Harnessing the Power of Social Media and Leveraging Community Voice

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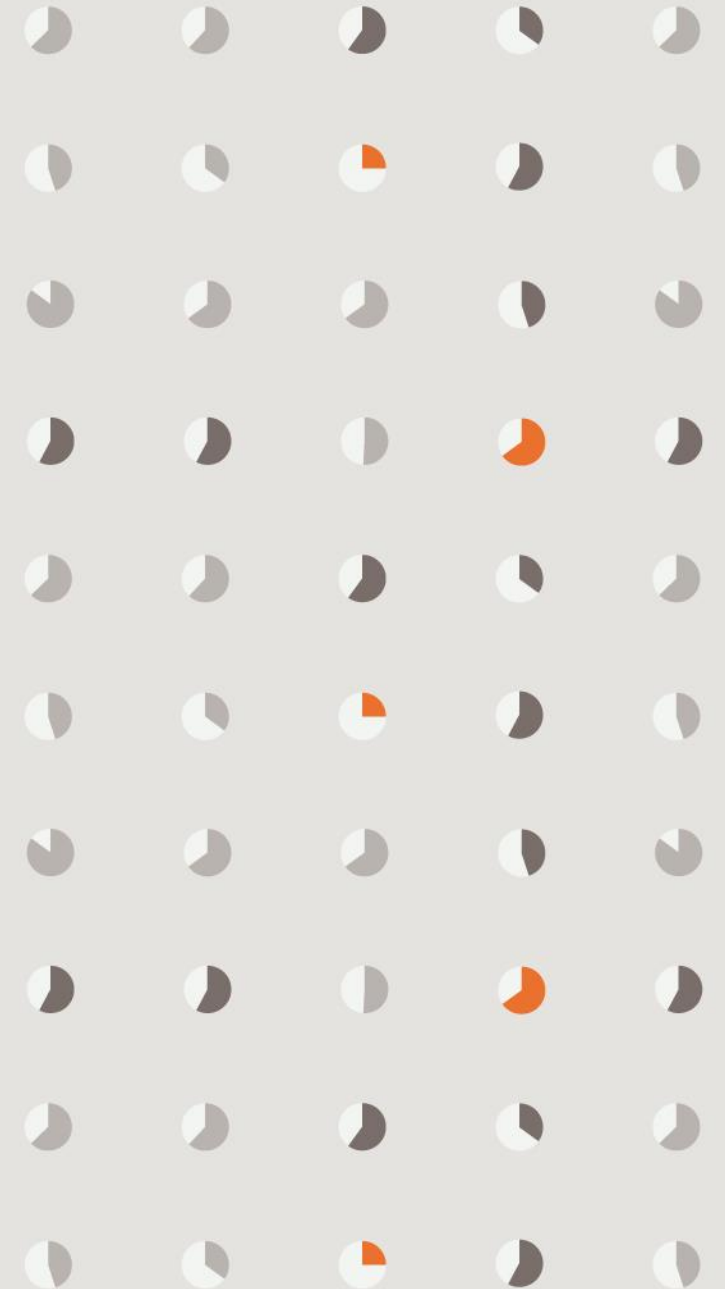
NORC | at the University of Chicago

Key Points

01 Social media is a reflection/shaper of public opinion—perception and reality

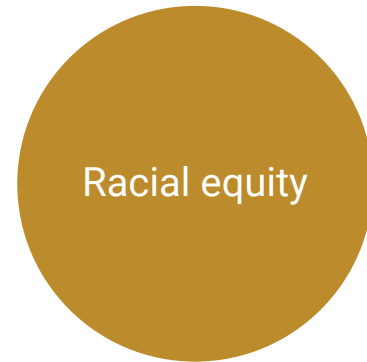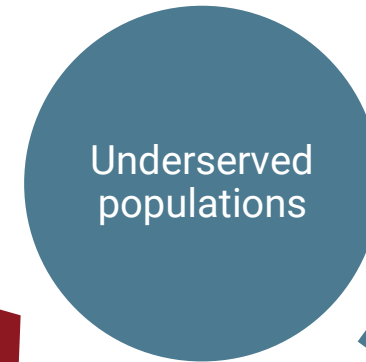**02** Public discourse about menthol in communities of color may not mirror social media discourse

03 We need to intentionally disrupt the sources of bias in social media analytics

04 Communities of color and people with lived experience of menthol use must have a voice in order to counter tobacco industry tactics

About Me

- Underserved populations
- Health equity
- Racial equity
- Systems perspective
- Culturally responsive and equitable evaluation (CREEval)

Understanding social, cultural, and physical environments in which people live that encourage or inhibit health and well-being

Applying CREEval lens to Social Media Analytics—Menthol Ban as a Starting Point.

- Integrating diversity, inclusion, and equity

- Incorporating cultural, structural, and contextual factors (e.g. historical, social, economic, racial, ethnic, gender)

- **Using a participatory process that shifts power to individuals most impacted**

- Advancing equity by informing strategy, program improvement, decision-making, policy formation, and change

Advancing our understanding of the intersection of anti-regulatory sentiment and the menthol ban on social media

We want to understand how people who identify as Black/African American and Hispanic/Latinx think and feel about the recently proposed ban on menthol cigarettes and the effect it will have on their communities.

COMMUNITY VOICES

- Create a Community Engagement Panel of people with lived experience of menthol use

- Want Black and Latinx people to help us look at our process for collecting and analyzing social media data

- Create a way to help us determine how best to engage community in research

Phase 1 Project Goals

Outreach

- Test recruitment process
- Establish a partnership between NORC and a panel of community members

Development

- Conceptualize and design a social media community engagement framework

Pilot

- Test a social media data party project exploring engagement with community members in social media
data analysis about menthol ban

Phase 2 Project Goals

Reflect

- Consider improvements on each step of the process from phase 1

Revisit

- Reconnect with most invested community members from phase 1 to provide input

Formalize

- Develop framework in more detail, with documentation to facilitate future engagement work

Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned – Substantive

Our keywords and platforms captured the existing content

Our Black and Latinx community members do not see menthol related content on social media

- Menthol use is normative—i.e., so common as not to merit mention in their social media

- Policy discussion is event driven—when something hits the news, that's the opportunity for people to see/engage

- Policy discussion is primarily shaped by and heard by industry advocates
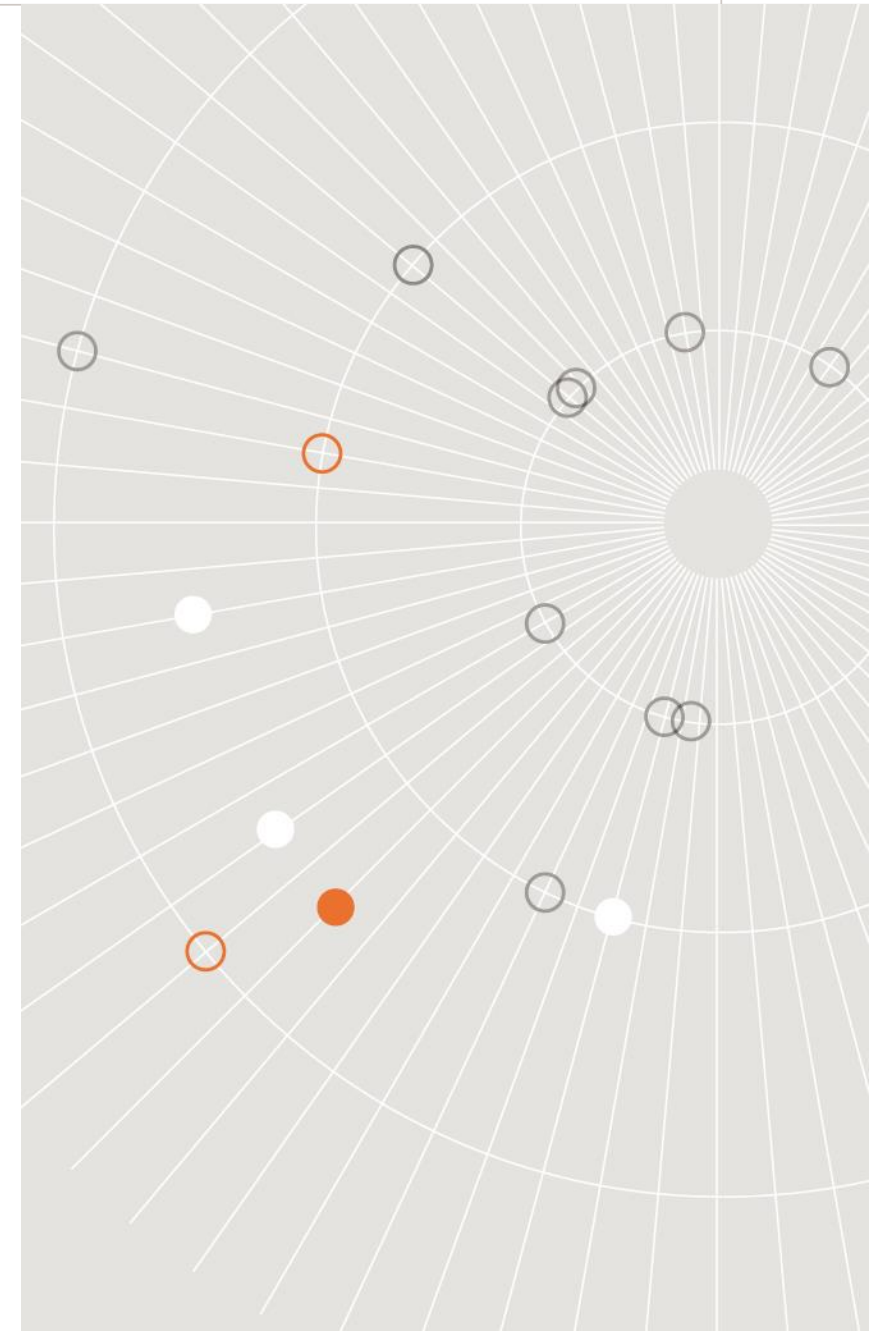
Top Retweets from ONLY April 2021

TobaccoFreeCO @TobaccoFreeCO · Apr 9

Less than 10% of #Black people who smoke used #menthol cigarettes in the 1950s — but today that number is up to 85%. A recent @TobaccoFreeKids report explains how this increase is a result of the tobacco industry's aggressive marketing of #menthol in #Black communities.

STOPPING MENTHOL, SAVING LIVES: ENDING BIG TOBACCO'S PREDATORY MARKETING TO BLACK COMMUNITIES

FEBRUARY 2021

Report: Industry Targeting Continues to Harm the Black Community
🔗 tobaccofreeco.org

💬 112   🔁 676   ♡ 1.3K

suorinofficial
@Suorinofficial1

What's your 2021 most concern vapers? 😜

#suorin #ace 🃏 #vapekit #cardstylemesh #vape #podmod #ecig #vapeon
Warning: This product may contain nicotine, nicotine is an addictive chemical.

2021 Your most concern?

COVID-19 vaccine   Tokyo Olympic Games

European Cup   new vape devices

8:22 PM · Apr 12, 2021 · Twitter for iPhone

48 Retweets   15 Likes

Ethan Nadelmann
@ethannadelmann

Not a single prominent scientist or advocate associated with tobacco #harmreduction invited to speak at the upcoming #PAVe conference on the youth #vaping epidemic. t.ly/FMF2 Reminds me of the anti-#marijuana fanaticism that once bolstered the #WarOnDrugs.

Conference — Parents Against Vaping E-cigarettes
🔗 parentsagainstvaping.org

12:29 PM · Apr 2, 2021 · Twitter Web App

55 Retweets   7 Quote Tweets   128 Likes

Example Tweets from April 2022

Lessons Learned – Recruitment

- Reddit outreach yielded panelists. However, the participants did not represent ideal partners for the panel.

- Recruitment through community organizations yielded most invested and informed panelists.

- Recruitment is about building relationships.

Lessons Learned – Implementation

- **Participants noted individual conversations or mini-groups are more personal in nature, better for sharing, and relationship building**
  - Small, comfortable, safe, trustworthy, and open atmosphere
  - Include icebreakers

- **Two-way sharing: participants and NORC staff shared responses to posed questions**
  - One partner shared that the panelists must have the right motivation, not only showing up for compensation or as an obligation.
  - Build deeper connections, establish shared purpose & developing a felt sense of buy-in from all members
  - Increase trust and sharing of opinions

- **Establish partnerships with community-based organizations**
  - Increase ability to leverage existing relationship to recruit participants
  - Create a pathway to stay informed about topics that are relevant to community members

Guiding Principles Used for Leveraging Community Voice

• **Trust** – Building trusting relationships is a critical first step in developing authentic and engagement

• **Context** – Be attuned to issues of diversity, culture, and structural racism as you engage with community members and also as you examine data

• **Time** – Time is a luxury and valuable commodity for both the community members and research team. *Try to balance the patriarchal sense of urgency which is embedded in white supremacy with the need to respect the limited amount of time community members have to engage in these types of activities.*

• **Shared Power** – Let go of traditional research structures (i.e., researchers are the expert) and create a shared space that equally values community members' voices and allows them to co-design and co-create

What's Next

How will we continue to harness the power of social media and leverage community voice?

- Finalize the conceptual framework for engaging community members in social media data science research

- Expand engagement to include LGBTQIA+ communities

- Identify more community-based partners to assist with recruitment

- Continue to investigate how the tobacco industry is co-opting the narrative related to the menthol tobacco ban

- Work with Black, Latinx, and LGBTIA+ people to use the power of social media to counter tobacco control policies
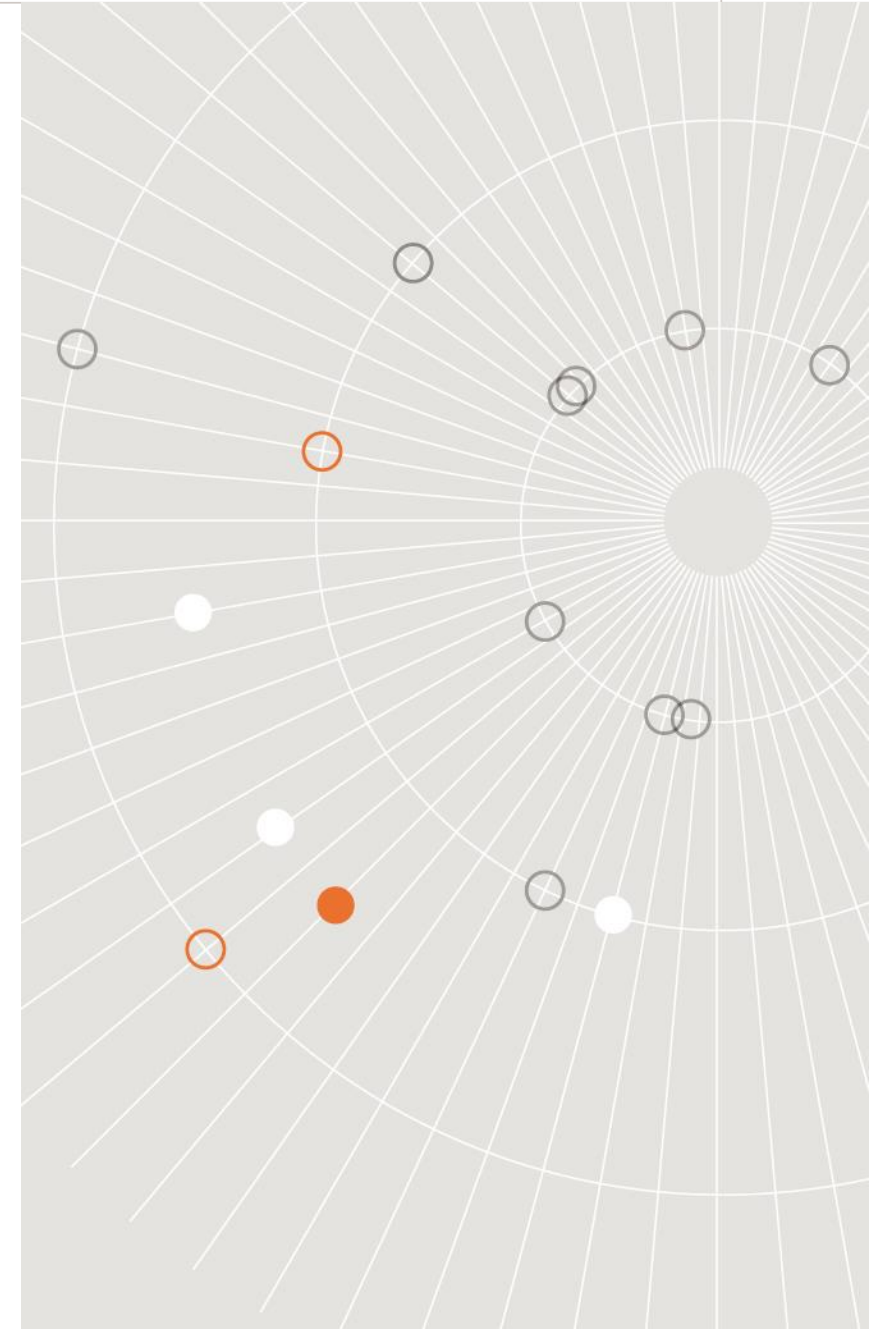
I'm no longer accepting the things I cannot change... I'm **changing the things I cannot accept.**

– *Angela Davis*

AZ QUOTES

Thank you.

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Research You Can Trust™

NORC at the University of Chicago