Targeting Tactics in Selling Smoke: Youthful Aspects of 20th Century Cigarette Advertising

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Targeting Tactics in Selling Smoke: Youthful Aspects of 20th Century Cigarette Advertising

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ABSTRACT

A descriptive history reveals the strategic interest in the young manifested by the cigarette industry from 1920 to the present. The tobacco and advertising trade presses, FTC records and recently disclosed corporate documents display and discuss the targeting of adolescents and collegians. They also document the rationale and results of media choices, the use of cartoons, and especially the use of images of independence to appeal to the psychological need of adolescents. The implications for both the private sector and public policy are discussed, given this persistent targeting of youth and failure of regulation to curtail most of these tactics.

"Carefully developed advertisements can lure our children into tobacco use behavior, then into addiction ... It is amazing that we sit back and allow this modern-day Pied Piper of Humelin to lure our children away from their good health to their eventual self-destruction." Journal of the American Medical Assoc. Editorial (Greydanus 1989)

"I don’t think cigarettes ought to be advertised ... I don’t know any way of doing this that doesn’t tempt young people to smoke, and, in view of my present knowledge, this is something I prefer not to do." Retired Marlboro advertising executive (Daniels 1974)

The ethical reservations about cigarette advertising typically stem from two unique and devastating aspects of tobacco products: their addictive and too often lethal consequences. From the industry’s perspective, the lethal consequences of smoking create a chronic and substantial need to replace those dying off, while the addictive nature of nicotine leads to phenomenally high rates of brand loyalty among smokers. This combination of factors leads naturally to a strategic interest in replacement starters, since brands able to attract starters will enjoy the profitability of their brand loyalties for many years. It is not surprising, therefore, that cigarette advertising has long been suspected of intentionally appealing to the young, for it is among the young that virtually all starting occurs.

In today’s market, the irreverent cartoon Camel has been found to be better recognized by the very young than by the claimed older target audience, consistent with Coca-Cola’s use of irreverence specifically to reach 12-25 year olds (Marketing News 1994). Critics contend that the campaign based on this character is intentionally designed to appeal to kids (Brody 1991). The Surgeon General has requested that the tobacco firms’ "hired guns," their advertising agencies, curtail these practices, but to no avail (Elliott 1992). For their part, the tobacco firms vehemently deny that they either then or now engage in practices which target minors.

R. J. Reynolds’ current use of a cartoon Camel trade character may falsely suggest to some that the specific use
of cartoons, or the more general targeting of youth, are new phenomena in cigarette marketing. This paper provides a descriptive history of cigarette advertising, focusing on the available evidence with respect to the young, and showing that current practices have many precedents. Giving primary attention to trade sources and corporate documents, it reports analyses and admissions demonstrative of the targeting of youth and the confidence of insiders in the power and import of cigarette advertising in inducing starting (market promotion), in addition to what it might do to reassure smokers concerned about their health (market retention).

EARLY TARGETING TACTICS

Concerned for Children

National cigarette brands, their associated skillful mass media advertising campaigns and the resulting dramatic growth in aggregate cigarette demand didn't occur until around WWI, long after mass production machinery had been in place. Whether intentional or incidental, the inevitable exposure of children to these well conceived and designed cigarette appeals was of concern to the parents and legislators of the 1920s. A U.S. Senator enacting in support of amendments to the Pure Food and Drug Act said: "Not since the days when the vendor of harmful nostrums was swept from our streets, has this country witnessed such an orgy of buncombe (bunk), quackery and downright falsehood and fraud as now marks the current campaign promoted by certain cigarette manufacturers to create a vast woman and child market" (Schudson 1984). From the very beginning of commercial radio, listeners complained to the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) about the effect of cigarette advertising on their children. One parent wrote: "I am very much worked up over the fact that the cigarette people are employing the radio to broadcast information that tends to corrupt the morals of my little son." Another stated that "deliberate propaganda put out to create an unnecessary appetite in young men and women is decidedly against public welfare" (Dunlap 1931).

For their part, the industry seemed boastful about its accomplishments at overcoming the moral reservations about smoking, including that by youths. American Tobacco's campaign for Lucky Strikes boasted "ancient prejudice removed" and one ad variant depicted a young man of uncertain age, but dressed in short pants, "breaking the chains of the past" to reach for opportunity and an open pack of cigarettes (Anderson 1929).

Music to their Ears

Cigarette sellers were among the most enthusiastic pioneers in the use of network broadcasting for coast to coast advertising. By 1930 American Tobacco (ATC), Brown & Williamson (B&W), P. Lorillard (LOR) and R.J.Reynolds (RJR) were all buying network radio time (Dunlap 1931, Appendix O). "There has been no greater enthusiast for radio broadcast advertising than George W. Hill of the ATC, whose business for the first five months of 1930 surpassed all records ... The company sponsors the Lucky Strike dance orchestra in three full hour broadcasts each week" (Dunlap 1931). Lucky Strike sponsored many radio comedies and musical shows, such as Jack Benny and the Kay Kayser Kollege of Musical Knowledge, and the best known and longest running of the popular music shows, Lucky Strike's Hit Parade. This show started in 1928 and ran into the 1950s on television. It featured teen idol Frank Sinatra when he was launching his career (Cone 1969). So popular was this show in 1938 that a sweepstakes promotion offering free cartons of Luckies for the names of the three most popular tunes drew nearly 7 million entries per week (Hettinger and Neff, 1938).


Market research studies guided the selection of musical shows and styles that appealed to "boys and girls." The market research files of J. Walter Thompson Co., the agency advertising Old Golds, included the following market research studies for 1941-42: Survey of Sales at Colleges, Survey of Dealers in 32 Colleges, remembrance check on the "Apple" campaign among college students, report by Crossley on New York City youth interests in radio programs, a research plan to deepen this knowledge, a survey of radio listening for "boys and girls," and radio preferences among "teenage boys and girls" (Pollay 1988).
POST WWII: BUILDING UPON SUCCESS

New Young Smokers Remain Important

Despite the impressive successes of 1920s, 1930s and 1940s promotion in recruiting starters and "growing the market," the industry still saw it as strategically important to continue efforts to recruit ever more new smokers. "A massive potential market still exists among women and young adults, cigarette industry leaders agreed, acknowledging that recruitment of these millions of prospective smokers comprises the major objective for the immediate future and on a long term basis as well" (USTJ 1950b). The "boys and girls in uniform" were seen as a target audience that made good business sense "since the majority are youngsters with pliable desires and subject to habit education that will be productive for many years to come" (Dunhill 1951). The strategic value of attracting the college aged young was expressed by a Phillip Morris (PM) executive: "Research and experience proved that the consumer, at this age and experience level, is more susceptible to change, has far reaching influence value, and is apt to retain brand habits for a longer period of time than the average consumer reached in the general market. Therefore, though the advertising cost per thousand in the college market is relatively high, the actual expenditure can be a great deal more efficient" (Gilbert 1957). Another PM executive said: "Students are tremendously loyal. If you catch them, they'll stick with you like glue" (USTJ 1962b). The same logic, of course, applies equally well, then as now, with respect to those even younger.

Cartoons, Comics and the Circus

The print advertising vehicle with the best penetration among the very young children of the 1940s was probably the cartoon Sunday comics, a feature of every major newspaper. "Puck: The Comic Weekly," a syndicated collection that in 1949 reached "8,000,000 homes and virtually all the kids," was self described as "America's most powerful and exciting sales force" (Puck 1949, emphasis in original). PM and RJR must have believed that this was an appropriate and effective medium for reaching one of their target audiences, for they both were Puck's clients in 1949, and RJR had been so for more than a decade.

In the 1950s, many brands used cartoon trade characters in their advertising. The ads on Lucky Strike's Hit Parade for a while featured a cute animated character called "Scoop" who, through the then impressive technical feat of super imposition, appeared on screen with the show's star, Dorothy Collins (BBD&O 1954). Philip Morris' used cartoons when advertising on "I Love Lucy." Lorillard created animated TV cartoon ads for Old Gold that featured the voices of their "Honeymooners" stars, Jackie Gleason and Art Carney (USTJ 1956d). This presaged the Winston spots that employed the animated hit characters from "The Flintstones," a totally cartoon show they sponsored, whose voices, structure and sense of humor all imitated the "Honeymooners" (AA 1961). Old Gold later used animated cartoons TV spots with a modern jazz jingle (USTJ 1957).

In 1958, the Philip Morris brand launched a print comic strip campaign featuring a "handsome, rough and ready" adventure hero, "Duke Handy." It was placed in the Sunday color comic sections of 40 newspapers in a national network. Supporting this was a heavy promotional campaign which included stories and ads in the major newspapers carrying the cartoon series, Duke Handy campaign buttons, truck posters, newspaper display cards, newsyb competitions and supporting publicity and promotional activities (USTJ 1958a).

Until 1961, B&W had advertised the Viceroy brand in comic supplements (USTJ 1961a). L&M used "Frosty the Snowman" for a Holiday merchandising symbol in 60 second "Frosty" TV spots and in store displays, bins and shelf extenders (USTJ 1961b). The Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, with its appeal to "children of all ages," was also used as an advertising vehicle by PM. Not only were their products promoted in the program, but they were also featured in "clown gags ... before a captive audience ... in a relaxed happy atmosphere" (Printers' Ink 1960a).

Going to School

Cigarette promotional programs also included elements that went right into the nation's schools. One "subtle, clever and enticing" plan provided high schools with free football programs that included a two page Chesterfield ad in the center spread along with the game's score card. This was not the first such effort, for "cigaret (sic) advertisers have used high school programs for football and other sports in the past" (Tide 1948). In the 1930s, for example, Lucky Strike placed colorful image advertising on the covers of football programs of over 100 colleges and universities (PI 1935). Philip Morris' collegiate ad program started in 1933 (Kent 1963). Plastic coated book covers featuring school logos on the front and cigarette ads on the back were still being used in the 1950s by Old Gold to reach the students "in most of the nations' 1,800 colleges and more than 8,000 of its 25,000 high schools with unusual success" (AA 1953a).
In 1947, B&W included 200 college newspapers in its media mix for the Raleigh brand (PI 1947). In the 1950s, Lucky Strikes targeted collegians with its largest ever campaign using college newspapers, campus radio stations, football programs, and extensive campus sampling and tie-in promotions (AA 1953b). Cigarette firms were reported by a research firm specializing in children to be spending about $5,000,000 per year on college promotions in the 1950s. The researcher noted that most of these college students had started smoking at earlier ages, and that "Continual exposure to advertising to adults through the different media has its effects on young people" (Gilbert 1957).

Promotional efforts targeting collegians were estimated by the President of the Student Marketing Institute to have doubled in the five years between 1957 and 1962, with 20 brands active on college campuses. B&W had 17 salesmen assigned to work college campuses, and Philip Morris had 166 "campus representatives," students paid $50 a month to spread good will and free cigarettes. PM also ran a contest at colleges offering record players in exchange for collected packages, a contest eventually won by a sorority of physical education student teachers (Neuberger 1963). Contests and other promotions on college campuses became popular sales tools (USTJ 1961c, 1962b). Liggett & Myers (L&M) ran contests for collegians with cars as prizes (USTJ 1963b). Cigarettes ads accounted for an estimated 40% of the national advertising incomes of the 850 college newspapers in the National Advertising Service (Brecher and Brecher 1963, p165).

Keeping the Beat Going on TV

Success as pioneers on radio led the cigarette industry to pioneer on television, too. As early as 1950, more than seven hours weekly were being sponsored by cigarette sellers, evidence of the industry's faith that "it is an historically demonstrated certainty that the more people subjected to intelligent advertising, the more people will buy the product advertised" (USTJ 1950a). The Hit Parade radio show was one of the first radio programs to be translated to television, where it continued for many more years, developing a substantial following among the young, because of their intense interest in the latest in popular music. ATC ultimately attempted to capitalize upon this by launching a new brand called "Hit Parade" (USTJ 1956c). Music was also an important element in most cigarette ads on TV, as it had been on radio, with often repeated catchy jingles and theme music. In addition, some brands sponsored tours for their bands while others had tie-ins with record companies (USTJ 1953b). Marlboro, for example, featured a favorite band among the college and university crowd, "Ralph Marterie and his Marlboro Men" in TV and radio ads, as well as in personal appearances (USTJ 1958c). ATC and Columbia Records arranged a joint promotion around the slogan "Lucky Strike is to your taste as music is to your ears" (USTJ 1961e).

In addition to the Lucky Strike Hit Parade, ATC in the early 1950s sponsored the Horace Heidt amateur show which regularly gave "talented youngsters selected a chance to be heard" by a national radio audience (USTJ 1952). Chesterfield's TV ads of this period used the theme line "First with Young America" (Sarra 1953), an idea echoed in PM's print campaign concept a few years later (USTJ 1955a). Marlboro sponsored the "Dobie Gillis Show" whose young actor hero received a prominent award from the Catholic Youth Organization (USTJ 1961d). By the early 1960s the industry was relying heavily on TV, spending the majority of their total promotional budget on this one medium (AA 1963f, 1963b). This trust in the efficacy of advertising led to record promotional spending, corresponding sales growth and increased profits (e.g. AA 1963e,r,z).

Healthy Heros

Sporting event sponsorships and endorsements of cigarettes by professional athletes were commonplace well into the 1960s. Marlboro sponsored "Rookie of the Year" and "Pro Player of the Year" football awards, as well as sponsoring telectcasts and employing five football stars as salesmen in the off season (USTJ 1960c). B&W sponsored radio and TV coverage of the New York Mets, Cincinnati Reds and LA Angels, as well as college basketball games, the Cotton Bowl, the Sugar Bowl and Viceroy advertising in the center spreads of the football programs of nearly 200 colleges (USTJ 1962a). L&M had long been associated with baseball, regularly sponsoring games and using athletes' testimonials. In 1962, RJR sponsored the telectcast of the College All-Star Football Game (USTJ 1962c). In 1963, RJR sponsored the games of eight different baseball teams and ATC sponsored six more (AA 1963g). Roger Maris, the home run record holding baseball star, endorsed Camels (Changing Times 1962, p35). Football was also used to associate cigarettes with athleticism. Marlboro, which used athletes' endorsements primarily to appeal to blacks (Pollay,Carter-Whitney and Lee 1992), sponsored National Football League games on CBS (AA 1963i), and the championship games on NBC (AA 1963s). Lucky Strike used New York Giants star Frank Gifford in ads (AA 1963k). B&W sponsored college football Bowl games (AA 1963t). Lorillard, preempted from the football contracts, signed to sponsor the Olympic Games of 1964 and was already broadcasting previews in 1963 (AA 1963p).
Young by Design: Packaging

Appealing to the young was an explicit strategic interest of PM, for when they redesigned a package in 1955, their President said: "We wanted a new, bright package that would appeal to a younger market." Their ad director at the same press conference said: "Our ads are now aimed at young people and emphasize gentleness" (Tide 1955). Old Gold redesigned is package in 1957, spending eight months on "intensive development," so that new package would evoke reactions of a "modern, youthful, clean, fresh" image (USTJ 1957). Several years later, the creative director of one of Lorillard's agencies solicited package designs "attractive to kids" and that had "selling appeal to the 'Youth Market'" for a new brand concept: "Kicks." Its specifications noted that while "geared to the youth market, no attempt (obvious) can be made ... The package design should be geared to attract the youthful eye ... not the ever watchful eye of the Federal Government" (CR 1971).

Being Fashionable and Sexy

Lorillard's Kent and Newport brands sought acceptance as fashionable by teaming up with fashion magazines, seven "well known" fashion houses, and 265 stores. Mademoiselle was chosen specifically because it was "aimed at smokers in a younger age group" (Advertising Agency 1958). Mademoiselle was not the only magazine able to deliver a young audience. The new Playboy sold itself to tobacco firms by noting that its "young readers are naturally more receptive to tobacco brand advertising," citing Marlboro, Kent and Winston as clients (Playboy 1958).

CRITICISM AND RESPONSES

There were, of course, critiques of these successful selling efforts of the cigarette advertisers. Criticism and concern flared in the 1950s, sparked by Reader's Digest articles and other publicity of emergent scientific findings, leading to a "health scare" and the launching of many new brands and product line extensions designed to appear to be "healthier," such as filters, king sized ("naturally filtered"), menthol, or mild variants. For an overview of the chronology of bench mark events in the history of cigarette advertising, see Table 1, or Pollay (1988).

The criticisms became particularly pointed, as cigarette sales among teens grew despite the growing cancer concern among scientists in the early 1960s. The industry continued to enjoy and expect sales specifically "among the teenagers ... (who) have not been much impressed by any anti-smoking campaigns" (Fortune 1963). Gilbert Research, a firm specializing in the young, reported that estimates of smoking rates among ages 13-19 were 35%, compared with 25% only two years earlier, with 44% of graduating seniors smoking. This was an impressive increase in the teenage smoking rate over two years, and the growth was linked to advertising by Fortune who commented: "Cigarette ads often portray and seem to be pitched directly at young people" (1963).

Reader's Digest named ATC, RJR and LOR as aiming at the young, noting the on campus efforts aimed at collegians, hiring students to distribute cigarette samples and the dominant presence of cigarette advertising in campus publications. "Nowhere in that bright wonderful world depicted in cigaret (sic) ads is there any hint to youngsters that cigarettes (sic) might be harmful" (AA 1963d). The National Congress of Parents and Teachers, the PTA, described the advertising as "smoke-washing," invoking an analogy to Communist brainwashing (AA 1963).

Much of this criticism and concern was, however, muted in the public forum by the age-old reluctance of media to offend its lucrative sponsors (AA 1963a). Changing Times (1962) reviewed the 1962 ad campaigns noting that "one of the most characteristic aspects of the ads is their marked emphasis on youth," leading them to ask: "Are we so bemused by advertising that we have lost the capacity for either indignation or self protection?" When the first Surgeon General's Report on Smoking and Health was imminent, it was anticipated with much discussion of the probable legislative responses it might precipitate (AA 1963v; Cohen 1963). Much of that discussion focused on the industry's sponsorship of sports, use of athletes' endorsements, and copy appeals to the young.

Insiders' Admissions

The targeting of youth was openly acknowledged and even became the subject of criticism from knowable sources within the tobacco and advertising communities. A Printers' Ink editor (Brown 1964) stated that the companies' prime concern for their futures meant that: "Until now, most advertising has been directed to a young market in an attempt to create new consumers." Both the leading trade magazine (AA 1963a) and a leading advertising industry executive (AA 1964f) saw effective marketing to the young as strategically important to maintaining the industry's size and fostering further growth. Advertising Age editorially counselled the industry to put less emphasis on youth and athletes in their ads (AA 1963b). The National Association of Broadcasters, working on the development of a self-regulatory process, stated clearly that "tobacco advertising..."
TABLE 1
SOME BENCHMARK EVENTS FOR CIGARETTE ADVERTISING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1940s</td>
<td>FTC Complaints about nicotine and health claims in ads of most firms are in litigation for years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td><em>Reader's Digest</em> sparks public &quot;health scare&quot; with &quot;Cancer by the Carton&quot; article.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>Tobacco Industry Research Committee formed for public relations. Evolves later to the Council for Tobacco Research and the Tobacco Institute.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950s</td>
<td>Proliferation of apparently &quot;healthier&quot; products and brands: e.g. filters, king size, menthol, mild.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950s</td>
<td>Motivation Research and industry agreements leads increasingly to ads featuring &quot;pictures of health&quot; and cease fires in the &quot;Tar Wars&quot; competition using verbal claims with health implications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>Marlboro re-positioned as &quot;male&quot; product, eventually becoming first choice among starters and the dominant brand in the industry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>Industry sponsored law passed requires &quot;may be&quot; warnings on packages, but not advertising.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>Cigarette advertising self-regulation administered by National Association of Broadcasters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>FCC mandates pro-health spots on radio and TV.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>Industry volunteers to Congress to leave Radio and TV.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>Direct Radio and TV advertising end. Warnings begin to appear in other advertising.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970s</td>
<td>Ad spending increases dramatically in print, outdoor, retail, transit and diverse media, event sponsorships, promotions, sampling, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
having an especial appeal to minors, expressed or implied, should be avoided" (AA 1963c).

The campaign that drew the most specific criticism for its copy was Lucky Strikes', for their campaign built around the slogan "Luckies separate the men from the boys, but not from the girls" (AA 1963q, w). A typical print rendition showed a young man looking longingly at a mature man, such as race car driver simultaneously enjoying a cigarette, a victory trophy and the admiration of an attractive woman. The TV schedule called for all three networks and spot commercials on 500 stations in 90 markets (USTJ 1963c). The President of the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) called the campaign a "brazen, cynical flouting of the concern of millions of American parents about their children starting the smoking habit ... They well know that every boy wants to be regarded as a man" (AA 1963x). Advertising Age condemned the campaign, too. "It is a too-clever, too-cynical attempt ... This is advertising we can do without" (AA 1963y). Printers' Ink also judged this campaign to be "directed specifically at young smokers, when the 'when-does-a-boy-become-a-man' dilemma is strongest felt" (PI 1963). The next year they applauded the NAB initiative for "raising the question of ethics" and booed ATC and its agency, BB&O, for "callously continuing" this campaign (PI 1964a).

**Industry Responses**

In the face of this criticism and the impending Surgeon General's Report, the six major firms of the industry in 1963 claimed to cease virtually all advertising in college media, although this left in place other youth targeting practices. RJR was still spending about half of its spot radio commitment, nearly $2,500,000, on radio stations in after-school hours (AA 1964b). Viceroy ads still showed "two young couples having a cigarette at a football game that is obviously a collegiate one" (PI 1963). Advertising Age noted the dilemma facing the cigarette firms, for they were interested "in picking up business from new, younger smokers," but were "not wanting to be seen reaching to the young market" (AA 1963i).

Industry executives met in the summer of 1963 to discuss restrictions on TV advertising, using the Tobacco Institute as framework to avoid collusion charges (AA 1963m). The Tobacco Institute's "suggestions" included one that programs "whose content is directed particularly at youthful audiences should not be sponsored or used. Thus, good judgement in program content, rather than arbitrary restriction of sponsorship to certain hours of the listening or viewing day, should be the determining factor" (AA 1963n). While the Tobacco Institute took pains to note that it itself did not monitor or regulate the advertising of its members, the chief executives of all of the major firms, save for B&W, instantly endorsed these "suggestions," indicating that they would display the necessary judgement and self-regulatory restraint (AA 1963n).

**Evaluation of the Response**

Despite these promises, ATC had 1964 goals for Pall Mall "to increase the percentage of smokers who think of the brand as being "for someone just starting to smoke" and "to increase the proportion of beginning smokers who smoke Pall Mall" (Sullivan, Stauffer, Cowell & Bayles 1964, p14, 16, emphases in original). One U.S. Senator felt that this self-regulatory process was an "exercise in futility" and "motivated by a desire to head off government regulation" (AA 1963n). Another complained about the subsequent Kent sponsorship of the Ed Sullivan show providing the American debut of the Beatles, exposing millions of teens to Kent ads (AA 1965). Printers' Ink (1964c) noted that 1964 creative work showed couples smoking after playing tennis (Viceroy) and that both Newport and Salem used young looking models, contrary to the claimed avoidance of models who were or appeared to be less than 25.

The Federal Trade Commission noted that both the messages and the media placement seemed destined to attract the young. "Whether through design or otherwise, cigarette advertising is so placed that its audience is substantially and not merely incidentally or insignificantly, composed of non-adults ... Whether or not the cigarette industry has deliberately attempted to exploit the large and vulnerable youth market, its advertising, in emphatically reiterating the pleasures and attractions of smoking without disclosing the dangers to health, has exercised an undue influence over the large class of youthful, immature consumers or potential consumers of cigarettes" (FTC 1964).

An analysis of the TV schedule chosen by cigarette firms in 1963 indicates that all firms except B&W bought a large number of shows whose audience was 30% or more youth under 21 (Pollay 1994a, b). All together in 1963, cigarette brands sponsored a total of 55 shows for 125 hours a week. Assuming conservatively that the average half-hour show involved only two commercial exposures, and based on realized audience data, it is estimated that teenagers saw an average of over 1,000 cigarette TV commercials a year, and that even younger children aged 2-12 saw nearly as many. The time slot preference pattern was significantly correlated with the proportion of teenagers each time slot
delivered - not the proportion of adults - consistent with the idea that reaching the young was a strategic priority and a criterion for media selection (Pollay 1994b).

An analysis for the week of January 1967 found 60 cigarette-sponsored programs on TV, 7.8 of which were seen by the average teenager, "a substantial increase over the 5.9 programs viewed on average," by the population as a whole. This suggested to the FTC that: "Intentional or fortuitous, teen-agers appear to be a prime target for televised cigarette advertising" (Consumer Reports 1968). Another analysis counted 73 TV programs sponsored by cigarette brands, appearing 296 times during January 1968 and containing a total of 501 ads. Based on realized audiences for the shows carrying these full commercials, and ignoring other sponsor identifications, this schedule was estimated to have exposed the average teenaged viewer to over 60 full cigarette commercials per month (FTC 1968). Note that with remote controls rare then, audiences were more certain than today to be exposed to the ads contained within watched shows. Over 90% of the public thought that "special efforts should be made to discourage young people from smoking" (Miller and Monahan 1966).

More Self-Regulatory Failure

Congress reacted to the first Surgeon General's Report in 1964 by passing an industry-sponsored bill that specifically exempted advertising from carrying the "may be" package warning, leading many to see the law as an industry "victory" (e.g. Drew 1965). The industry formalized its self-regulatory advertising code, including potential (but never imposed) fines of up to $100,000 (Cigarette Labelling and Advertising - 1965). The advertising code appeared substantial and adequate, for it prohibited cigarette advertising in school and college publications, and testimonials from athletes or other celebrities of appeal to the young. It also banned the use of comic books, newspaper comics and the distribution of samples at schools. It disallowed advertising on broadcasting programs directed primarily to persons under 21 years of age, and the use of models who were younger, or appeared younger, that 25 years of age. Representations that smoking was essential to social success, or representations that the healthiness of models was due to cigarette smoking were also not allowed.

Industry insiders did not seem to find the code particularly restrictive, however (PI 1965a). Printers' Ink noted that "in the past, advertising has been directed at a youthful market ... (and) there is still little reason to assume that the manufacturers are going to do a complete about face in their thinking" (PI 1965b). "Four months after the code was formulated, Viceroy ads featured young tennis players lighting up after a hot game. Salem showed a young couple playing giggling games alongside a waterfall ... A TV commercial producer admitted it didn't matter how young the models looked, or how youthful were their actions, so long as they possessed 'over twenty-five' birth certificates. In fact, his quest now is for older models who 'looked young'" (Baker 1968).

The cigarette code operationally defined "primarily" underage as prohibiting cigarette advertising on shows whose audience was 45% or more under 21 (AA 1966). This decision rule allowed the continuation of the sponsorship of 'The Beverly Hillbillies' by RJR despite the fact that two successive measured shows had 50% and 45% of its audience under 21, because an interpretation held that the prohibition would be applied only on the basis of two successive monthly audience analyses, not for specific shows (AA 1967b). It wasn't until later that year, after the monthly data also repeatedly showed extraordinarily high levels of minors, that RJR finally capitulated and dropped the show (AA 1967d).

When the 1969 Congress held hearings and considered the effectiveness of the self regulation in restraining advertising targeting the young, Michael Pertschuk, then a young lawyer and not yet an FTC Commissioner, presented "20 uninterrupted minutes of cigarette commercials stressing romance, pretty girls and athletics - many accompanied by rock music, with its unique appeal to young people, and all obviously designed to encourage young people to light up and smoke" (Consumer Reports 1969).

The National Association of Broadcasters Code Authority, who reviewed all ads in the self regulatory process, noted that: "Despite changes which have been brought about in cigarette advertising on radio and television, the cumulative impression created by virtually all of the individual campaigns supports a finding that smoking is made to appear universally acceptable, attractive and desirable ... The difficulty in cigarette advertising is that commercials which have an impact upon an adult cannot be assumed to leave unaffected a young viewer, smoker or otherwise. The adult world depicted in cigarette advertising very often is a world to which the adolescent aspires" (Bell 1966). While the advertising for many products may occasionally depict "a world to which the adolescent aspires," the research, development and design for some cigarette brands seem to have strived to maximize this appeal (see below).
Candy Cigarettes: How Sweet It Is!

In 1967 the FTC complained to the industry's self regulatory Code Authority about candy and bubble gum being sold in the same or look alike packages as cigarette brands (AA 1967a). At least five U.S. candy manufacturers distributed various candy cigarettes imitating existing brands: Camel, Lucky Strikes, L&M, Marlboro, Pall Mall, Salem, Winston, Chesterfield, Oases (sic), Lark and Viceroy, with candy versions of L&M, Camel, Marlboro, Salem, Winston, Lucky Strike and Pall Mall sold by more than one manufacturer. A chocolate cigarette came from a European source and appeared in packages stated "Made under licence of Philip Morris Inc., New York, NY, USA."

Candy cigarettes have been on the U.S. market since at least the 1930s (PI Monthly 1939). These infringements by small candy firms of the much larger cigarette makers' copyrights and trademarks seems to have been unaffected by the large and growing numbers of lawyers working for the industry. When questioned by reporters, the candy makers said that "no company had ever suggested that it might take action." Another said: "The companies don't object. That's the point. We've been doing it for many years. They don't care" (AA 1967c). The cigarette sellers disclaimed any intent to lure kids with candy cigarettes, but would not say what action, if any, would be taken. Candy cigarettes imitating Camel, L&M, Lucky Strike, Marlboro, Pall Mall, Salem, Viceroy and Winston were still available into the 1980s (Blum 1980).

THE ERA OF THE IMAGE

"Cigarette advertising, over the past several decades, has changed constantly to fit the conditions under which it operates. It is in the process of changing even now, and must continue to change, in order to fulfill its function: selling cigarettes" (USTJ 1956a).

Finessing Fear with Photos

Before the cancer scare of the early 1950s, cigarette advertising had characteristically used very explicit health claims, assertions and reassurances. With greater public awareness and concern about cancer, however, these explicit health claims were keeping the increasingly threatening health issue salient, i.e. prominent in consumers' thinking. While the intent was to reassure, explicit verbal references to health inevitably reminded viewers of health issues to be considered. Fortune called industry attention to the fact that many campaigns were "riddled with warnings and appeals to fear" so that "the present cigarette turmoil could be considered an inside job" and the "industry may be promoting itself toward a dead end" (Fortune 1953). Ad slogans, like Philip Morris' "The cigarette that takes the fear out of smoking" was judged by Business Week to be a "strange somersault" for coming so close to the word 'cancer' without actually using it (Business Week 1953a). The leading tobacco trade journal "warned editorially on many occasions that the health theme was a risky one" (USTJ 1958b).

The industry was getting similar counsel from the many motivation researchers it employed during this era (Cheskin 1967; Dichter 1964; Martineau 1957; Smith 1954). Leo Burnett, the adman who so successfully repositioned the Marlboro brand, noted that "Those who do smoke do so for various conscious or unconscious reasons ... Marlboro is made for them" (Burnett 1958). Social Research Inc. did motivation research into the depth psychology of smokers (Day 1955) and concluded that "Advertising makes cigarettes respectable, and is thus reassuring" (Neuberger 1963). Young & Rubicam also used depth motivational interviews of smokers to extract social meanings, conflicted feelings, attitudes, and perceptions and beliefs about health aspects (Smith 1954). "(Health appeals) may capture momentary competitive advantages, and they may offer some reassurance to the inveterate smoker. But they do utterly nothing to widen the market, to tap the driving force of the real psychological satisfactions" (Martineau 1957). Put simply, the recommendations from motivation researchers were to be oblique and indirect - to use images, not information - reassuring pictures, not words - pictures of health, not the less credible verbal claims of healthfulness.

This advice was apparently followed. The "grim messages from the health scare days gave way to pleasant, almost 'Pollyanna' prose ... cajoling the smoker with soft, 'gentle' phrases and oh-so-gay jingles" (Day 1955). A few years later, the trade press noted that "Once more the industry is back to its traditional and usually successful course - advertising flavor, taste and pleasure against a backdrop of beaches, ski slopes and languid lakes. It is a formula that works, as all time high sales show" (PI 1960b). "The artful copywriter succeeded in making, implicitly, health claims which had before been explicit" with copy written with "heavy use of terms like gentleness, purity, mildness, freshness, white ash" (Neuberger 1963). "Nowadays all allusions to the health question are models of indirectness" (Fortune 1963).

In 1981 the FTC reviewed the changes in cigarette advertising since the 1964 Surgeon General's Report and noted the continuing glamorization of cigarette smoking.
"In the (last) sixteen years there has been little change ... ads have continued to attempt to allay anxieties about the hazards of smoking and to associate smoking with good health, youthful vigor, social and professional success ... thus the cigarette is portrayed as an integral part of youth, happiness, attractiveness, personal success and an active, vigorous, strenuous lifestyle." The FTC also noted that the ads were very visual and "rich in thematic imagery associating smoking with, among other things, outdoor activities, athletics, individualism and achievement. They are frequently filled with rugged, vigorous, attractive, healthy-looking people living energetic lives full of success and athletic achievement, free from any health hazards" (FTC 1981).

IMAGES OF INDEPENDENCE

The Marlboro Man

There may be no better example of the practical power of motivation research than the success enjoyed by Marlboro over the years, and this brand's ability to attract young starters with advertising that has used the mythology of the cowboy in its transformational, rather than informational, image based advertising. Marlboro was converted from a female product, "Mild as May," to a more masculine product with ads that initially featured various tattooed models, but soon relied solely on the durable cowboy of Marlboro Country, with all his favorable connotations of rugged individualism. The Marlboro ad man said: "We have been able to get under their skins a bit and find out what they really think about a product or the presentation of it and can't or won't express in words, thanks to Doctor Dichter, Burleigh Gardner, Pierre Martineau, Paul Lazarusfeld, the late Henry Link, and others" (Burnett 1961). Marlboro research was also done by Elmo Roper who surveyed the largest national sample of smokers ever - some 10,000 - and by the Color Research Institute for association testing (Cheskin 1967). Intensive field interviews were used to "pre-test our selling promotion and advertising techniques" (Weissman 1955).

Large advertising spending in all media made Marlboro commonplace. Outdoor advertising was seen as contributing to the success of Marlboro because its low cost per exposure allowed for signage that produced multiple exposures, creating a "friendly familiarity" that built consumer confidence. "The No. 1 factor in building confidence is the plain old fashioned matter of friendly familiarity" (Burnett 1961, emphasis in original).

One account describes the success of George Weissman and Jack Landry of PM. When Weissman assumed responsibility in the later 1950s, his research informed him that the young in search of an identity took up smoking as a way of declaring independence from their parents. Jack Landry, coordinating with the Leo Burnett agency, came up with "commercials that would turn rookie smokers on to Marlboro ... the right image to capture the youth market's fancy ... a perfect symbol of independence and individualistic rebellion" (Meyers 1984). The importance of this cowboy imagery of independence and its appeal to youth is suggested by its selection by PM despite being inferior in Starch readership scores to an ad featuring a more urbane tattooed man with whom adult men could more readily identify (PI 1964b).

The President and CEO of PM International discussed the Marlboro Man, emphasizing this idea of autonomy. "The cowboy has appeal to people as a personality. There are elements of adventure, freedom, being in charge of your destiny" (Trachtenberg 1987, p109). The Marlboro Man is consistently portrayed in ways that emphasize his independence. The Marlboro Man is almost always alone and is never subject to any authority whatsoever, or even in its presence. There are no parents, no older brothers, no foreman, and no bullies in Marlboro Country. It seems no accident that Marlboro Country doesn't even have a sheriff. The power of this associative style of image advertising was demonstrated by Marlboro's success at capturing the dominant share of starters every year, starters whose brand loyalty soon made Marlboro the best seller. This success led to much imitative competition. "The theme of masculine independence has been used by several other advertisers," with Camel, Newport and Old Gold given as examples (FTC 1970).

You've Come the Wrong Way, Baby!

The stunning success of Marlboro advertising led PM to launch a second brand with imagery of independence, this one with a female personality, Virginia Slims (Weinstein 1970). It, like Marlboro, was carefully researched and became an enduring success. An ad executive for a leading female brand recently stated: "We try to tap the emerging independence and self-fulfilment of women, to make smoking a badge to express that" (Waldman 1989).

Many other "female" brands have come and gone in the interim, such as the floral "Eve," or the self-indulgent "Satin" (Abrams and Guyon 1983; Dougherty 1970). Silva Thins was suspected as trying to appeal to dating teenagers with ad copy about first dates: "Should a girl skinny smoke on her first date? If she doesn't, she doesn't know what she's missing" (AA 1971). Analysts (e.g. Jones 1987) have noted that those women's brands stressing independence
have done far better than those implying excessive femininity or prettiness of design. The failure of most of the imitative or alternative tactics demonstrates the importance of the preemptive positioning of Virginia Slims as the symbol of independence.

A retrospective study observes that the launch campaign for Virginia Slims and other female brands seems to account for an abrupt increase in smoking rates among women younger than 18 years of age. "The tobacco advertising campaigns targeting women, which were launched in 1967, were associated with a major increase in smoking uptake that was specific to females younger than the legal age for purchasing cigarettes" (Pierce, Lee and Gilpin 1994).

Capturing Driving Passions

Many ad campaigns over the years have featured race car drivers, and many brands like Camel, Marlboro and Winston continue to sponsor racing teams, events and series for a wide variety of vehicles: Formula One, stock cars, drag racers, motorcycles, Grand Prix racing. The sponsorship of racing car events by Marlboro at first may seem inconsistent with the autonomous cowboy character, but it is not. A PM Vice President explained: "We perceive Formula One and Indy car racing as adding, if you will, a modern-day dimension to the Marlboro Man. The image of Marlboro is very rugged, individualistic, heroic. And so is this style of auto racing. From an image standpoint, the fit is good" (Marlboro 1989).

A commercial study of three different executions of a 1976 Viceroy ad with close-ups of "a young man in auto racing garb" found that those images could connote "positive personality characteristics including courageoussness, independence, adventurousness and aggressiveness" (Schwartz 1976). These associations are also obtained through the sponsorships of many motor sport teams and events: Formula One, Indy Car, Road Rally, Speedboats, Drag Racing, GT and GTO Series, Motorcycles, Monster Truck, and Stock Cars (Blum and Solberg 1993). Signage placed at key camera angles insures brand exposures in TV and press coverage of events (Business of Smoking 1983).

OTHER RECENT AD TACTICS

Cigarette advertising in the 1980s, as before, had a number of characteristics that indicate an ongoing interest in reaching the young. In addition to the industry's failure to prosecute candy firms, cigarette brands have appeared in Video arcade games and been given away as free samples. Cigarettes sponsor rock, country, blues and jazz concerts (Business and Society Review 1984). RJR launched the "largest fully integrated music-marketing program in history" with their $40 million Salem Sound-Waves program that included free sampling, free merchandise, controlled circulation magazines (and mailing lists), membership in record/tape/compact disc clubs, concert and local radio tie-ins (Levin 1989).

RJR also experimented with the Dakota brand that targeted "virile females" who enjoyed cruising and attending Hot Rod shows and tractor pulls with their boyfriends. While the disclosed documents specified a target audience of 18-24, the focus of particular interest seemed to be on those under 20, for their target person was described as aspiring to get married by the time they reached their early twenties (Spector 1990).

Magazines particularly effective at reaching teenagers were increasingly used as advertising vehicles. Both magazines with a high youth readership (e.g. Mademoiselle, Cycle World, Rolling Stone) and women's magazines experienced dramatic increases in cigarette advertising, reaching 5-8 ads per issue by the 1980s (Albright et al. 1988). Each of the above magazines with high youth readership had 40% or more of its readers 18-24 in 1983, and a median subscriber age in the 20s, but unfortunately no data was available for readers under 18. Revenue to these magazines reaching the young and carrying cigarette ads was considerable by the late 1980s. Glamour with a quarter of its readers under 18, got over $6 million; Sports Illustrated with a third of its readers boys under 18, got nearly $30 million; TV Guide which reaches 8.8 million teenagers got about $36 Million (Davis 1987).

Making Out at the Movies

RJR held a monopoly on Moviegoer distributed free in movie theatres where about one half of the audience is under 21 (Davis 1987). Lorillard placed cigarette posters in movie theatres (Business of Smoking 1983). "One benighted cigarette advertiser even placed a spot in a movie theatre that was showing Snow White" (Business and Society Review 1984). Product placement for Larks in the James Bond film, "Licence to Kill," netted the producers $350,000 (Bergman 1989, CR 1987). Product placement can lead to script rewriting, such as Superman's love interest, Lois Lane, being made into a smoker in Superman II. "Batteries Not Included," a Steven Spielberg movie designed for children, featured prominent billboards for Salem, as have at least a dozen other youth-oriented films (Bergman 1989; Tobacco and Youth Reporter 1988).
Leaked Corporate "Secrets"

Recent revelations of corporate documents disclosed in litigation and associated investigations give compelling evidence to the long standing industry strategic interest in starters, who are almost entirely children. B&W documents include a "Project T" in 1969 which "deals with interviews with female starters concerning their attitudes, behavior, feelings and views on smoking." In 1975, B&W received recommendations from their ad agency, Ted Bates, that were judged by B&W to be "highly sensitive re: mentality of smokers: introducing starters thru (sic) 'illicit pleasure' theme" (Hilts 1994, p10). One former Winston model, now a whistle blower, says that he was explicitly told that his job with RJR depended on his appeal to the young (Anderson 1989; Tobacco on Trial 1989).

Previously secret corporate documents produced during the trial about Canada's cigarette advertising ban give evidence about the contemporary tactics to appeal to youth by both plaintiffs, R. J. Reynolds-McDonald (RJR-M) and Imperial Tobacco Ltd. (ITL) (Pollay 1995b; Pollay and Lavack 1992). The 1988 Marketing Plan of Canada's Imperial Tobacco Ltd (ITL) noted: "If the last ten years have taught us anything, it is that the industry is dominated by the companies who respond most effectively to the needs of younger smokers" (emphasis in original). Extensive and sophisticated research discussed the behavior of those as young as 11, 12 and 13, identified target segments of youth for media plans starting at age 15, and guided the advertising aimed at them. Images of independence and freedom from authority were used to capitalize upon the psychological needs of younger starters. Crafting and pretesting ensured that the ad images were not too immature, lest the brand be rejected by teens seeking symbols of maturity, and the activities not too aerobic, lest this precipitate cognitive counter-arguing.

Multiple research resources and perspectives were employed for a single brand. ITL's Project Huron, for example, evaluated the feasibility of a flavored cigarette targeted primarily at young males 15-25. It was the subject of at least 33 different market research reports, utilizing at least six external research suppliers, over the space of just four years. RJR-M also researched the young, studying 1,022 subjects from ages 15-24 in great depth in Youth Target Study '87. A third of these subjects were minors under 18. Whether starters came from particular family and social environments was addressed by measuring adult smoking, family pressures about starting, and smoking by teenage peers. Lifestyle was measured along fifteen dimensions such as laissez-faire, workaholic, wimpishness, or dropout. Attitudes and knowledge about the association between smoking and ill health were studied in great depth. The images of smokers, quitters, and never starters were measured along seventeen dimensions. Data on the image of brands was gathered along twenty five scales.

Picturing Young Health - Carefully

"Positive lifestyle images" were used by ITL to enhance the social acceptability of smoking as a matter of consistent policy. Models and activities were chosen by them to facilitate identification by the young. Imperial sells Player's, a starters' brand in a head-to-head competition with RJR-M's Export "A," paralleling the Marlboro and Camel positioning in the U.S. Their ad production instructions included: "Models in Player's advertising must be 25 years or older, but should appear to be between 18 and 25 years of age." RJR-M learned that models can be too young, however. Their Tempo brand was test marketed with most of the media budget going for out-of-home media, targeting key youth locations and meeting places, e.g. close to theatres, record stores, video arcades, etc. The J. Walter Thompson creative recommendations targeted the young by using imagery of "peer group acceptance... belonging and security." The creative featured notably young models, arm in arm, and wearing casual clothes seen as trendy by the young. The brand met with mixed results in the test market, in part because it was too explicitly "young" in its character. Few self respecting teenagers, it seems, wanted an explicitly teen product, as they sought symbols of adulthood, not adolescence. Despite this, many cigarette ads in the U.S. feature models young in appearance (Mazis et al. 1992).

The images used in Canada's cigarette ads were carefully crafted to feature attainable activities which were appealing to youth, but which were not so 'aerobic' as to be unbelievable in the context of smoking. For example, a windsurfing ad for ITL's Player's brand was evaluated finding that carrying the equipment provoked thoughts of being out of breath, so the campaign was revised to sit the model down. These images were tested to elicit minimal thought and counter-arguing from viewers.

Images of Independence

The brands most successful with teenagers in Canada, as in the U.S., are those that offer adult imagery rich with connotations of independence, freedom from authority, and self-reliance, in addition to being 'pictures of health.' ITL's Project Sting tested "overtly masculine imagery, targeted at young males ... Young males are going through a stage where they are seeking to express their independence and individuality under constant pressure of being accepted by
their peers." ITL's Project Stereo (1985) provided creative guidelines for the effective display of freedom and independence in advertising imagery for appealing to a young market. It made recommendations for designing advertisements showing people "free to choose friends, music, clothes, own activities, to be alone if he wishes"; who "can manage alone" and be "close to nature" with "nobody to interfere, no boss/parents" and self-reliant enough to experience solitude without loneliness.

"Genital Joe" Camel

Consistent with the above, Camel advertising before the present cartoon campaign featured solo male adventurers, rugged men alone in the wilderness. This effort was particularly successful with young men, 18-24, but was never able to gain a substantial market share against Marlboro in the competition for starters (Taylor 1984). The current cartoon campaign renders the camel's face to bear a striking resemblance to male genitalia (Pollay 1994a). The campaign's character seems more explicitly rebellious and adolescent, such as the Smooth Move #437 ad teaching readers how to ask others for help in redeeming coupons (Tobacco and Youth Reporter 1989). This cartoon campaign has been described as "one of the most egregious examples in recent history of tobacco advertising targeted at children," encouraging even Advertising Age editors to urge that it be dropped (Cohen 1994). "Although the industry has been insisting for years that it doesn't target women or kids, anyone who's seen a Virginia Slims or Joe Camel billboard understands that's preposterous" (Quindlen 1994). A Philip Morris executive said: "You don't have to be a brain surgeon to see what's going on. Just look at the ads. It's ludicrous for them to deny that a cartoon character like Joe Camel isn't attractive to kids" (Ecanbarger 1993).

On a more scientific basis, several papers have noted the success of Camels at gaining the attention and interest of children as young as pre-schoolers (DiFranza et al. 1991; Fischer et al. 1991; Pierce et al. 1991). These studies and their authors have been investigated, subpoenaed, deposed and criticized by tobacco lawyers, consultants and apologists (e.g. Boddewyn 1993). The "academic" critiques have in turn been judged as superficial and intentionally unconstructive "baleful bombast" (Pollay 1993). Subsequent reports have corroborated the 1991 findings of Camels' popularity with youth (MMWR 1992). The latest, by Pierce et al. (1994) reports that "nomination of Joe Camel as the favorite advertisement was highest among 12 to 14 year olds (36.6%) and declined rapidly with age."

Whether or not the appeal to children of the cartoon Camel campaign is ever proven to be intentional, at least some of the RJR's sales force in 1990 operated under management instructions to place merchandising premium items like hats and T-shirts in stores in close proximity to colleges and high schools (Catanoso 1993).

ADVERTISING EFFECTIVENESS IN RECRUITING STARTERS

The role of cigarette advertising in inducing starters and buoying total market volume was easier to recognize in the days when the rate of recruitment exceeded the rate of dying and quitting so that total cigarette sales were growing. Comments from a diversity of sources expressed the unanimous opinion that cigarette advertising deserved much if not all of the credit for expanding sales and accelerating the social trends upon which they relied, such as smoking among women. The acknowledgement of cigarette advertising's effects on starting and aggregate demand came from academics, advertising agents and journals, the tobacco trade press, and tobacco executives themselves.

Professional Analysts

Printers' Ink, the leading advertising trade journal of its day, noted as early as 1930 that sales success demonstrated the power of "the one feature which has contributed more than any other single factor to the enormous growth of the cigarette industry - advertising" (Tennant 1950). This opinion was unchanged by the depression experience: "The growth of cigarette consumption has, itself, been due largely to heavy advertising expenditure. ...It would be hard to find an industry that better illustrates the economic value of advertising in increasing consumption of a commodity ... There can be no doubt but that steady advertising pressure has been a dominating force in increasing cigarette consumption among both men and women" (Weld, 1937).

Commenting on the diminishment of medical, moral and religious reservations about smoking previously held by consumers, a Harvard Business School professor noted: "The campaigns of testimonials featuring well-known personages and picturing the 'right' kind of people smoking have undoubtedly had an influence in breaking down such prejudices" (Borden 1942). One trade analyst noted that the industry is a "glowing testimonial to the power of advertising ... these firms have not only outspent but also have out earned any others ... tobacco tycoons ... are loudest in their praise for the part advertising has played" (Wootten 1941). Business Week commented that

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"cigarettes offer the classic case ... of how a mass-production industry is built on advertising" (Business Week 1953b, p 66).

Tobacco Industry Insiders

The U.S. Tobacco Journal commented so frequently and unabashedly on the power of advertising that it became an editorial litany. "Advertising, in the hands of the manufacturers of tobacco products, has become a powerful tool for the construction of the massive edifice of this industry" (USTJ 1953a). After rebounding from the health scare of the early 1950s, they opined: "There is no obstacle to large-scale sales of tobacco products that cannot be surmounted by aggressive selling" (USTJ 1955a). Elsewhere, they noted "the pivotal importance of advertising (USTJ 1955b)," and expected the launch of multiple new filter brands and the associated intense advertising drives to "increase sharply the trend toward greater volume in the whole tobacco industry" (USTJ 1959). "The purpose of advertising ... has a simple answer: to sell cigarettes" (USTJ 1960a). "Steady increases in sales of cigarettes offer the classic example of what advertising can do ... advertising pays off" (USTJ 1960b).

The ever increasing record spending on cigarette advertising and promotion is perhaps the single most unambiguous evidence of the industry's convictions. George Washington Hill, proud of his role in building the industry, said: "The impetus of those great advertising campaigns not only built this for ourselves, but built the cigarette business as well, because ... you help the whole industry if you do a good job" (Tennant 1950). "The money invested by the tobacco industry in various forms of advertising and promotion essentially reflects the industry's faith in the effectiveness of advertising as a vital sales building tool. That faith appears justified by the continued annual rise in sales of cigarettes in this country" (USTJ 1963a). The official history of the RJR states: "The company's expenditures and those of its major rivals were extraordinary, reflecting the apparent agreement on the necessity of large scale advertising to fuel expansion" (Tilley 1985).

Advertising Agents' Admissions and Second Thoughts

John Orr Young, whose agency, Young & Rubicam, had cigarette experience, said that: "Advertising agencies are retained by cigarette (sic) manufacturers to create demand for cigarettes among both adults and eager youngsters. The earlier the teen age boy or girl gets the habit, the bigger the national sales volume" (AA 1964f). Another leading advertising executive, the President of McManus, Johns & Adams felt that "There is no doubt that all forms of advertising played a part in popularizing the cigarette (sic)" (AA 1964). Not every advertising leader was sanguine about advertising's role in recruiting the young. Emerson Foote, a founder of Foote, Cone and Belding and later with McCann-Erickson, ridiculed the industry claims that its advertising only affects brand switching and has no effect whatsoever on recruitment. "I don't think anyone really believes this ... I suspect that creating a positive climate of social acceptability for smoking, which encourages new smokers to join the market, is of greater importance to the industry ... In recent years the cigarette industry has been artfully maintaining that cigarette advertising has nothing to do with total sales. Take my word for it, this is complete and utter nonsense" (Foote 1981).

Because of their conviction that cigarette advertising played a role in recruiting the young, many advertising professionals simply refused to do it. Just before the first Surgeon General's Report in 1964, Advertising Age (1963v) stated emphatically: "It seems safe to say that no advertiser, no agency man and no media would want to continue advertising cigarettes if it were clear that they pose a serious and positive danger to the health of the ordinary smoker." When the Report was issued, several advertising industry leaders acted accordingly, avowing that their ad agencies would cease or refuse cigarette advertising accounts on moral grounds. This included several who were highly visible and prominent, such as Bill Bernbach (AA 1964e), David Ogilvy (AA 1964f), Emerson Foote (O'Gara 1964) and John Orr Young (AA 1964e).

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

A Diversity of Effects Likely

Advertising effects can be both direct and indirect and, of course, advertising is not the only factor influencing smoking uptake. Other factors include both those under direct managerial control (e.g. distribution availability, package design and sizing, pricing) and various psychosocial factors, including several where advertising might still play a significant role: perceptions of smoking's risks and rewards, risk taking propensities, perceptions of the popularity of smoking, perceptions of the social support, sanctions or status of smokers, smoking by parents, sibling or peers, rebelliousness, self-esteem, socio-economic status, etc. For a more detailed review of factors contributing to adolescent smoking behavior and the probable effects of advertising, see Preventing Tobacco Use Among Young People (SGR 1994, Ch. 4).
Cigarette advertising by its very nature inevitably glamorizes smoking, potentially influencing the young by shaping their perceptions that many attractive people are smokers, that smokers appear to be healthy, that smokers obtain social approval for their smoking, and/or that smokers are especially independent and self-reliant in character (despite their nicotine addiction). Because of its pervasiveness, it is very difficult to believe that cigarette advertising would have no effects whatsoever on the product and social perceptions of the young. Several research studies indicate that youth overestimate the prevalence of smoking (Sherman et al. 1983; Sussman et al. 1988). Youths also tend to underestimate the negative attitudes of peers and the risk that they personally are exposed to should they smoke, and are generally misinformed, leading to some doubt as to whether their uptake of smoking is in any sense an "informed choice or decision" (Leventhal, Glynn and Fleming 1987).

"Teens are also more susceptible to the images of romance, success, sophistication, popularity, and adventure which advertising suggests they could achieve through the consumption of cigarettes" (Nichter and Cartwright 1991, p242). Cigarette ads intentionally appeal to the adolescent need for independence, and also communicate the meaning of this badge product which is so easily appropriated as a prop for communicating identity and maturity. "Cigarette advertising's cultural function is much more than the selling of cigarettes. It's collective images represent a corpus of deeply rooted cultural mythologies that are not simply pieces of advertising creativity, but icons that pose solutions to real, experienced problems of identity" (Chapman and Fitzgerald 1982).

Smoking uptake is increasingly associated with social class, with the greater risk borne by those more marginalized, experiencing less success and support at home or in school, and with dimmer future prospects (Hall 1985; McCracken 1992). Youths with emotional problems seem to be at greater risk facing cigarette ads. "Adolescents are encouraged to use tobacco by well designed advertisements that promise happiness and improved well being; these advertisements may be particularly alluring for adolescents who are depressed" (Anda et al. 1990). Teenage smoking is also associated with various indicators of stress, and may be used by the young as a socially sanctioned and legal self administered drug, unfortunately an addictive one and with lethal risks (Hadaway, Beyerstein and Kimball 1986).

Private Sector Implications

The cigarette example demonstrates that the young can be appealed to with obvious practices, like the use of young looking models (Mazis et al. 1992), media whose audience is exclusively or predominantly young, copy and art known to be attractive and interpretable to children (cartoons), or via contexts they trust (candy, games). The cigarette experience, however, demonstrates that targeting of the young need not be so manifestly obvious. With careful research, ads can be more indirect by using appeals that match the psychological needs and aspirations of the young, like images of independence to appeal to adolescents' needs as they go through maturation transitions. Similarly, much can be gained by advertising and promotion in association with those things of great interest to the young, such as automobile and other motor sports, popular music, fashions or the movies. Heavy media buying, coupled with in store and on street signage, can make a product attractive simply by virtue of being so well recognized that it becomes familiar and trusted. Ads to the young need not be informative. Indeed, because of the identity needs of adolescents, this age group may be particularly responsive to ads connoting style and symbolic product personality attributes.

All of these tactics can attract the interest of the young, just as they do the more mature. The cigarette experience suggests that what is necessary to avoid regulatory punishment is the maintenance of a level of plausible deniability. Media which reach children can be used, even for hazardous products, so long as children are not their only or predominant audiences. Cartoons can be used, so long as it can be argued that cartoons also appeal to some adults, or are used in promoting some adult products. Children can be researched, and ads crafted accordingly, so long as target audience specification is nominally older customers. Seeing that the sellers of addictive and deadly products like cigarettes can do so, others are likely to be encouraged that they can also get away with murder in their targeting of children. If willing to suffer a little public criticism, and able to hire lobbyists and lawyers to fight in the corridors of powers and courts, as necessary, children can apparently be targeted with impunity.

Public Policy Implications

Protecting children from the inducements of cigarette promotion cannot, judging by its history, rely upon the moral restraint or self-regulatory promises of the industry. Despite avowals to the contrary, the industry has always had a manifest interest in starters and the young. This is perhaps inevitable given a single minded profit motivation and the facts that almost all starting occurs among the young and that nicotine users display very high rates of brand loyalties once addicted. This gives the managers of starters' brands an expectation of substantial future profits
from these young customers, in contrast to the lower net present value of attracting older, more fickle brand switchers with a far shorter life expectancy.

The persistence and political tolerance of these practices also indicates that we cannot rely solely on the federal institutions traditionally empowered for regulating commercial practices. Despite the best efforts of many individuals, to date neither Congress nor the Federal Trade Commission has been effective at protecting children from the practices romanticizing and promoting tobacco use. The failure of these institutions suggests the need to rely on others with a different mandate and/or different political priorities, such as the federal Food and Drug Administration, or state and local authorities.

Cigarette advertising practices in these jurisdictions could be either banned outright, as other jurisdictions have done, or limited by elimination of any or all of the following: billboards, point of sale signs (interior and/or exterior), sports stadium signage and advertising, events and promotions sponsored in brand names. Where advertising is to persist, its content could be regulated to permit presentation of information (new brand availability, product traits or performance) while reducing glamorizations. This is the spirit of proposals for bans of life-style advertising, while permitting so-called tombstone formats.

Marketing a product requires an integrated and consistent marketing mix utilizing all managerial decision variables. Any de-marketing of tobacco also requires a comprehensive program. Other initiatives which would help to protect the young include the following: limiting distribution to control access (such as vending machines, convenience stores, etc); making sales to minors illegal with penalties and enforcement (Kinn 1987); making possession by minors illegal (DiFranza et al. 1987); banning product sampling (Davis and Jason 1988); raising prices to change the age distribution of initial trial behaviors; mandating minimum package transaction sizes (such as blocking sales of singles, or permitting carton sales only) to also inhibit easy access by the very young; plain packaging, so that brands are less of a badge product communicating brand imagery and social identity (Pollay 1994c); increasing warning and health disclosures at retail points of sale (Pollay and Gorn 1994); targeting and sustaining public education in mass media as well as schools to match the pervasive sophistications of pro-smoking communications.

No matter what the proposal, tobacco funded political resistance to any de-marketing policies will be vigorous. Various arguments will attempt to reframe the issue and distract concern away from children and health - such as uncertainties about the effectiveness of each proposal considered in isolation, fear of contraband and crime, fear of job loss or other economic costs, and assertions of constitutional freedoms of commercial practices and speech. It is unlikely, however, that the Constitution will forever be held to protect the pushing of deadly and addictive drugs, even for cigarettes which are still so commonplace that they are treated with more friendly familiarity than they deserve.

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