INDISPOSABLE TALES
VISUAL STORIES TO REDUCE PLASTIC WASTE

Our love affair with this material began in the 1950s with the advent of disposable plastics.

Plastic is everywhere now, polluting our planet. At this rate, plastic in the oceans will outweigh fish by 2050.

An exploration of how visual stories might motivate people to reduce their plastic waste in response to our global pollution problem

DROWNING IN PLASTIC

We are drowning in this ubiquitous material because our culture views it as a throwaway item. If enough people reduced their use of disposable plastics by replacing them with reusable alternatives we would make a significant impact on our plastic waste problem. This will require changing people's minds and behaviors, which I hope to facilitate through visual storytelling.

Using my skills in graphic design and storytelling, I want to create visual stories that motivate people to reduce their plastic waste by inspiring them to change their behavior.

KEY RESEARCH INSIGHTS

1. Storytelling is the most effective way to change minds and behaviors. Why? Because people look to the actions of others to determine their own. When fictional or nonfictional characters go through a believable transformation, the audience is changed as well.[1]

2. The best stories inspire us and are generally character-driven with emotional content. These qualities make a story more persuasive by capturing people's hearts and minds.[2]

3. Visual stories are effective at communicating large, abstract problems and providing the audience with an intuitive sense of the scale or gravity of a problem.[3]

PERSUASIVE STORYTELLING IN A DIGITAL SPACE

The design opportunity for this thesis is to create a *persuasive* story.

What does a persuasive story contain?
The main ingredients include: a hook (opener) that intrigues, emotional highs and lows, an inciting event, a character that demonstrates a new social norm, resolving conflict, and leaving the audience with inspiration.

Where will my story live?
My target audience is UW students so this story may be shared via sustainability-affiliated organizations' online channels, such as Precious Plastic at UW and UW Recycling.

What could my story look like?
This is still in the early brainstorming phase, but it will be a digital story.* My story will probably include a mixture of animated graphics, video, photography, kinetic typography, interactive elements, and website design.

*Stories made with computer-based tools and a mixture of media

You can help me!
I'm examining existing digital stories and their effectiveness in terms of persuasion. I would be grateful if you could please take a few minutes to participate in the short activity placed below this poster.

CLARE ORTBLAD
Master of Design Candidate 2019
clareo@uw.edu

COMMITTEE:
Karen Cheng
Annabelle Gould