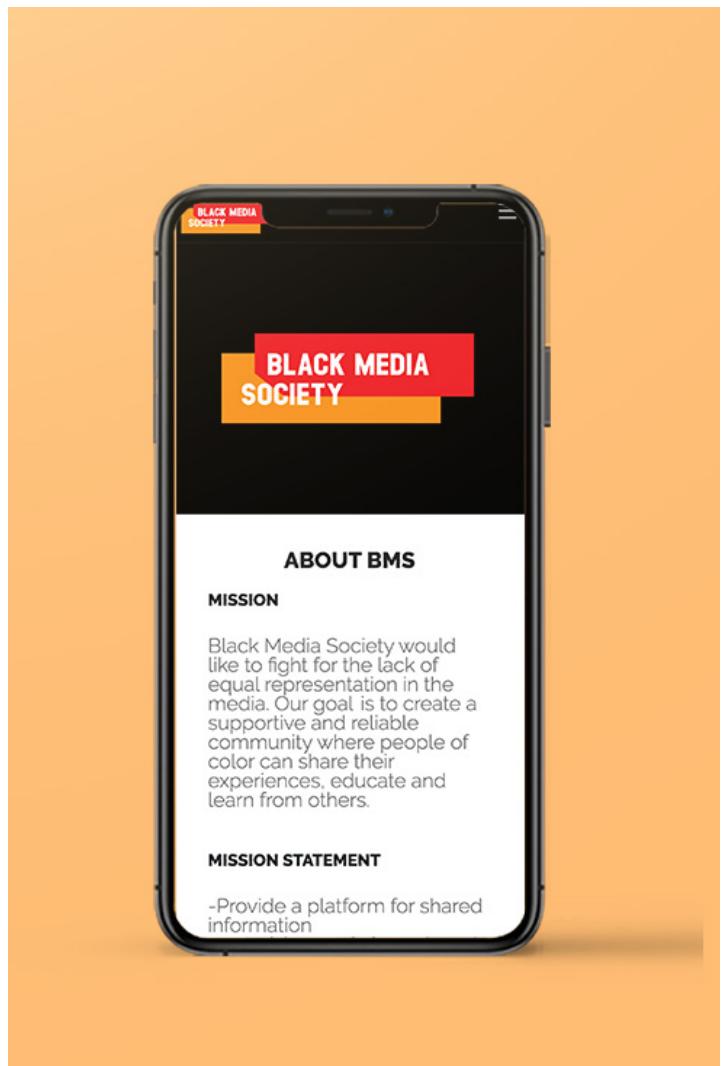
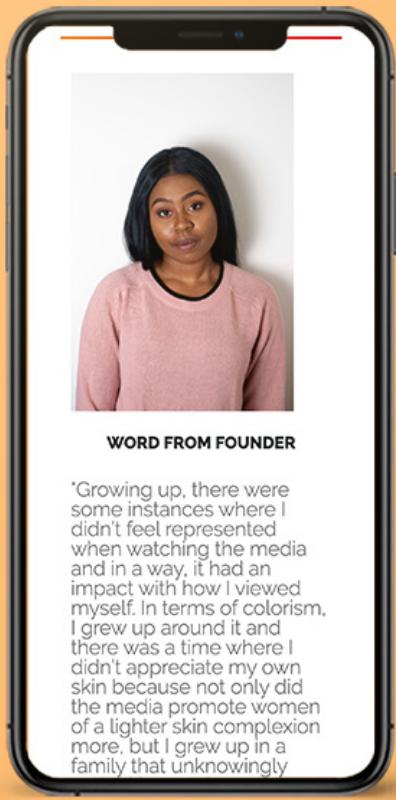
GABRIELLE UNION WADE

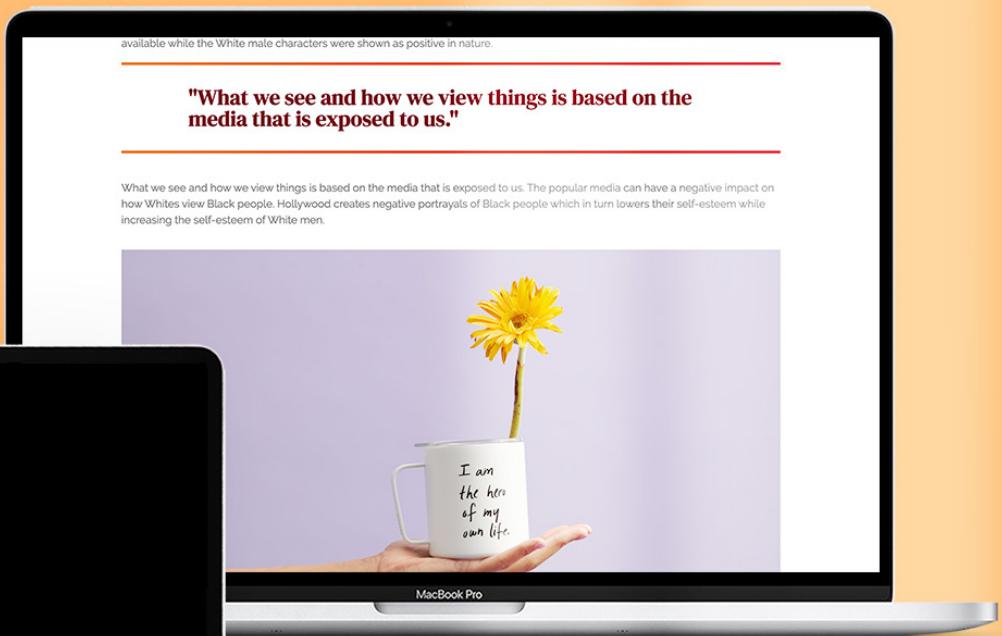
ISSA RAE

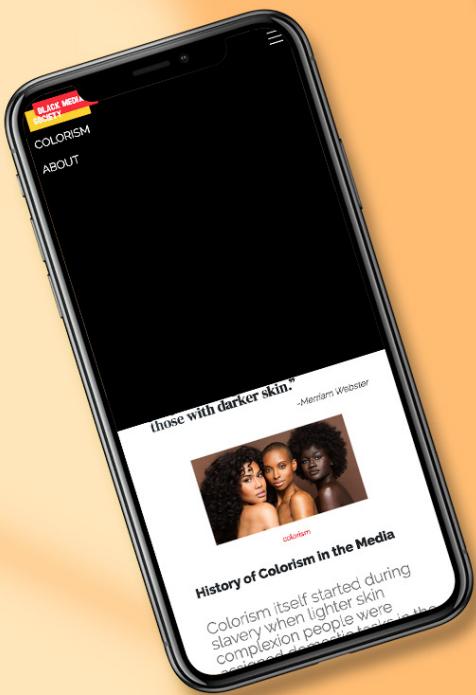
“I definitely grew up feeling uncomfortable with my skin color because I felt like the world around me was treated lighter-skinned.”

“You can't change what you see in the mirror, but you can tell women they're strong, ambitious, robust or hyper-sensual, and you don't get the in-between very much.”









The Importance of media representation

The movie Black Panther does a lot of records in history. It involved an all Black cast, had strong and powerful women, the country had technology that was far more advanced than what we have, and it gave the next generation a movie that allowed them to feel represented in the media they grew up in. This is important because minority groups are not represented in the media and even if they were, in most cases, the Black characters were flat or had some negative thing about them. The people that are exposed to such limited views of Black people digest those ideas and spread some negativity among about them. The people that are exposed to such

Not only does this affect how minorities view themselves, but it also affects how they view their communities. This goes a mile in their self-esteem. In this case Black people are viewed by others, but it also affects how they view their own demographic that aren't exposed to lower self-esteem after reading things while boys. [Lawson, 2018](#) That was because the Black male characters were shown as macho and ugly yetts. The Black female characters were shown as exotic and sexually available while the White female characters were shown as positive in nature.

"What we see and how we view things is based on the media that is exposed to us."

What we see and how we view things is based on the media that is exposed to us. The popular media can have a negative impact on how Whites view Black people. Hollywood creates negative portrayals of Black people which in turn lowers their self-esteem while increasing the self-esteem of White men.

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