THE LUNG GOODBYE

A manual of tactics for counteracting the tobacco industry in the 1980s

SIMON CHAPMAN

for

CONSUMER
INTERPOL

as a contribution to
THE 5th WORLD CONFERENCE ON SMOKING AND HEALTH
WINNIPEG, CANADA. JULY 1983

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* Consumer Interpol is an informal network of consumer, health and environmental groups concerned to draw the attention of consumers and governments to the trade in products banned or restricted in one country but sold freely in others where regulations are inadequate or non-existent. It is an organisation dedicated to halting this process through concerted action on an international scale.

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Some remarkable things have been happening to the tobacco industry in Australia in the past four years. Consumers and health workers, appalled by the 16,000 annual tobacco related deaths, by the industry's galloping promotional activities and especially by the inertia of a conservative government in acting with any force grew tired of 'working through the correct channels'. Radical critiques of the futility of traditional individual-directed forms of smoking control in seriously effecting community health quickly spawned radical actions. Suddenly, the industry was forced to contend with a whole new arsenal of tactics and their responses on many occasions have proved woefully inept.

In 1979 I formed with four similarly-minded friends a public interest group we called MOP UP (Movement Opposed to the Promotion of Unhealthy Products). At its height in Sydney, before it branched to other cities, we had six active (unpaid) members, $900 in the bank and about 150 subscribers to a stencilled newsletter. In May, 1980 we engineered an end to the largest cigarette advertising campaign in Australian history. Since that time, similar activist groups have been formed in other capital cities and most have proved major thorns in the industry's side. On a recent visit to the United Kingdom, I was delighted to find that these Australian initiatives were a source of great inspiration to British health workers and I was encouraged to write a manual describing some of the principles and tactics that have been useful.

This monograph is very much a work-in-progress. It has been prepared specifically as a contribution to the 5th World Conference on Smoking and Health and intended as a first edition in a process that will lead toward a more complete consumerist and health worker's manual. In places, its suggestions will be found inappropriate to readers from countries where various objectives have already been achieved or where the political climate would not tolerate the radical actions described.

I invite readers to contribute any material or criticism toward the final project which is intended for world-wide distribution throughout consumer and health agency networks.

My thanks go to my friends and colleagues who have encouraged and inspired the writing of this monograph – especially to Steve Woodward, Paul Magnus, Mike Daube, David Simpson, Nigel Gray, Peter Vogel, Alan Blum and Allan Asher.

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INTRODUCTION

So where do we go to from here? I believe we go to war. We recognise quite clearly that this is a war with a determined enemy.... The tobacco industry has demonstrated in every continent that it has forfeited any right to be regarded as anything other than the opposition.... The merchants of death are the manufacturers, and we must confront them on every battlefield, whether it be health, political, social, environmental, economic, or any other.

Mike Daube
Summing up of the 4th World Conference on Smoking and Health

It should go without saying that the tobacco industry is the largest, most determined and most devastatingly effective source of opposition to worldwide efforts at reducing smoking. But the irony is that this fact has gone mostly without saying in the now vast literature and the extensive workforce attempting to control smoking. The tobacco industry is seldom the direct target of health workers' efforts, not because its role is well understood and resignedly taken for granted, but rather because the smoking control field has been, with some outstanding exceptions, curiously apolitical.

Smoking control can be conceived of in classic epidemiological terms as having a host (smokers and potential smokers), an agent (tobacco), a vector (the mode of transmission - the total marketing system of the tobacco industry) and environment (the social, economic and political climate in which host, agent and vector exist). Smoking control therefore becomes the attempt at breaking the chain of causation by weakening links or strengthening the resistance of others. Most efforts to control smoking concentrate solely on the host - the individual who smokes or who might be prevented from smoking - and largely ignore the roles of the vector and environment. This monograph takes the opposite emphasis.

The individualistic legacy

The dominant perspective that has defined the issues and directed the tasks of health workers in attempting to reduce smoking prevalence has been individualistic, viewing smoking as a personal behaviour to be reduced through informational, educational and motivational programs directed at individuals or small groups. Because the ravages of smoking finally present as medical problems, and because epidemiology as a branch of medical science was first able to describe the relationship between
smoking and disease, the great part of smoking control activity has been overseen by the medical profession. The reports of the Royal College of Physicians and the US Surgeon General stand as landmarks to the widespread social recognition of smoking as a major health epidemic but also to the prevailing and limiting definition of the problem as fundamentally medical.

Accordingly, smoking control has been dominated worldwide by medical interests. Medical agencies have tended to fund only work that fits in with established notions of what the role of medicine ought to be – biochemical, clinical, individualistic. Interventions are often sterile, over-theorized and trivial having been stultified by research conditions that enable peer acceptance in the scientific, conferencing community. Scarcely monetary grants capable of financing substantial interventions are emasculated by up to a third going to support the research interests of academic hoop-jumpers. Such notions of 'the way to go about it' are recycled in medical and the less radical public health curricula and have effectively limited the role of medicine in addressing smoking control in its political, economic and cultural dimensions. With the discipline and profession of health education struggling for a place at the table of academic respectability, there too is it now de rigueur for educational interventions to be subject to painstaking evaluation exercises, the research conditions of which blunt the flexibility of most programs.

Psychology too, through its clinical and social branches, has been a leading agenda-setting discipline in smoking control. Like medicine, psychology defines smoking as a phenomenon manifest in and among individuals that may be reduced through therapies and programs drawing on various developmental and learning theories of behaviour. But like medicine, its contribution remains largely host-directed, while the massive marketing activity of the tobacco industry proceeds unchecked in the great majority of the world's nations.

Certainly, most major health and medical agencies by now include legislative and fiscal strategies in their smoking control policies. Yet, too often, these remain little more than bold and welcomed statements, the topics of submissions to government inquiries and of occasional press statements. With few exceptions, work by established health and medical bodies in these areas cannot be described in terms like politically sophisticated, sustained or substantial. It is often as if, having declared their policy on matters like advertising bans and price, many see their work as having ended.

The processes of political change in the smoking control field involve so much more than declaring your position on an issue and then expecting your policy to line up next to opposing positions in some pristine contest of rational, considered judgement by legislators. William Hobbs, a president of the tobacco multinational RJ Reynolds said about anti-smoking measures "If they caused every smoker to smoke just one less cigarette a day,
our company would stand to lose $92 million in sales annually. I assure you that we don't intend to let that happen without a fight." [1]

One of the main aims of this monograph is to describe aspects of the 'so much more' that are involved. It should be read as a 'cookbook' - a smoking control activists' manual that considers ways of both frustrating the industry's marketing efforts and shaping public and political opinion favourably towards smoking control goals. It is not so much concerned with what changes and actions need to be taken to check the industry as with how these might take place. The Union Internationale Contre le Cancer (U.I.C.C.) manual, Guidelines for Smoking Control [2] and the World Health Organisation report Controlling the Smoking Epidemic [3] contain the most complete and concise statements of the goals of a total smoking control program.

Many governments by now have been handed policy documents, reports and recommendations by their hopeful expert advisors urging adoption of the standard set of legislative smoking control measures. Often these are backed up by the most reasoned and researched arguments, yet in spite of lofty government declarations about commitment to reducing smoking, they are seldom enacted. The reasons are nearly always political and this monograph will consider arguments and suggestions as to how smoking control may be more forcefully politicized, thereby giving politicians an imperative to act.

The task ahead is to assess and act on ways of turning this armchair, do-nothing acceptance into a virtual obligation to act. Briefly, this will probably best be done by engineering public antipathy to the tobacco industry to such a point that it would become embarrassing for a government not to act. While such a point is being reached, there is much that can be done. Goals like bans on advertising and promotion and forcing disclosure of chemical additives in the manufacturing process are as important as processes as they are as goals because of the way their difficult attainment can inspire massive press coverage that often takes in the wider aspects of the smoking issue.

Radicalising smoking control

While there have been nearly two decades of conferences, published research and doctoral dissertations on the theory and practice of educational preventive programs and therapy-based cessation, scant material is available that might guide health workers wanting to address the political, industrial and broad socio-cultural goals essential to a total smoking control program - the vector and environment directed aspects of a program. Successful or instructive episodes of interaction with the tobacco industry and of the processes that led to widespread anti-industry media coverage or to the passage of legislation mostly exist as oral history and anecdote. I hope this monograph will draw some of this together in a way that is useful.
All the tactics and strategies that are to be discussed, especially in Chapter 4, are totally within the law, although in nations with repressive and openly corrupt political regimes, the power of the tobacco industry may conceivably result in harsh treatment for anyone who seeks to disrupt the progress of such a 'favoured' industry in some of the ways suggested. Many of the suggestions to be made could be described as radical, confrontational and 'uncivilised'. No apology is made for this or for the lack of any deliberately reformist/gradualist orientation to dealing with the tobacco industry.

The Industry has long engaged in the most carefully planned strategies to frustrate, delay and dissuade governments from any item of smoking control legislation that has the slightest potential to reduce consumption or negatively position smoking in the minds of consumers. It has ignored, flouted and been deliberately ambiguous about aspects of the implementation of voluntary agreements on advertising, labelling and promotions to children. It has orchestrated an elaborate, 30 year campaign to deceive and confuse the public about what it knows to be the case about the health risks of using its product. It has engaged in blatant and outrageous double standards in its marketing practices between countries of the first and third worlds, where in many of the latter it deliberately chooses not to label packets with the health warnings it must use in the West; where it markets brands with tar contents way above those in identical brands sold in countries with more concerned governments; and where it uses themes in advertising that are the same as those it so sanctimoniously publicly claims to eschew in some developed countries.

Such an industry would be delighted at the mild-mannered, let's-talk-it-over approach adopted toward it by health workers who still see the industry's 'legitimate business' efforts as somehow out of their court as a proper target for radical action. It should be regarded as axiomatic that the Industry possesses awesome political and economic clout that has shown the capacity to hamstring even the most determined politicians intent on enacting smoking control objectives. In recent years, both the USA and Britain have seen high-ranking smoking reformers demoted or moved sideways following signs from them of intended reforms. A corollary of this power is that orthodox approaches 'through the correct channels' at restricting and countering the marketing practices of the industry will almost inevitably be futile, obviating the need for tactics that can be less easily neutralised by political inertia and opposition.
Civil Disobedience.

To some, the assurance above about the tactics to be discussed being within the law, may seem a surprising statement. However, recently in Australia, a widespread national campaign of civil disobedience involving graffiti spray painting of tobacco billboard advertisements (BUGA UP or Billboard Utilising Graffitiists Against Unhealthy Promotions) has emerged as perhaps the most visible form of anti-smoking activity in the country. Several doctors, teachers and health workers have been among those fined by the courts for this form of pro-social vandalism which has attracted overwhelming public financial and moral support - a modern day Robin Hood phenomenon.

History reveals some groups who break laws as champions of causes judged eventually as being more just or of higher principle than the status quo the law being broken sanctifies. One thinks of the suffragette movement, the campaign for nuclear disarmament and environmentalist groups who regularly break the law in confronting corporate polluters and destroyers. The work of BUGA UP may be considered parallel to other social reforming groups who have broken the law for what they, and much of society, have regarded as a higher concern. Readers interested in the BUGA UP movement can contact them at Box 78, Wentworth Building, University of Sydney 2006 Australia. They have several pamphlets and posters available describing the rationale and techniques of their campaign.

GETTING PERSPECTIVE: WHAT'S WORTH DOING?

Smoking is a mass social phenomenon. Often the majority of a population are smokers. Consequently, interventions that have no potential to affect mass numbers of people must be considered ineffective instruments in any community smoking control program. Cessation techniques, for example, that are applied through face-to-face or small group methods may occasionally produce impressive success rates, but are rarely organised on sufficiently broad-based delivery systems to produce impressive quitting numbers.

The industry knows that the aggregated number of people quitting from labour-intensive, therapeutically-oriented cessation programs around the world hardly bears a second thought compared with the number of people who take up smoking each year. It knows, ironically, better than most health workers that the vast majority of those who quit smoking do so quite independently of any direct program or contact with quit smoking programs. Most simply quit, as a consequence of health concerns or dissatisfaction with remaining a smoker. In many countries, smoking is fast becoming a behaviour in social retreat: people are becoming increasingly aware and concerned about the health effects of smoking and its changing social acceptability. It is
reasonable to argue that most have become aware and concerned through having been exposed to coverage of smoking and health through mass media sources, and the discussion throughout the community that such coverage generates. The following chapter will discuss ways to keep the smoking issue as 'news'.

Similarly, the tobacco industry does not bat an eyelid at the earnest conferencing of educators presenting seemingly endless results from theoretically-sound pilot school interventions. The best and most widely acclaimed school education programs remain in the worst traditions of inconsequential, 'so what?' research if they remain one-off, experimental programs that do not become permanently incorporated into school curricula across a state. Sadly, this is so often the case.

For as long as the smoking control field is dominated by personnel working on trivial preventive and cessation interventions with no potential for mass delivery, the impact of such efforts will not cause the tobacco industry even to flutter with concern. What the tobacco industry is concerned about is any action that might influence many people to cut down, stop or not start smoking.

Legislation

The industry's on-going nightmare is any governmental legislative or fiscal regulation that may directly effect supply or demand. This covers moves to raise sales taxes on cigarettes; to require any form of meaningful and informative content labelling on packs; health warnings on packs and advertising; bans or restrictions on advertising; restrictions on retail outlets (e.g. banning vending machines and raising the cost of tobacco retail licences); and any lowering of government subsidies or other financial assistance to different sectors of the tobacco industry. Changes to any of these factors in ways that are compatible with smoking control objectives have the potential to affect every present and future smoker, whether this be just to remind them of the health risks of smoking or to prompt them to stop smoking. Any hint that government intends to act in these ways causes the industry to pull out all stops to try and persuade them of the folly of their ways.

The litmus test of whether a smoking control intervention is worthwhile is the industry response to it. If they try to oppose an action, you're on the right track. If there is a deafening silence, you need hardly bother. The industry makes very loud noises indeed when legislation is being proposed but seldom rustles when education is being discussed. Indeed, the industry has often advocated health education as the 'proper' sort of government response in the heat of its protests about impending legislative controls.
Public credibility and executive morale in the tobacco industry

Another area of major concern to the industry is confirmed in a recent Roper report (see Chapter 2): that the industry's credibility with the public has fallen to its lowest ebb. This has important implications for the reception that will be given to their public relations efforts, and to the public support that is likely to be given to criticism of the industry.

The industry's growing pariah status in the community gives smoking control advocates a phenomenal head-start in any arena of public debate. In countries like the United Kingdom, the USA, Canada and Australia where there are extensive and vociferous smoking control agencies, the industry is now being hounded and blasted in public almost daily. In all but the most partisan of forums (such as the tobacco and advertising industry publications and most government inquiries into the agricultural economics of tobacco), the ball has been squarely in the court of the industry to account for itself. In public debate the smoking control position is generally assumed to make common sense: preventing cancer, like preventing child abuse or lowering unemployment, is a 'good thing' to most people. The industry position, by contrast, will be perceived by many as being tainted by grasping self-interest. Hanging over any assessment of an industry statement will be feelings like 'well, they're only saying that because they work for the industry... they could hardly come out and say that smoking is a health hazard...'

Spare some thoughts about the people who work in management in the tobacco industry and who front to present the industry case in public debate. I have already commented on the sceptical reception that industry-attributed statements are likely to have to overcome. But there is a further dimension to consider that can be crucial to the dynamics of any radio, television or live debate between individuals from the two sides. The people who will be pushing the industry line bear some thinking about as credible message sources and in terms of their likely morale.

Aside from the observation that it employs people, the tobacco industry, perhaps more than any other, is synonymous with the notion of an economic institution almost devoid of any socially redeeming characteristics. Its executives are widely regarded as being among the more shadowy echelons of the business world, blithely devising marketing strategies for a product that slowly kills hundreds of thousands of people worldwide every year. Putting aside the particular joys of fat salaries, think about what it must be like, more than twenty years after the first wave of condemning evidence on smoking and health from the Royal College of Physicians, to work as an executive in the tobacco industry. Think about the constant expectation of disapproval that would follow disclosing to new acquaintances what you did for a living. Think about how it must be to glibly deny that smoking is a health hazard, knowing that you and your colleagues are the only ones who 'believe' this. Think about the conflicts
for such people when their children are taught at school about the health hazards of smoking and question their father about his job. When you think about it, the tobacco industry would hardly be the first place that on-the-way-up executives would want to hang their hat in 1983. So much energy would be taken up by the constant sedge mentality the industry has been called to work under. Unlike other industries, where a new marketing campaign is cause for some pride and excitement, the tobacco marketer's work is constantly under the cloud of being denigrated as just one more slick attempt at selling cancer.

Management in the tobacco industry has undergone a gradual, but radical change in recent years that has important implications for smoking control. The old guard, who have now mostly died or retired, came into the industry before the evidence against smoking accumulated. By contrast, those now at the top came into the industry knowing that they would be marketing a deadly product. These people are mostly gung-ho free marketers, contemptuous of what they see as bleeding-heart liberals trying to interfere with their marketing 'skills' and who take a totally amoral position on the product they are selling. They are nonetheless astute enough to realise – as you should – that most people would find their indifference to the human suffering caused by their activities to be repulsive. The lesson they have learned is how to steer the debate on smoking away from their part in the grim realities of cancer and heart disease, and onto their favourite theme for the 1980s: freedom of choice.

Chapter 3 will consider a range of industry arguments that have been drilled into their public spokespeople as ways of diffusing and defending attacks on the industry and its product.


Being so close to the issue, health workers concerned about smoking control sometimes lose perspective on how the public views the issue, assuming that concern and awareness are greater than they really are. In the Roper survey cited on page 10, the overall saliency of the 'cigarette issue' is understandably low on a list of the community's concerns. Inflation, unemployment, crime, the road toll, nuclear war and many other issues are all of more concern to people - a point the industry is delighted to point out to anyone who'll listen. There are many social issues that draw very strong public response, while never making any Top 20 list of social concerns. For example, because most people would not rate cruelty to animals anywhere near the top of such a list, it hardly follows that there is widespread consensus that it is not an issue of any importance and that therefore nothing ought to be done to prevent such cruelty.

Perhaps the greatest challenge for health and consumer activists in the 1980s is to determine how the smoking and health issue can be best positioned in ways that will make it more personally and politically important to those for whom it is not at present. This is especially true for opinion leaders and shapers: politicians, celebrities, journalists and editors. A corollary of this will be when taking active objection to the tobacco industry's activities is seen less as a form of extremism, and more as a sane and decent response to the legally sanctioned mass promotion of a carcinogenic agent. After a brief consideration of the 'state of the art' of community attitudes toward smoking, this section will examine some ways that the smoking issue might continue to gain momentum as a highly engaging news area.

Like all industries, the tobacco industry is vitally concerned with the current and predicted state of community attitudes and beliefs about both their product and their customers: smoking and smokers. They are continually commissioning market research and opinion polls to inform them about any relevant trends that may have bearing on their total marketing operation. This naturally includes information on the extent of public antipathy towards smoking and the industry. Because of the highly sensitive and politically inflammable nature of the smoking debate, such reports are usually closely guarded as internal company documents.

Recently such a document, prepared for the US Tobacco Institute in 1978 by the Roper Organisation [1], has been widely circulated amongst smoking control agencies. The 52 page document gives valuable insights into the range of issues that are of interest to the industry. An introductory summary highlights the range of community beliefs and attitudes that the Roper group believe the industry should be pleased about and those it should view with great foreboding. These were:
"ASSETS"

1. The overall saliency of the 'cigarette issue' is low. Compared to crime, drugs, pollution, and a half a dozen other items, smoking is at the bottom of the list of personal concerns.

2. There is little sentiment for a total ban on cigarette smoking in public places.

3. There is overwhelming approval of placing notices outside places that restrict cigarette smoking.

4. Few people favour job discrimination based on cigarette smoking.

5. The percentage of smokers in the 17-24 age group is up, and the amount smoked per day per young smoker is also up.

6. There is broad support for FTC regulation of 'public service' advertising sponsored by non-profit groups like the Cancer Society and Ralph Nader.

7. There is less than majority sentiment in favour of a graduated tax cigarette tax.

"LIABILITIES"

1. More than 9/10 Americans believe that smoking is hazardous to a smoker's health.

2. A majority of Americans believes that it is probably hazardous to be around people who smoke even if they are not smoking themselves.

3. There is majority sentiment for separate smoking sections in all public places we asked about.

4. There is majority acceptance of the idea that the cigarette warning label should be made stronger and more specific.

5. The percentage of people who smoke is at the lowest level measured in the past 10 years.

6. A steadily increasing majority of Americans believes that the tobacco industry knows that the case against cigarettes is true.

7. Favourable attitudes toward the tobacco industry are at their lowest ebb.

8. There is widespread support for anti-smoking education in the schools—and at the very early years.
9.2/3 of smokers would like to give up smoking

10. Nearly half the public thinks that smoking is an addiction

11. More people say that they would vote for than against a political candidate who takes a position favouring a ban on smoking in public places.

It is worthwhile reflecting on how such attitudes have arisen; on how it is that the social climate about smoking appears to be changing in many (usually developing) countries with such encouraging rapidity. The only reasonable answer is to point to some key milestones and to broad, quite intangible influences - the major smoking and health reports and their surrounding publicity; the aggregated number of people with personal experience of a relative or friend who died of a smoking induced disease; the cumulative effect of over twenty years of health education in schools; some outstanding TV reports like Britain's Panorama series produced by Peter Taylor on the tobacco industry which were seen by millions of people in many countries; the spin-off from the growing concern in the affluent classes about 'lifestyle' and environmental pollution.

Such a list could be added to considerably, but most entries would be characterised by being somehow cast in a mythological good versus evil battle in an arena observed by mass numbers of people. The good (health/clean air/children) versus evil (cancer/uncaring, callous industry) dimension is the ineluctable bottom line in the whole issue and a rich reservoir for spawning a great deal of useful social drama, metaphor [2] and symbolic politics [3] that is the stuff of 'news value' and which is almost always to the detriment of the industry.

Newsmaking

The tobacco industry spends billions of dollars each year on its advertising, on sponsorship of selected cultural and sporting events and on its public relations. In 1980 in the USA alone, this expenditure totalled $1.24 billion [4]. By comparison, the expenditure of health agencies on anti-smoking programs in even the wealthiest countries is minuscule, never reaching even half of one percent of total health expenditure. The tobacco industry can buy its way in front of the mass audiences and readerships of the media, into our daily visual environment with outdoor advertising and increasingly into the programs of sporting
events, concerts and exhibitions. For the smoking control lobby, access is a very different matter.

The health sector's occasional forays into paid advertising of anti-smoking messages have to be supplemented by media access obtained through making news. Publicising anti-smoking material through news and media feature items is one of the most important tasks that you can spend time on. A glance at the size of audiences for high rating television news programs or readerships of newspapers will give some perspective to the number of people who might be influenced favourably by a well-covered item.

The brevity of most news and news feature programs necessitates some careful thought about both how and what arguments, emphases and rhetorical turns should be used whenever you have the opportunity to get access to the mass media. Give some very serious thought to what there is in all you might want to say about a particular issue that will be the 'resonant' aspect remembered by your audience or readership. Remember that people are presented daily with a mass of news items, all potentially pressing for attention. It is largely up to you to develop a 'sense' for angles or emphases that are headline-grabbing, and to exploit these angles in your news releases and appearances on the media. In the clipped and edited world of the mass media interview or debate where a 'grab' lasts for a maximum of 15-20 seconds, it is essential to 'get your retaliation in first' by setting the parameters of the debate rather than being forced to dance to a tune called by the industry. They will be seeking to steer the debate to areas where their advisors tell them they have a chance of getting community support - of winning. Equally importantly, there are several total blind alleys that they will desperately try to avoid, and which should be raised at every opportunity (see Chapter 3).

The problem with 'anti-smokers'...

When you do get access to the mass media, it is vitally important to be mindful of your or your group's public image. The way that this is presented will depend on what you wish to achieve and with whom, taking into consideration different media audiences, the issue you are addressing and the reputation or style of the program or newspaper covering your story.

The smoking control lobby still labours under the unfortunate public image legacy of some of its early activists, many of whom were the last word in puritanism and everything that represents dullness. To such people, smoking was a self-indulgent evil and tobacco the devil's weed. Smoking was a symptom of some more fundamental moral turpitude and so it was smokers more than smoking that was at the heart of what they reviled. Think about the characteristic vaudeville representation of the non-smoker and imagine most people's response to a word-association exercise using 'anti-smoker' and it's easy to see some of the difficulties
that still beset the field today. Many probably still believe
that, given some rein, people taking a stance against smoking
would like to stop everyone drinking, lace everyone up, turn the
music down, take all sweets out of children's mouths, and ban sex
and probably laughing too. How many who might otherwise stop and
think about smoking, dismiss or relegate the message because of
this plous and totally unnecessary wrapper?

The Industry actively encourages this view and emphasises that
smoking control advocates are enemies of freedom and pleasure-
haters (see Chapter 3). To diffuse this widespread pre-
conception, it is crucial to select emphases and spokespeople who
belle such images. People who carry implicit repudiation of a
puritan image by their reputation (eg: celebrities renowned for
some wild, risque, or widely admired lifestyle), by their
appearance or manner and by their arguments should be pushed to
the front of your efforts whenever the goal is to widen community
support.

News angles

It is vital to reflect on the vastness of information, social
issues and news to which people are exposed and over which they
are often urged to take up a position. The smoking debate is just
one issue pressing for attention amongst thousands, and like
almost any other issue, tends to attract media attention when its
issues can be subsumed under some more fundamental mythological
context [6].

Following, are some examples, by no means exhaustive, of angles
and themes on smoking that seem to have news value:

* the mouse that roared, or David and Goliath – when little
  public interest groups or individuals go into battle with the
tobacco industry. (When MOP UP in Sydney challenged the largest
  cigarette advertising campaign in Australia – and won! [7] – one
newspaper captured the spirit of the challenge with the headline
"MOP UP'S SLINGSHOT CUTS DOWN THE ADVERTISING OGRE")

* child abuse – when the industry can be accused of
directing advertising and promotions at children. Also
shopkeepers who sell cigarettes from broken packets to children –
without doubt, an unfailing standby that brings out all the usual
child abuse metaphors.

* the emperor with no clothes – when some public industry
extravaganza is deflated by a 'rude' and 'uncivilised' smoking
health group who have the gall to point out that all the colour
and pageantry should be seen as part of the process that keeps
cancer wards full.

Source: http://industrydocuments.library.ucsf.edu/tobacco/docs/skfl0143
government collusion, duplicity, hypocrisy and ineptitude - any government dragging the chain is always fair game for the press. Decide for yourself what is to be gained by having government criticised in the press - whether this may create change or stubborn resistance.

nasty things at the bottom of the garden - to many, cigarettes are very familiar and comforting things, very attractively packaged and advertised. New evidence on smoking and health and new ways of making the existing evidence more personally meaningful to people is generally of interest to the media (see WHAT'S IN CIGARETTES? below).

the private lives of celebrities - the popular culture of interest in celebrities' lives is a profound and seemingly endless source of fascination to the media. Celebrities who quit smoking or who curse it from their sick beds can be pushed into the limelight to great advantage.

Venues for meetings and press conferences

When you hold press conferences, advantage should be taken of any venues that will be a poignant reminder of the more dramatic aspects of the smoking issue. Rooms adjacent to cancer wards, forensic medicine or autopsy lecture theatres (which are often located near mortuaries) or general hospital locations are ideal. Someone active in smoking control will probably be connected with such a venue, and so holding a meeting there will not appear contrived or melodramatic.

In such locations, a major prong of the industry's argument - that the health consequences of smoking are the exaggerated fabrications of fanatics - will be rendered an objection in the poorest possible taste. If you are ever involved in negotiations with the industry, the same remarks apply.

WHAT'S IN CIGARETTES?

An unexploited field for giving the industry bad press is the theme of 'what's in a cigarette?'. The revolution in awareness in many countries over ecological issues that ranges across environmental pollution, waste disposal and food processing holds enormous potential to sweep tobacco before its path. Already much has been achieved through people objecting to having to breathe ambient tobacco smoke - an understandable response to others' smoking. But little attention has been focussed on the notion of self-pollution and smoking, or more basically, on the idea of putting noxious chemicals into one's body.

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Tobacco is almost unique as a substance that, while sold to be taken into the body, is covered with an almost total blanket of secrecy about its contents. Food and drug producers in many countries are properly required to fully disclose what preservatives, colourings, flavourings and basic ingredients are contained in their products. Aside from the requirement applying in a handful of countries for compulsory labelling of tar, nicotine and (sometimes) carbon monoxide, no country requires tobacco manufacturers to fully disclose the many additives contained in their products. Pointing this out to a public already suspicious of industry in general and the tobacco industry in particular, may cause widespread alarm and consumer revolt accompanied by massive drop-offs in sales.

A glance through any copy of the Smoking and Health Bulletin of the US Department of Health and Human Services shows an entire indexed section on 'Tobacco Product Additives'. Citations are included from patent office registrations of new chemical applications to tobacco processing and from the specialist chemical literature. Both these sources are virtually unintelligible, let alone normally accessible to the average person but are rich in potential for anyone willing to translate them into news items with popular interest. Polysyllabic chemical names should be checked through a reference book that lists common usages and toxicological data for chemicals. Look for usages that will conote revulsion or concern. For example, well-known chemicals found in tobacco include cadmium (as in car batteries), ammonia (as in toilet cleaners), cyanides, formaldehyde and so on.

Tobacco pesticide usage and residue is a second subject that has received little attention despite occupying news headlines in many countries during the campaigns dealing with DDT, dioxin and 2,4,5-T. Tobacco growing features intensive use of a large array of pesticides, herbicides and fungicides. Chemical residues often remain in tobacco after processing and packaging and therefore represent a major source of concern. The idea of ingesting pesticides is disturbing to many people, despite their unwitting daily intake of residues on fruit and vegetables. Again, most pesticide and herbicide names will be meaningless to the non-specialist so some means must be devised to give them comparability to benchmarks of public concern. The WHO publication Guidelines to the Use of the WHO Recommended Classification of Pesticides by Hazard lists agricultural chemicals in four classes of hazard: extreme, high, moderate and unlikely to present any acute hazard in normal use. In the moderate class, for example we find DDT, 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T. By obtaining names of chemicals used in tobacco growing and looking them up in the WHO list, one can put some perspective onto previously meaningless names. Completing this exercise for a sample of agricultural chemicals used in Australia turned up monocrotophos and methoymyl both of which are classed as highly hazardous, and dieldrin (extremely hazardous) putting them in categories of risk above the more notorious DDT and 2,4,5-T.
Radioactivity in tobacco smoke

The radioactive isotope polonium-210, found in phosphate fertilizer used in growing tobacco, remains in tobacco after it has been dried and processed and is highly concentrated in insoluble particles in tobacco smoke. A 30/day smoker receives an equivalent dose of radiation from smoking to 300 chest X-rays per year [8]. Polonium-210 has been found in the lungs of non-smokers at levels which may not be explained by natural exposure to this isotope, suggesting that passive smoking may be responsible [9].

Tobacco same-name products for children

There is an extensive range of promotional material bearing tobacco brand names that is designed expressly for children. Examples include model racing cars, clothing in children’s sizes, brand-name parody confectionery cigarettes and amusement parlour video games. The sale and promotion of these items calls for an unremitting attack on the industry’s pious statements about marketing only to adults. If you write letters of complaint to the offending company, experience has shown that they usually reply by claiming no knowledge of or power over producers of the products in question, implying that the tobacco brand name has been used without permission. Such replies should be followed by calls to the company to demand the ‘offending’ other company ceases to use the brand, about which you should point out, the tobacco company must be surely very concerned. Needless to say, publicise your protest and any correspondence as widely as possible.

School parents associations may be valuable and widely respected allies through which to channel your actions in these situations.

A Rogue’s Gallery: Tobacco Industry Directorships and Shareholdings

Take the trouble to make lists of the directors and major shareholders of tobacco companies operating in your country. These can serve as useful ready-references for your understanding of the web of vested interests that support the industry and which oppose smoking control efforts. Make special note of any significant joint directorships (for example, newspapers, broadcasting and hospital boards) that might raise the public’s eyebrows over suggestions of social control or hypocrisy. Such facts can speak for themselves when raised in a wry ‘well, what a coincidence!’ fashion.
Also make a list of all products manufactured by subsidiary companies of tobacco companies. This list, too, should be used for reference purposes when questions of the industry extending its sphere of influence arise. Subsidiary industries may also have large advertising budgets and could join their tobacco parent companies in exerting editorial influence through threatened withdrawal of advertising in cases where a newspaper or magazine is giving tobacco a bad press.

While tobacco company efforts to diversify into non-tobacco areas deserve encouragement (through mechanisms like government tax incentives), it is nonetheless naive to assume that diversification will in any way be a sign of a winding down of a company's tobacco interests. Most diversification is simply a question of cold economic expansion. One's attitude to subsidiary companies ought to be at least circumspect, and probably forthrightly suspicious of the cards such companies can be expected to play in the business and political world. A list of tobacco subsidiaries' products might therefore prove useful in organizing consumer boycotts, if the possibilities of such a move appeared worthwhile.

QUICK N DIRTY OPINION SURVEYS

The industry is a past master of the quick n dirty public opinion survey — the sort that asks leading questions. The surveys are calculated efforts to ask questions in ways that will produce favourable results for use in the industry's special pleading. A favourite technique, for example, has been to ask a survey sample to rank a forced-choice list of public issues on degree of importance or personal concern. Tobacco advertising is one item thrown in with a list that includes major social problems like unemployment, nuclear disarmament, violent crime and inflation. Lo and behold, tobacco advertising is ranked last by most respondents and the industry jubilantly announces to an often uncritical press, headlines like "public are unconcerned about tobacco advertising - industry says government has no mandate to ban tobacco ads." All survey results reported by the industry should be thoroughly analysed for biased and beside-the-point questions and for conclusions not warranted from the data.

Two can play this game. Just as the industry casually slip in the odd emotive word into their surveys to produce favourable results, so too can smoking control interests ask questions their way — and publish the results. In seeking public opinion on an advertising ban, the industry might ask "Do you believe that in a free country a legally sold product should be allowed to be advertised, thereby allowing consumer freedom of choice?" whereas you might care to word it "Do you believe that government ought to act to protect children from being exposed to cigarette advertising?"

2. see Sontag S. Illness as metaphor. New York: Vintage, 1979. for an illuminating discussion of the way in which cancer and TB have been metaphorically characterised in literature.


Industry public relations leaders have developed a polished and often impressive arsenal of standard responses to most of the major criticisms leveled at their industry. They have also gone on the offensive and developed calculated attacks against smoking control advocates. These arguments are a composite of outright denial ('alleged' health hazards etc) and ideological blather. They can be found in all their unedited glory in the tobacco and advertising industry press and with monotonous regularity in industry comment on statements by smoking control bodies. Some of the most important journals that one can subscribe to are tobacco and advertising industry publications such as the Tobacco Reporter and World Tobacco which feature information and comment for the consumption of industry workers about new brand launches and the pernicious arguments of the anti-smokers.

This chapter gives detailed critiques of the most common sophistry and rhetoric used in attack and defence by the industry. They fall into three categories: denials of the health arguments against smoking; defences of advertising; and attacks on the supposed wider motives of their anti-smoking antagonists (see also Chapter 2 on 'the problem with anti-smokers...'). As is clearly the case with the industry's corresponding public relations training, these arguments and their hatchet jobs should be thoroughly familiarised. The industry lines have a deceptive simplicity capable of disarming poorly prepared opponents.

DENYING THE HEALTH RISKS OF SMOKING

When the first major reports of smoking related diseases began getting wide publicity, the tobacco industry must have shared the scepticism of much of the smoking population that a product and a habit so widespread and so socially acceptable could be pronounced so deadly. The early reluctance of the industry to accept and act responsibly on the early evidence, while not condonable, might at least have been seen as understandable, given the vast capital that was invested in the industry throughout the world.

However, as the evidence continued to re-affirm the early conclusions, the industry was put in a position where it could no longer be non-committal. It clearly took a decision that it was in the business of selling cigarettes and that any barrier put in its way, even if this turned out to be the identification of tobacco smoking as the cause of a worldwide epidemic of avoidable death and illness, must be dealt with in a way that allowed the marketing of tobacco to proceed unabated.
The industry has therefore taken up the position of refusing to publicly admit that its product is harmful, which gets it into all sorts of trouble when it has to admit implicitly to health problems with tar and nicotine when promoting low yield brands. Its public position is that the health case against smoking is 'not proven' - two words that ring comfortingly in the ears of millions who want to clutch at straws rather than stop smoking.

By 'not proven' the industry generally means that smoking does not kill everyone who smokes: that it cannot be predicted which smokers will die from a smoking related condition. To them, the necessary and sufficient condition of proof of smoking's danger would consist in being able to demonstrate that each and any given smoker would die from a disease that never affected non-smokers. For while many smokers continue to live full life terms and non-smokers occasionally die from (say) lung cancer, the industry can luxuriate in endless public doubt-casting that turns on their claim that smoking is only artifactual to some real cause of death (pollution, stress, personality, genetic disposition &c).

There are standard industry tactics for diffusing and denying evidence on smoking and health. These may be found in the regular propaganda sheets distributed by the industry to journalists, politicians and other influentials throughout the community. They include:

* playing to a popular anti-intellectual mistrust of numbers by using "statistics" as a boo-word
* quoting the contrary (mostly unpublished) views of individual scientists, in ways that suggest that these views are the tip of a major doubting iceberg.
* selectively quoting leading medical authorities out of context or from statements made before a crucial change in evidence became available (especially on the issue of the health effects of passive smoking).
* referring to the unreliability of death certificate information, without mentioning that most smoking caused deaths such as lung cancer are readily diagnosed before death and certainly so at autopsy.
* choosing a unit to measure tobacco consumption that supports the rebuttal being made (for example, when packs of cigarettes are used as a unit to demonstrate that smoking is stable, when it is conveniently omitted from mention that cigarettes per pack have increased).
* being sarcastic about the relevancy of animal studies to humans
*citing international differences in smoking-related disease rates without mentioning relevant cultural or historical differences that might account for these differences (e.g. different smoking practices such as the length of butt left in different cultures).

The complexities and premises of epidemiological concepts like relative and absolute risk will be lost on most of the population, and especially on those smokers who filter anti-smoking arguments through a net of disbelief. Analogy seems to be the best rhetorical device for arguing the health risks of smoking in situations where scepticism about 'statistics' is rife.

Some useful analogies about the health risks of smoking include:

* Russian roulette (despite there being five winners to one loser per game, most can readily appreciate that it's still a deadly game and one to be avoided).

* crossing a busy street or minefield blindfolded (most will get to the other side... some won't. Comments as above)

* the case of TB and other highly infectious diseases (many who are exposed do not contract the disease, but most appreciate the risk and give little opposition to public health measures like inoculation, quarantine and compulsory notification. Point out that public health measures were introduced to check major epidemics like polio and TB on the basis of evidence which at the time was much thinner than that accumulated today on smoking and health).

The extent of industry sophistry and chicanery is almost proportional to the mounting evidence against smoking. Its flabbergasting lies reflect its need to take up a loud position against the implications of any significant piece of new 'bad news'. An exhaustive review of its mischief would prove tedious. However, the following letter contains some 'crunch' that might be asked of a local tobacco lobby group. Elizabeth Whelan of the American Council on Science and Health sent its original version to the US Tobacco Institute and received the heartening reply that the questions raised were best left to the "democratic process"! Perhaps the lesson is to write it as an open letter to a newspaper, where any absent reply will be conspicuous.
Dear [Director of Tobacco Institute],

As I've no doubt you are aware, [name of your organisation] is concerned about the health consequences of smoking. As part of our contribution to smoking control, we intend to publish material for widespread public readership on aspects of the smoking and health issue.

We have access to the extensive literature which links smoking with various diseases and have noted the tobacco industry's regular commentary to the effect that the relationship between smoking and these diseases remains controversial, that statistics cannot be used as a basis for establishing causal relationships, that the data collected to date are flawed and that there is a need for more research.

Certainly, every industry has criteria by which to judge the safety of its products. We would be most appreciative if you or your advisors could advise us of the tobacco industry's product safety criteria and answer the following questions:

1. What type of evidence would the Tobacco Institute accept as reasonable proof that smoking cigarettes significantly increased the risk of diseases such as lung cancer, heart disease and emphysema?

2. What evidence would convince the tobacco industry that its product was hazardous to human health?

3. What research methodology(s) would the Tobacco Institute suggest to collect the type of data which would generate answers to questions 1 and 2.

4. What action would the Tobacco Institute and the various tobacco companies take if proof of cigarettes' danger to health were obtained?

Next, representatives of the tobacco industry often say in public that 'a' scientist or 'an eminent' researcher here and there challenges the smoking-disease link. You must have a list of such people. But could you provide us with a list of whichever established health bodies or expert scientific committees anywhere in the world have rejected the fact that smoking - not just 'excessive' smoking - is a significant health problem? Of course, we would ask you to provide us with full references to these claims, so that our verifiers can check any quotes you may give at their source and in their full context.

We realise that answering these questions may take up valuable time and resources. However, we feel sure
that you would want to take this opportunity to set the record straight in what is an important area of public interest. We intend publishing our questions, together with your replies in a forthcoming publication.

In anticipation, we thank you for your early reply to this matter.

THE INDUSTRY'S ARGUMENTS ON ADVERTISING

"IF IT'S LEGAL TO SELL IT, IT SHOULD BE LEGAL TO ADVERTISE IT"

Given half a chance, this argument is always used by the industry. It indicates both just how fearful the industry is of advertising bans, and how confident they are of the argument's power as a 'king hit' winner against advertising ban advocates. It is an attempt to win public sympathy by portraying the tobacco industry as the potential victim of an anomalous and therefore unjust application of a principle. Several points are worth making about the implications and uses of this argument.

Firstly, the rhetoric of the first clause in the argument "if it is legal to sell it..." obliges us to concede that, yes, tobacco is legally sold. So the implication is made that tobacco, being legal, cannot be all that bad. Having been seduced into making this jump, we temporarily lose sight of the real issue behind calls for a ban – not the legal status of tobacco, but its public health status as the leading cause of death in the developed world. The argument's rhetoric urges that government would be justified in outlawing advertising for an illegal product, but since tobacco is legal, an advertising ban would be somehow incongruous. In this way, the industry calculatively attempts to deflect public thinking away from any consideration of whether promoting tobacco is in the public interest, and onto the wider issue of whether it is 'fair' that the principle embodied in the argument should be violated – regardless of the product in question.

The argument also invites ban advocates to fall for a three card trick by being drawn into a sidetracking debate about why they don't advocate that tobacco be banned. This, being an extreme position with overtones of totalitarian and draconian government, is calculated at portraying smoking control advocates as repressive agents, forcefully trying to prevent people from smoking and blind to the historical lessons of prohibition. Banning tobacco and smoking is not a position adopted by any reputable world health agency and so attempts at portraying your group as 'otherwise should be dismissed quickly as straight misrepresentation.
The rebuttal of the argument proceeds something like this. If tobacco were invented in a laboratory tomorrow, with all that is known about it today available for consideration, there is not a government in the world that would permit its sale. However, the health risks of tobacco were realised long after it had become established as a widespread habit, a whole industry infrastructure established and its use made respectable through glossy advertising. If the health consequences of smoking had been known at some hypothetical time when any question of legalising tobacco might have arisen, it is extremely doubtful that smoking would have become so popular, let alone been allowed to develop as an industry.

Prohibition of social drugs like alcohol and tobacco is neither feasible nor desirable, but the encouragement of their use through advertising and promotion is a logically distinct issue from the issue of their legality. The prosaic sound of the industry anthem "If it's legal to sell it..." should not serve to hide its essentially ideological basis. While the slogan sounds 'reasonable', it is insensitive to the particular history of the smoking and health question, where factors with crucial bearing on any decision to make tobacco freely available had not yet been determined. The slogan thereby remains a convenient and deceptive ruse to justify the perpetuation of tobacco advertising.

It may also be germane to point out that in some countries it is not legal to sell tobacco to children and since children are exposed to advertising all such advertising accessible to children should be banned. This usually means all advertising. The industry usually counters this argument by piously pleading that their advertising is not intended to be accessible to children and that they cannot be held responsible, for example, if a child reads an adult magazine containing tobacco ads. Well, well.

"TOBACCO ADVERTISING IS AIMED ONLY AT ADULT SMOKERS, AND CERTAINLY NOT AT CHILDREN"

As I hope the last example indicates, so much of the back-and-forth between smoking control advocates and the tobacco industry produces the most feeble sort of denials and retorts from the industry that it is worth being provocative just to test the limits of incredulity. Their constant refusal ever to admit having designs on marketing to children epitomises the nonsensical corners they frequently paint themselves into. This position is obviously only a public posture in deference to the widespread community attitude that children should not smoke, and that an industry should certainly not try to influence them to do so. You can't go much lower than leading children down the path to addiction and cancer, exploiting the impressionability of tender years, the community would feel.
The tobacco industry, like all other industries, is interested in new customers. It has to be. It doesn't take any dizzy intellect to work out that failure to capture a cohort of young smokers to replace those older ones who die and quit would starve the industry within a few years. The industry knows probably better than most how many regular youthful smokers maintain the habit throughout their life, albeit a shortened one. If they get them early—and the earlier the better—they will often have a customer for life. Yet they continue to persist with the facile line that they are an upright, community-minded industry that shares concern about children smoking and has therefore voluntarily chosen not to direct their promotions intentionally at children.

As is so often the case in seeking written corroboration of embarrassing issues for the tobacco industry, one has to go to private, internal source documents rather than the sanitized and security-cleared public utterances of the industry. A document placed before the US Federal Trade Commission, but eventually suppressed from publication in their report on cigarette advertising [1] gives us a rare but expected glimpse into the advice the industry seeks and gets from its research agencies.

"Thus, an attempt to reach young smokers, starters, should be based ... on the following major parameters:
- Present the cigarette as one of a few initiations into the adult world.
- Present the cigarette as part of the illicit pleasure category of products and activities.
- In your ads create a situation taken from the day-to-day life of the young smoker but in an elegant manner have this situation touch on the basic symbols of the growing-up, maturity process.
- To the best of your ability, (considering some legal restraints) relate the cigarette to 'pot', wine, beer, sex etc.
- DON'T communicate health or health-related points.[2]

Industry representatives will sometimes point to the overtly 'adult' characters and slices-of-life depicted in tobacco advertising and innocently intone that, see, our advertising is clearly adult-directed. Any marketer of products and services for adolescents can testify that to appeal to youth, one needs to construct a campaign that looks as if it is a product for adults. Few red-blooded teenagers want to be reminded that they are sub-adult, so most overtly adolescent-directed campaigns are likely to be abruptly dismissed by a teenage target audience. A corollary is that many apparently adult-directed tobacco advertisements are the products of research into how to appeal to adolescents' needs to feel adult.

Accusing the industry of inducing children to take up smoking works like garlic before a vampire; it is almost infallible at sending industry credibility cascading and should be used at every opportunity—especially in conjunction with a reply to any
Industry attempt at denying the health risks of smoking.

"ADVERTISING IS PURELY AN INTER-COMPANY COMPETITIVE INSTRUMENT CONCERNED WITH ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING BRAND LOYALTY. IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH INCREASING THE SIZE OF THE MARKET, AND SO PLAYS NO PART IN CAUSING PEOPLE TO SMOKE."

This is the standard industry line on why they spend billions worldwide on advertising. It is a companion argument to the one above about not wanting to influence children. Having discussed the need of the industry to attract young (previously NON) smokers, it remains for us only to look at the absurdity of this second proposition to see even more clearly the desperate position the industry gets itself into when trying to scrub clean.

It is inconceivable that any industry would consciously avoid trying to expand the overall size of its potential market. Certainly, inter-company competitiveness in seeking to win smokers of competing companies' brands is one goal of any company's advertising. But this is only one possible function of advertising. By definition, all advertising seeks to play a role in maximising sales for the product being advertised. Where there exists a known ceiling on the size of the market for a product — as in the case of insulin for diabetics — the sole economic function of advertising is the attempt at maintaining or increasing brand share, in this case by prescribing physicians. The 'cake' can only be divided differently between competing manufacturers, but not increased in size through marketing efforts. However, for the majority of products, there is no accepted ceiling on the size of the market and so advertising is undertaken with two main purposes in mind: to maintain and improve each company's market share, and to expand the overall size of the market.

Tobacco is clearly an instance of the latter category. Many people, especially children, do not smoke and might be persuaded to take it up, and many smokers do not (from the industry's point of view) smoke enough and so might be persuaded to smoke more.

WHISTLEBLOWING

Despite the tobacco industry's programmed denial of advertising's role in promoting smoking, advertising industry workers have occasionally shot from the hip and expressed things a little differently. Alex Dumas, an Australian agency executive wrote:

"As an argument [that tobacco advertising is only aimed at brand switching and not at attracting new consumers] it is so preposterous it is insulting... To claim that cigarette advertising does not encourage smoking flies in the face of all advertising knowledge and experience... We have the
Ironic situation of the Advertising Federation of Australia, on the one hand, saying that advertising in general helps expand markets, and thereby reduces the cost of products; and on the other hand claiming that cigarette advertising keeps the market in a miraculously static state." [3]

Some other comments from advertising industry leaders:

David Abbott, a leading figure in British advertising, puts it even more simply:

"I think it's incontrovertible, though people will argue against it, that advertising things encourages people to use them. The advertising industry believes that in every other product, I don't see why the rules are different for cigarettes." [4]

Emerson Foote, former Chairman of McCann Erikson, one of the world's leading advertising agencies said about the same issue:

"This is the public position of the tobacco industry but I don't think anyone really believes this. I am not even convinced that competition among brands is the most important purpose of such advertising. 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." [5]

Larry Jennings, President of Jennings and Epstein, Atlanta USA:

"I believe in the power of advertising and marketing, and there's no doubt in my mind that advertising encourages [cigarette] usage. The objective of the tobacco companies is to stimulate volume ... I find advertising claims by the industry specious, full of hyperbole and full of puffery." [6]

George Washington Hill, Vice-President of American Tobacco:

"Of course you benefit yourself more than the other fellow [by such promotion] ... But you help the whole industry if you do a good job." [7]

And also, Business Week, America's major business weekly magazine:

"[The tobacco industry is] the classic case, studied in every business school in the country, of how a mass-production industry is built on advertising." [8]

In debate with the industry, taunt anyone pushing the 'brand-share only' line with the observation that they must work for an industry that is unique in its lack of interest in growth.
Perhaps the piece de resistance of responses to this argument is to point to the tobacco monopolies that operated until recently in Kenya (British American Tobacco). In a monopoly situation, brand share is irrelevant to the total returns to the monopoly trader and therefore any advertising must exist solely to try and increase total sales. Kenya during its monopoly period had extensive tobacco advertising.

One seldom has a chance to reveal the full contradictions in the industry’s position on the role of advertising. The brevity of media interviews will almost always preclude you firing off all your rounds, leaving the industry safe from danger behind their barricade of half-truths, cooked data and slogans. The print media usually allows the fullest exposition of arguments so access through letter writing or paid advertising should be considered as a means of giving industry rhetoric a proper pasting.

Below is the text of a letter that could be sent to the industry direct, to newspapers for publication as a letter or placed as an advertisement in the form of an 'open letter' to the tobacco industry. If you decide to send it directly to the industry, it will help the letter avoid the waste paper basket if you advise them that your letter and their reply are to be published in a forthcoming book that you anticipate will have wide circulation. If you receive no response or a brush-off response, send your letter to the press inviting the industry to respond in public.

"We are curious about the tobacco industry’s regular denial that tobacco advertising and promotion is ever intentionally directed at non-smoking children in an attempt to encourage them to smoke. Frankly, this position would make no economic sense to us if we were trying to maximise sales for tobacco – clearly your industry’s overriding concern. In view of this apparent paradox, we’d like you to answer the following questions.

1. Is not the industry delighted when children take up smoking, given the potential years ahead of them as regular smokers?

2. Does the industry therefore regard children adolescents as the highest priority in its marketing efforts?

3. If so, is it not likely that industry shareholders would agree that any of its marketing executives should be sacked if they continue to neglect this vital market, as frequent public statements from the industry repeatedly state to be the case?

4. If, as the industry claims, smoking is not harmful to health, why does the industry continue to be so
reticent in their ambitions with children? And

5. If brand competition between firms is the only role claimed for cigarette advertising, could you explain why the tobacco monopoly that operated in Kenya apparently wasted vast sums of money on advertising?

"In countries where they have no tobacco advertising, cigarette smoking has not declined, and has sometimes even increased. A ban is therefore ineffective."

First, consider the strange economic logic embodied in this common plaintive industry cry. Intended as a salutary warning to well-intentioned legislators about the folly of banning advertising, on not-too-close inspection, it seems a very peculiar argument for the industry to be advancing. If industry sources really believed that a ban would actually increase sales to the industry at large, it doesn't require much thought why they aren't the strongest proponents of advertising bans. The answer, as always, is their faithful stand-by that advertising is only an inter-company competitive instrument, and that, intoxicated on the smell of competition, they are only interested in beating their rival companies for market share and not in expanding the size of the overall market. By this logic, we are supposed to believe that each company would seriously prefer to grapple for a better share of a smaller market than to take their chances (without advertising) at getting at least an even share of a possible larger market that they claim would follow an advertising ban.

Next, consider the very strange role of advertising in marketing if, after advertising is banned, more people buy a product. While a good case can be advanced that much (by definition, bad) advertising has no effect on consumption, to argue that stopping all advertising actually promotes market growth is a preposterous position to come from an industry struggling to maintain the right to advertise presumably because they believe that advertising promotes sales.

The argument at this extremity of the industry's defensive contortions illustrates the problem of the methodological impasses that will always be reached in attempting to pin specific smoking effects on advertising. The industry knows this only too well which explains why is very happy to confine the debate within a problem definition of cause and effect. Maintaining a position that requires the attribution of specific effects to specific factors or causes in a complex area of human behavior like smoking might be a sign of a lack of understanding of the dynamic and interactive play of variables that determine behavior, were it not such an obvious cynical industry tactic to keep on asking unanswerable questions.
Some countries that have banned tobacco advertising (Norway, Finland, Singapore) have done so as part of a comprehensive smoking control policy involving price policy, health education, packet warnings and other dissuasive measures. Others, like most Eastern Bloc Countries, have simply never had tobacco advertising, not because of any aggressive smoking control policies, but because of wider ideological problems with advertising per se. This distinction is conveniently erased in industry references to countries with no tobacco advertising, thereby glossing over often crucial differences in the social climate concerning smoking between the different countries. To them, an Eastern Bloc country with no advertising and climbing smoking prevalence is hard evidence that having no advertising will not slow or decline a country's smoking rate. They make no reference to any other crucial factors that might be responsible.

Tobacco advertising is one factor among many that influences the decision to smoke. Others that are obvious to anyone living in a culture where smoking is prevalent (and which have been 'discovered' by the sort of behavioural scientist who is blind to the existence of anything until it has been measured, cross tabulated and factor analysed) include social, religious, parental, sibling and peer smoking behaviour and attitudes, price and disposable income, age limit proscriptions, measured intelligence and social class.

Individuals starting to smoke find themselves in the thick of this imbroglio being persuaded and dissuaded by varying degrees to smoke. For example, a young person may have non-smoking parents, a smoking peer group, plenty of money to buy cigarettes and have just participated in some intensive school anti-smoking education program. What reliably can be said about exactly why such an individual does or doesn't smoke, given the complex, interrelating and historically changing nature of the factors mentioned? The wonders of computerised multi-variate analyses notwithstanding, the ambition to state the precise influence of a single variable like advertising reflects a crude understanding of the interactive and dynamic determinants of smoking. Or at least it would if one assumed that the industry was attempting to engage in some bona fide debate.

As it is, tobacco industry insistence that the ball is in the court of smoking control advocates to 'prove' that advertising influences market size represents a cynical exercise in promoting tall-chasing.

As well as the Eastern Bloc argument, the industry is fond of quoting the advertising 'ban' in Italy in support of the 'bans don't work' argument. In Italy, the government imposed a ban on cigarette advertising in 1962, and as the tobacco industry is quick to point out, smoking still remains very prevalent. What is not widely known outside Italy, is that the ban is widely violated. Indeed, the Tobacco Reporter, the journal of the international tobacco industry, had this to say about the Italian
Occasionally one even reads that the industry argues that partial advertising bans haven't worked. Countries such as the USA, Australia and the UK where advertising bans are in force on the electronic media have each experienced massive transfers of tobacco advertising expenditure into other media (print, outdoor, sponsorship) in compensation for the lack of radio and TV access. Partial advertising bans can be expected to have correspondingly partial effects, so industry claims about failed bans should be ironically supported, by emphatically pointing out that a ban on advertising — and not just on advertising on TV — has never taken place in the country in question.

Finally, in the face of claims about rising smoking prevalence in countries with no advertising, it is worth pointing out that the rise would likely be much steeper if the forces of advertising were added to those factors forcing consumption up in the absence of advertising. This response can also be used to counter the analogy often used by the industry that cannabis usage is flourishing in the absence of formal advertising. Again, one could argue that its use would be even higher if it were advertised.

"TOBACCO ADVERTISING ALLOWS US TO INFORM THE PUBLIC ABOUT SAFER (sic) CIGARETTES WHEN THEY ARE INTRODUCED ONTO THE MARKET. ADVERTISING BANS ARE THEREFORE AGAINST THE PUBLIC'S INTEREST BECAUSE THEY REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO SMOKERS."

Again, note how the implicit notion of there being something dubious about existing cigarettes gets introduced when the industry chooses to speak of 'safer' cigarettes. The industry's tactics in overcoming this dilemma — of never wanting to even hint that cigarettes might be deadly — have resulted in some quite extraordinary semantic contortions.

Take for example, the use of the word 'mild' in cigarette advertising. Recently in Australia two brands were both concurrently advertised as being the mildest cigarette on the Australian market. The Movement Opposed to the Promotion of Unhealthy Products (MOP UP) complained through the advertising industry's self-regulation system about the obvious contradiction: that two brands could not both be the 'mildest'. Since both brands were at the lowest range of the tar and nicotine tables, it seemed clear that the companies were using the term to refer to the cigarettes' tar and nicotine content.
Asked to specify what they meant by the term "mild", both companies replied in innocent unison that they meant 'subjective taste sensation' which thereby allowed a grammatical superlative (mildest) to turn into a figurative, subjective comparative. Surprised! Surprised! The explanation was accepted by the industry self-regulation system in a glowing testimony to its impartiality, allowing both companies to keep using the term.

The industry has taken a unilateral decision not to inform people about its product. There could hardly be any other product about which consumers are told less, indeed, about which consumers are in fact actively denied information. An American internal company memorandum neatly underlines the situation:

"We do not support definition in advertising of the problem of gas [carbon monoxide] in order to specifically communicate its consumer benefit and distinguish it from low 'tar'. To supply such definition would require overt references to alleged ciliotoxic and cardiovascular ill effects of smoking. The possible ramifications of this in the legal, regulatory and policy areas are appalling... a likely result of such activity on our part would be escalation of quitting rates among smokers." [9]

Any self-righteous talk by the industry about how advertising informs the public is shameless deception and could be met with a string of questions requesting information on tobacco additives such as chemical flavourings, burning agents, assurances about the safety of pesticide residues and perplexed enquiry as to how it is only under duress that advertising informs smokers about the health hazards of smoking.

THE WIDER MOTIVES OF ANTI-SMOKERS

Realising that they are fighting a losing battle for their irredeemable product, the industry has decided to try and divert community attention away from what is being said about tobacco by fabricating hysteria about who is saying all those dreadful things about it. As stated in Chapter 2, the industry's favourite slur their opposition is to paint them as enemies of freedom. Words like take over, regiment, nanny group, Big Brother, unrepresentative minority, making up people's minds and telling us what's good for us punctuate their speech and writing.

Their position is essentially a crude, laissez faire, free marketing 'philosophy' with its attendant and expedient abhorrence of any state intervention or regulation. To them, the notion of a state seeking to protect its citizens from unnecessary and costly illness, such as smoking related diseases, is somehow viewed as indicative of a population having gone spiritually flabby. Their social Darwinist assumptions allow them to maintain with complete
equanimity that smoking is simply another behaviour in the natural order of things, a 'decision', 'chosen' by free citizens all in a position to weigh and balance their reasons for doing so.

The tobacco industry spokesperson typically has a one-dimensional understanding of freedom: freedom to act. The other dimension, that of freedom from unwanted or harmful things is passed over. Accusations about being an enemy of freedom can be met by pointing out this distinction, illustrating what sort of dubious results are involved in the industry's precious freedom to persuade people to smoke: the freedom to addict people to a dependence-producing drug, the freedom to market a product with no product safety criteria, the freedom to place an economic burden on the state's medical services, the freedom to corrupt the language by calling the stale smell of smoke 'fresh' or a carcinogenic product 'mild' and so on.

Opening the floodgates

Related to this argument is the 'thin end of the wedge' or 'floodgates' argument. The industry often tries to win support from other beleaguered industries and from the public's sense of fair play by warning that the arguments for a tobacco advertising ban represent only a test case. With the anti-smokers scenting victory, the industry warns "what will be next?" and proceeds to list any product that has ever killed or injured. Alcohol, junk food, cars, pharmaceuticals, high cholesterol products and activities involving some risk (hang-gliders, motor cycling &c) are usually invoked as being 'next'. Their chief motive is to make a case for smoking control advocates being ridiculous and unreasonable by supposedly lumping products and activities with very low relative risks in the same boat as tobacco.

There are crucial differences in the arguments about tobacco and alcohol advertising that the industry conveniently chooses to ignore. Use and abuse can be distinguished in the case of alcohol, but tobacco has no known safe level of use and consequently presents a different case in terms of justifying its promotion.


2. Document A901268 May 26, 1975 "What have we learned from people? A conceptual summarization of 18 focus groups interviews on the subject of smoking." suppressed from publication in ibid.


FORMING AN INDEPENDENT GROUP

Most readers of this book will already be involved, whether by employment or by membership, in an organisation or agency that is either totally or substantially concerned with smoking control. Some will be satisfied that their agency is flexible enough to permit a diverse range of activities. Others will have experienced episodes of frustration when a seemingly useful course of action has been blocked through reference to some conflicting agenda. The two most common of these are where fund-raising agencies tend to be cautious about making radical statements or taking radical actions on smoking, lest potential (conservative) donors are alienated. An unspecified working notion of a middle course is usually selected, which often is too timid to be effective. Secondly, many government employed health workers either lack power to take direct action — having to filter letters through to conservative bureaucrats for signature for example — or are too frightened to do so, fearing being labelled too radical by their promoting superiors.

A way out of such situations is to form an independent group where such people can either don independent hats or work unfettered behind the scenes for spokespeople in the group who are willing to appear publicly. The press will usually flock to such groups because of their willingness to shoot from the hip and not cower behind committee, board or government red-tape when asked to comment on a topical issue.

Financing independent groups presents the same problems that beset any public interest group and will not be developed here. However, below are some suggestions that will a group or movement to function at optimum capacity.

* Acronymic names for such groups like ASH (Action on Smoking and Health), GASP (Group Against Smoking Pollution), DOC (Doctors Ought to Care) and MOP UP (Movement Opposed to the Promotion of Unhealthy Products seem to be a distinct advantage in being both memorable and unstaid.

* Run advertisements for support funding in magazines and journals read by the monied classes. The billboard graffiti group in Australia, BUGA UP, ran such an ad asking for donations to a "fighting fund" and were inundated with cheques from people who wrote "keep up the good work ... I've not time to help your efforts, but hope this cheque will be useful".
* Merchandise items such as stickers, T-shirts and posters at a price that includes a donation. Such items can include hard-hitting and political messages that transcend the normal limits of anti-smoking material distributed by government agencies. Make these items relatively hard to obtain, to lend them a quasi underground flavour.

* Try to get official patronage from a person in the community beyond reproach or with massive popular appeal. Such people may be unwilling or unprepared to make public appearances on your behalf but may lend their signature to letters or be prepared to make cameo media appearances.

* Print official stationary and use this in press releases.

* Refer to your group as a 'movement', thereby allowing a more liberal answer to questions about your group's size.

* Maintain constant communication with all other groups involved in smoking control. They may find your independence an asset that assists with aspects of campaigning where their own organisation is somehow compromised.

LETTER WRITING TO POLITICIANS

There is a widespread and naive view that a penultimate step in getting a law changed or a policy implemented, is to write to the politician in charge. This view has it that if one's concerns reflect some sensible suggestion, perhaps drawing attention to some inconsistency in policy, and are expressed soundly, the politician will put the cogs into gear and the desired changes will be set in motion. The view is naive in all sorts of ways, perhaps mainly because of the assumption that your suggestion will be found in any way new or original. Most recommendations for change in smoking control policy are verses from a litany that has been sung for many years.

Politicians rarely personally read incoming letters, unless they are specially passed to them by staff as being in some way important. Neither do they write their own outgoing replies, especially when it concerns routine matters like points-of-view from members of the public on topical matters such as smoking. Instead, bureaucratic advisors usually draft replies for the politician's signature. Often replies will be lifted out of a word processing system, containing give-away paragraphs like "I have received many letters from constituents on the subject of tobacco advertising. The government's view on the changes you suggest is that...".
There are however, ways that letter writing can help to make waves. Below are some suggestions that may enhance the chances of a politician reading, showing concern about and perhaps even acting on the contents of letters.

**How can you make the politician look good?**

Change invariably involves conflict and opposition. Moves to control smoking will bring a politician into headlong conflict with the tobacco industry, one of the most powerful industrial groups in the world. Every astute politician will be fully aware of the strength of the opposition to introducing any effective measures. The decision to implement any tough smoking control policy will not be taken lightly, and will be balanced against the likely political gains to be made by doing so. Letters to politicians can seed perspectives on the likely reception a stand against the industry might have ("an epoch-making decision for community health" ... "a principled decision in times of political spinelessness" &c). Always write and congratulate a politician when any worthwhile action is taken.

**Volume is important**

A trickle of letters can always be dismissed by a politician as unrepresentative, especially if over the months they seem to be coming from the same handful of people. A constant stream of letters, and great rushes in response to particular incidents can often be taken much more seriously. The tobacco industry knows the importance of keeping the letters pouring in: tobacco industry workers have been known to be urged to write letters of complaint in response to smoking control announcements. It is sensible to assume that the embattled industry will increasingly resort to drumming up support from its workers in this way.

**Don't send form-letters.**

While there may be total agreement about the wording of the ideal letter on a smoking control subject, never distribute such letters as form letters for people to either sign or retype and send. A form letter will get a form reply and nothing will be accomplished other than to affirm to the politician that the smoking control lobby has no imagination or political acumen. It is even risky to distribute a form listing 'essential points' to be made in letters. This may result in a flood of obvious paraphrases being sent, which will leave a similar poor impression.

It is best to produce a fact sheet for distribution to potential letter writers. The sheet should provide all factual material germane to the issue you hope to have people write about, as well as summaries of the various arguments and possible responses that writers can either raise or anticipate.
Who actually writes the politician's replies?

Find out the name of the bureaucrat who deals with all smoking control correspondence. There is a good chance that the person will be in this role because of their knowledge or background in the smoking control field and therefore likely to be positively disposed to your concerns. Ask this person frankly what the politician's attitudes and positions are on the various aspects of smoking control policy - whether (s)he is under instructions from the political party or cabinet to take a particular line, whether (s)he has any personal convictions, positive or negative, about smoking and most importantly, whether there are any issues that the bureaucrat feels are ripe for the politician to take action on.

Bureaucrats are often frustrated by the political impasses or inertia they are obliged to work under. Often they will report a real conflict between their professional assessment of what should be done to further stated government policy ("to reduce smoking in the community") and their growing knowledge that certain important actions are 'politically unacceptable' in the wider context of government, perhaps conflicting with other portfolios like agriculture, labour and industry. Their own ideals become compromised and their roles are reduced to appearing to protect politician's careers. This frustration can often breed a willingness to help outsiders by precipitating courses of action that they themselves cannot be seen to start, but which once placed on the agenda, they may be able to manipulate to advantage.

The classic ways of bureaucrats helping are by leaking documents and by forewarning of events, meetings and impending announcements relevant to smoking control, thus enabling anticipatory action by outside smoking control groups. The bureaucrat will be the best judge of what is potentially useful and of his/her own security in leaking particular pieces of information. (S)he may be able to suggest prudent times for writing certain letters, or to provide valuable background information that might assist the content and timing of your letters to the politician.

A note of caution: it is wise to be on guard about your relationship with bureaucrats. Double-bind situations can arise where your independence can be severely compromised through 'past favours owed'. In a situation of conflicting wishes - of bureaucrats wanting to tone you down for fear you will embarrass their Department over inactivity or suchlike, awkward decisions must sometimes be made.

Letters from the powerful, the important and the well-known.

Letters from persons in positions of power and influence or from public celebrities almost by definition carry more weight than those from 'ordinary' citizens. Professors, deans, presidents of medical colleges, public interest groups with large memberships,
trade unions, Nobel laureates, folk heroes and bodies representing children's interests all qualify here. Even more impressive will be if several such people - say, the deans of all medical schools in a nation - jointly sign a letter to a politician. Such a letter could even be published as an open letter to a politician or to government in the letters page of a leading newspaper. By publishing an open letter, it will be almost mandatory for the politician to reply publicly in the same publication. If the open letter asks specific questions rather than simply making an impassioned statement, the politician will be obliged to deal with the questions rather than gloss over the implications with some fine-sounding but empty statement.

Private letters to politicians run the risk of achieving nothing but a polite reply, with no-one but the staff knowing the extent and vehemence of community feeling toward smoking control. Public letters are read by thousands, and millions in some countries. You should weigh up what effects you hope to achieve - gentle, polite persuasion or public confrontation - before deciding how to write.

Consider publishing your correspondence

Even if you have no immediate plans to do so, it cannot hurt your efforts to explain in your letters to politicians that you are seeking information on his/her policies for a forthcoming article, report or book. This will help you obtain a serious and carefully worded reply, rather than some throw-away line that may later embarrass its signatory. Such a prompt may even cause some reconsideration of policy if the present policy looks archaic in the face of new information or the policies of other states or nations. Care should be taken not to word such letters in belligerent terms or tones. Careful thought can produce letters than are uncompromising and to-the-point while not sounding hot-headed and 'emotional'.

Always send copies of your correspondence and replies received to other campaigning groups.

CHALLENGING TOBACCO ADVERTISING SELF REGULATION

In some countries the advertising industry, generally in cahoots with the tobacco industry, has established a system of self regulation based on codes of voluntary advertising restraint. These codes are a set of rules about what the intended function of advertising is supposed to be (brand competition) together with a series of clauses about what claims cannot be made in advertising. Without exception such systems' primary function is to allay the threat of advertising bans by establishing a public veneer of social responsibility that serves as a shield against accusations of irresponsible advertising practice. The industry in countries where the codes operate, regularly participate in
public orgies of self-congratulation about what it alleges to be the publicly responsive operation of the codes.

Typically, industry members cite a mere handful of public complaints about tobacco advertising, reasoning that this means the public is satisfied with the voluntary regulation operating. It never occurs to them that complaint numbers are low because people do not know that they can complain or who to complain to, and because most people, even if they did know, would be wise enough to realise that the exercise would be largely a waste of effort. Industry spokespeople allude to the number of advertisements rejected for publication or broadcast, while never allowing any open public scrutiny of the acceptance or rejection process. They publish lavish guides to the operation of the codes, usually brimming with pious sentiment about concern for community responsibility. To those uninitiated in trying to have a reasonable complaint upheld by a self-regulation system, the industry's public relations efforts can be persuasive. However, in practice the story is somewhat different.

No industry will clip its own wings by supporting any system of advertising regulation that seriously limits its marketing possibilities. To pretend otherwise is to be naive about the spirit of capitalism. Even a cursory look at self-regulation systems shows them to be purposely full of loopholes, taken up largely with unfalsifiable proscriptions ("Cigarette advertising should be directed only to adult smokers...") and virtually complaint-proof thanks to the ambiguities inevitably involved in making subjective judgements on the 'meaning' of the photographs in advertising. The resolution of such ambiguities when the adjudicators have vested interests is invariably self-serving. A complaint about the biggest cigarette advertising campaign in Australian history took 18 months to reach resolution, having negotiated a labyrinth of delaying tactics all calculated to keep the advertisement before the public for as long as possible [1].

Self regulation is usually introduced in a climate where the industry decides that it had better smarten up before it is jumped on by legislators. The existence of a self-regulatory body signifies that the industry is feeling somewhat cautious and therefore sensitive to criticism. All self-regulation codes should be regarded primarily as steps on the way to total advertising bans and therefore never supported or implicitly endorsed as acceptable smoking control mechanisms. Instead, they should be firmly sighted as targets for discrediting the industry as being incapable of seriously regulating unacceptable advertising.

As mentioned already, the industry harps endlessly about how few complaints it receives. This is easily rectified by pumping complaints in from everywhere. Organise mass and on-going complaint projects, compiling fully documented dossiers of the responsiveness of the self-regulatory body and the results of your complaints. If, as is likely, complaints are treated cursorily or rejected on the basis of alleged weak argument (so
make sure your arguments aren't!), give widespread publicity to the failings of the system. Make sure a full critical dossier is sent to the relevant government ministers. Make it your object to have tobacco advertising the most frequently received complaint appearing in their annual reports.

DISRUPTING TOBACCO PROMOTIONS

In most countries, the tactics the smoking control lobby uses in attempting to check the promotional activities of the tobacco industry are orthodox, predictable, timid and unsophisticated. Letters get written, words are had in supposedly Important ears, condemning motions are passed in meetings of the like-minded and endless submissions are placed before government inquiries that are often merely window-dressing displays of concern about public health. All these activities are necessary, but hardly sufficient tactics capable of faltering the promotional efforts of the industry.

In the late 1970s, Australia saw the emergence of several public interest groups concerned about smoking and health which took quite radically different approaches to the task. While some of these groups persisted in the 'correct channels' of attempting change, all became thorns in the side of the industry in ways that it had not had to deal with before. These groups have demonstrated that just as a chain is only as strong as its weakest link, so too can apparently massive, expensive and highly publicised tobacco promotions be rendered transparent and limp by carefully planned and inexpensive disruptive tactics. Hoping to win new smokers in practically every section of the community, the industry lays itself open to potential public relations disasters in many public situations, and this chapter will describe a selection of tactics for ruining some of the more common industry promotions.

Demonstrations and protests are central to an aggressive approach to frustrating and disrupting industry promotions. Not only do many people see demonstrations - they usually occur at crowded locations or events - but many more learn about them from the media coverage that they can generate, thereby increasing the potential number who will personally protest during such promotions in future. While a prime function of protests and demonstrations is to flaw the gloss on particular industry promotions, another equally important objective is to put the idea into more people's heads that tobacco promotions should not be regarded as just another innocuous sales promotion - part of the normal urban landscape - but something that deserves a show of contempt. Most who have felt this way in the past will have endured silently the obsequious public fawnings of sporting administrators as they thank their tobacco sponsors in the formal and 'a job well done' atmosphere of prize giving ceremonies. They will have regarded the plastic smiles of cigarette 'girls' handing out free cigarettes in shopping centres as mildly irritating, but hardly occasion for anything more than brusque refusal of their kind offers. In future, after your protests have politicised such events, such people will be forced to re-evaluate their own position. Tobacco sponsorship will not be able to masquerade as benevolence and free sample promotions will be tainted with thoughts of drug-pushing.
SUBVERTING SPORTING AND CULTURAL SPONSORSHIP

During the past decade, the industry has moved increasingly into the field of corporate sponsorship. In countries where tobacco advertising has been banned from television, sporting sponsorship serves to circumvent such bans by allowing cigarettes to be 'indirectly' or 'incidentally' advertised. Try counting up the number of times a sponsoring tobacco company's name is both mentioned and seen during a sports broadcast and you'll appreciate how efficient sponsorship is as a means of getting tobacco advertising before the public at levels that would not be possible using only direct advertising. It has been estimated for example, that during the 1981/2 summer cricket season the Benson and Hedges brand name was screened on one Australian television network alone over 40,000 times [1].

The industry is naturally concerned to sponsor sporting and cultural events that have popular followings and which are likely to attract large television audiences. It is especially interested in those sports which appeal to youth, such as football, cricket and tennis. One seldom hears of the industry getting generous with a predominantly old persons' game like lawn bowls or croquet because few new smokers are likely to be found and the smokers who aren't already dead among such advanced age groups in any case won't be customers for the industry for too much longer.

There is much advantage that can be taken of the industry's sponsorship of live televised events and those that draw large crowds. To illustrate, let's take the example of a major tennis tournament, complete with international star players, that is to be televised live. Many of the suggestions require advance planning, which means that you will need to know well ahead when the televised rounds are to be played and who some of the leading players will be. The ideas following can be adapted to the circumstances of other sports or to cultural sponsorship like ballet, music and art exhibitions.

Before the tournament

Organise a meeting of those in your movement who are prepared to become involved in demonstration and protest type activities. Here you should explore general ideas for subverting the tobacco sponsored aspects of the tournament and then, once the project is agreed upon, continue with a creative pooling of ideas, planning of tactics and delegation of tasks.

The first tactic described has been used successfully in the USA by the Boston chapter of GASP (Group Against Smoking Pollution). The Camel company decided to drop sponsorship of a series of outdoor concerts after GASP alerted the trio Peter, Paul and Mary together with Juice Newton and James Taylor that their talents were going to be used to advertise Camel. Most threatened to
cancel upon learning of the sponsorship, setting a notable precedent worth quoting in future situations.

Returning to our hypothetical tennis series: all players known to be competing in the tournament should be sent a letter like the one set out below. In essence, the letter should point out how the player's presence will be used to promote smoking; how inconsistent this is with the responsibility to promote health that you are sure the player believes in; and that the player should be aware that a lot of adverse publicity will be stirred up by your movement about the hypocrisy of sport and tobacco going hand-in-hand during the event. The letter should include a direct call to players to withdraw from tobacco sponsored tournaments and to give publicity to their reasons for doing so.

"Dear ...

We notice that you will be competing in the [Brandname] Open tournament in this country in December. In all probability, being an athlete, you would be mindful of the inappropriate association of sport with cigarette smoking. There are many people in this country who share this view and who in past months have become actively involved in public protest and demonstration over the tobacco industry's cynical disregard for people's health.

It is anticipated that the series will be subject to a great deal of protest and criticism which may prove embarrassing to players involved in the tournament. We enclose a pamphlet in which we have set out detailed arguments about the ethical issues involved. We urge you to withdraw from the tournament and to publicly state your reasons for doing so. You are in a privileged position to make a major contribution to smoking control efforts, and we trust you will appreciate the seriousness of the issues involved."

In all likelihood, you will hear nothing from the players to whom you've written. However, any response that either accepts or rejects your suggestion can be turned into valuable publicity. If players agree to withdraw, lose no time in contacting them to urge them to come out strongly in public against the industry. Their withdrawal will usually be news enough in itself for sports journalists, but you may be able to work a major news story out of it. If players or their management serve up a reply that contains choice quotations about the player's gratitude to the tobacco industry or the usual evasive guff about freedom of choice, you might think about using such gems in the text of a future pamphlet or press release.

A player may be strongly supportive of your suggestion but unwilling to withdraw from the tournament. S/he may nonetheless be willing to make some public statement to the effect that the system virtually necessitates players competing in such events...
because international sporting administration declares tobacco
sponsored events to be major tournaments that have bearing on
players' world rankings. If a player speaks out about being thus
compromised, a powerful perspective of unfairness will surround
the event in the eyes of the public. If the player wins, and if
his/her reluctance to play in the event has been publicised, the
presentation ceremony - complete with a battery of congratulatory
tobacco senior executives looking on - will be a very pregnant
moment.

Such players may also be interested in wearing some form of anti-
smoking insignia on their clothing, or stencilled on their
racquet. In the tobacco dominated world of motor racing
sponsorship, a car painted over with anti-smoking messages will
contrast sharply with the motorised cigarette advertisements. If
event organisers attempt to forbid such signs being displayed,
again the golden rule about turning on the publicity should
apply.

You will not always be able to rely on player and performer
boycotts happening, but with an active core of people, you can
guarantee to the industry that tobacco sponsored events will
nearly always be greeted by protest and disruption activities.
And the simple beauty of it is that there is little that they can
do to stop it. Your other preparation should include:

* informing journalists, radio and TV stations what your
group intends doing, pointing out that your protest may be short-
lived if the tobacco interests persuade the ground officials to
have you removed. It's therefore important that whatever you do
occurs when cameras and journalists are present and ready.

* producing pamphlets, car stickers, T-shirts with slogans,
banners and placards. MOP UP in Melbourne, who have done
pioneering work in this area, even had a giant inflatable plastic
cigarette made up and emblazoned with "Come to Cancer Country"
along its length. Three stickers produced by Melbourne MOP UP
read "JOIN McENROE - BREAK A RACKET. KEEP TOBACCO COMPANIES OUT
OF SPORT.", "BENSON & HEDGES STUMPS YOUR GROWTH" (Benson and
Hedges are the sponsors of Australian cricket, and 'stumps' is a
cricketing term meaning to be given out), and "MARLBORO TAKES THE
WIND OUT OF TENNIS". If your group has little money, the content
of pamphlets and slogans on stickers should be general enough to
be relevant to different events at which you will be protesting,
covering the general theme of tobacco sponsorship of sport - not
simply one particular brand's involvement in one particular
event. If you are in a position to create different material for
each event, this is all the better.

* Noting essential details like how many entrances to the
ground will need to be covered by demonstrators.
Outside the ground

* arrive just before the busiest period of entry to the day's matches. If you get there too early, any successful move to have your group removed may occur before many people have been exposed to your protest.

* dress everyone in a T-shirt with an appropriate message across it, or wear sashes or costumes parodying the style of free-sample cigarette distributors. Many brand names are easily changed into humorous send-ups like Came-ill, Burnson & Stenches, Chest-is-filled or Chests Defiled, Slay-em, Dunghill, Kruel and Endmessy. You can print these names on T-shirts and banners using script identical to that used on the corresponding brand.

* stage some street theatre. For example, some of your group could be dressed as obese cigar-puffing tobacco executives leading blindfolded sports stars around with rings through their noses. People can dress up in giant mardigras style cigarettes with appropriate slogans written on them. If there are children in your group, their presence with appropriate placards about the appeal of sport to children will be a good idea.

* distribute pamphlets explaining your protest and giving suggestions for action by those who share your concerns. Such actions can include loud booing whenever the tobacco company name is mentioned or thanked over the public address system, writing letters to the sports administration body urging them to seek alternative sponsorship in future years and information about how people can actively join your movement. Those distributing pamphlets should also carry plastic buckets to take any cash donations that may be offered.

* place leaflets under car windscreen wipers in the adjacent car park.

* create an alternative prize which should be displayed to those filing into the arena. You could create a huge perspex cigarette and fill it with butts and ashes ("ashes to ashes, butts to butts"). Have an appropriate inscription on it, commenting on the achievement of the tobacco industry in killing however many thousand people they are responsible for in your country each year.

Inside the ground

Your protest inside the ground will need to be orderly enough to give the ground authorities no cause to have you removed. Making any disturbance that distracts players or annoys other spectators may give your message a short blaze of glory, but result in your ejection, with the incident reported in 'rabble-rousing' terms. A better ploy is to engage in passive, less obtrusive forms of protest. For example, if six can sit in a row together, they could wear T-shirts each with the single letters forming 'C-A-N-
C-E-R boldly written on them. This will be easily read by all spectators and unavoidably picked up by the TV long-range shots as part of the background (just like the cigarette advertisements). Try imagining an official trying to prevent you wearing a T-shirt into the arena because it had the disruptive letter 'C' on it! If you take banners in, give some thought to when you will unfurl them, keeping in mind that you may be asked to take them down. Perhaps they should be saved until a moment when you don't mind being ejected.

Presentation ceremonies present the ideal opportunity for reddening the faces of those normally composed tobacco executives as they press the prize money into the winners' hands. Often these ceremonies are held courtside and if the telecast is live-to-air, no opportunity for editing out any embarrassing incidents can occur. Just as you will have been jeering any public address announcements that mention the sponsoring company, so will you spare no mercy for this ritual of generosity where people are lulled into complacency with thoughts of 'deserving wins'.

Harassment from Security Guards

Tobacco companies have been known to hire private security firms to lean on protest groups. If you are on public property, such as outside a tennis arena, these people have no power to move you away or prevent you from distributing leaflets. This will not usually prevent them from trying though. It is wise to ask people to attend your demonstration who will take no active part, but who may act as witnesses to any unlawful harassment. If any incidents look like occurring, take photographs. If you see suspicious-looking people taking photographs of you, reciprocate. The effect is usually quite amusing.

A REGISTER OF CELEBRITIES REFUSING TO PERFORM FOR TOBACCO MONEY

In 1982, the Australian Consumers' Association (ACA) successfully put a motion before the actors and performers labour union in Australia, Actors' Equity. The motion urged that all Equity members should refuse to work in any performances sponsored by a tobacco company. Having attained such support, ACA set about creating a mechanism whereby actors and actresses wanting to support the boycott could confidentially register with other like-minded people in order that they could present a strong front in any expected confrontation with theatre management. Equity agreed to allow a pamphlet explaining the boycott register - the CRUSH register (Celebrities Resisting the Unhealthy Smoking Habit) - to be sent out to all members in the mail. At the time of going to press, the first returns from the pamphlet were just coming in.

The pamphlet is reproduced as Appendix I and other groups are welcome to use it as a model for similar efforts in other countries. With coordination between groups around the world, an
ENTERING TOBACCO PROMOTIONS

The industry often holds sales promotions disguised as competitions or talent quests. For example, they may offer rich prizes for the best entry that explains "why you smoke brand X" or for the entrant whose photograph is selected as being the typical Brand Y smoker. The competitions and their prizes are always thematically consistent with the brand's image as portrayed in its advertising and often draw the attention of the thousands of chronic competition addicts in the community.

Philip Morris held a competition in Australia in 1981 where they sought an Australian Marlboro man with the lure of $25,000 and an advertising contract: fortune and fame. The activist group BUGA UP (Billboard Utilising Graffitists Against Unhealthy Promotions) took a pause from their usual illegal graffiti refacing of outdoor billboard advertisements and decided to enter someone appropriate in the contest.

A man confined to a wheelchair who smoked through his tracheostomy air hole was approached in a Sydney hospital. The man, Frank, agreed to enter the contest as BUGA UP's entrant. Not a group to do things quietly, BUGA UP decided not only to formally enter the contest with the Australian macho hopefuls but to produce a poster of Frank for placement on the billboards of Sydney. Feeling that the judges would feel Frank wasn't quite what they were looking for, they decided to give their entrant the benefit of public adjudication. The entry form sought entrants who had "a strong and distinctly individual masculinity - that unique difference that personifies the flavour of Marlboro" and Frank's entry attracted considerable press attention to the point that when the largest selling Sydney morning newspaper reported the eventual contest winner, three out of four newspaper columns were spent describing the BUGA UP entry. The poster was later used as the cover of the Medical Journal of Australia [2].

All such competitions should be publicly 'entered' in this way, using a maximum of black humour or understatement.

*SEND FOR YOUR FREE SAMPLE...*

New brand launches sometimes include opportunity for people to write in for a sample pack. Such offers usually say in small print "offer open only to adult smokers" in a pious display of responsibility. Have a child write in for a sample, using deliberately childish handwriting. Keep a photocopy of the
application form. If a pack is dutifully mailed back, pull out all stops to protest that the company is sending cigarettes to children. Argue that your efforts illustrate how (purposefully) lax the company is in sending cigarettes to children.

SHOPPING CENTRE PROMOTIONS

Promotions of (especially) new brands in shopping centres, street plazas and other places where large crowds are found present good opportunities for disruption. MOP UP (Movement Opposed to the Promotion of Unhealthy Products) in Newcastle Australia have some practical advice here.

Free sample promotions permit a particularly salient dimension in the smoking ritual to operate - the offering, and the concomitant difficulty of refusing cigarettes. The offering of a cigarette has long been a means of expressing welcoming and hospitable feelings, with refusal often signaling so much more than the mere refusal of a cigarette. Recent ex-smokers and young novice smokers often testify to the difficulty of refusing an offered cigarette because of its wider implications. The associated cupping of the hand around the lighter in the cigarette girl's hand and the short mandatory pause for conversation allow a range of susceptible individuals - the callow youth, awkward in female company, the self-styled connoisseur of cigarettes - to have a pleasant experience, more to do with the interaction than with the cigarette.

Alert members of your movement to look out for notice of forthcoming events connected with tobacco promotion in newspapers, shopping centre notice boards listing coming events and so on. These may be as discreet as some pageant called "The world of skiing, brought to you [in small print] by Peter Stuyvesant. Generally though, someone will report seeing a team of young women (it is always women in the sexist world of the tobacco industry) handing out free samples. These women are carefully selected for their decorative potential and wear kitsch uniforms like cow-girl outfits (Marlboro). Advise your members casually to ask one of the women "how long will you be here... it's such a nice place for you to be working! Where do you go to next?" This way you may get a quite detailed itinerary to enable some forward planning.

The main task is to have a network of people who can be phoned to see if they are available to act against such promotions, to organise action and to prepare placards and other visual material with appropriate messages on them. If most of your group are working, suggest a lunch-hour demonstration. Naturally, contact sympathetic journalists for some news coverage and try and prepare a quick leaflet to hand out to onlookers. Have someone check out what the appropriate laws relating to obstruction, public disturbances and gatherings are so that you are prepared.
to deal with any bluffing attempt to move you along by shopping centre managers or security guards.

MOP UP in Newcastle, Australia, ran a campaign of turning up at tobacco company promotions and holding up placards with slogans like "Danger! Drug Pushers at Work!". They also handed out free apples, parodying the distribution of free cigarettes. Children in the group constantly approached the women and asked for cigarettes in an effort to demonstrate to onlookers the attractiveness of the promotion to children. In the early days, before the industry became alert to the organised nature of the demonstrations, the children were sometimes handed cigarettes and dutifully photographed in the act by lurking MOP UP members.

If the promotion is occurring on public space, such as on a footpath or recreation area, it may be that the promotion is being held illegally. Many local government authorities require people involved in sales promotions to have special, written permission to operate from a public area. You should always ask the people involved to produce their written authority to be there, which often will be non-existent. If it seems you have caught them out, ask a sympathetic local resident or ratepayer to write a formal complaint to the local government council which may feel obliged to formally warn the offending company not to break regulations. Naturally, you'll feed news of the incident to the press who may run a headline like "Local Council Warns Tobacco Giant".

Newcastle MOP UP believes that a noticeable drop in the number of shopping centre promotions in their city followed their persistence in disrupting them. They report that some of the women working in the promotions became upset when their apathetic 'we're only doing it for the money' justifications began to take on a different complexion in the face of the demonstrations. It is likely that word spreads quickly amongst the agencies that recruit the women that it is a thankless and sometimes very demeaning job to 'push' cigarettes with a fake smile.

CINEMA ADVERTISING

In the expectant hush that descends over a cinema audience when the lights are dimmed, tobacco advertisers can find particularly attentive audiences for some of their most lavish productions. The wide screen, the 35mm medium and the larger-than-life images can combine with this receptivity to create an advertising situation highly valued by the industry.

Tobacco ads in cinemas are particularly vulnerable to subversion. In Australia, it is now quite uncommon to sit through a cinema tobacco ad without hearing loud hissing, jeering, exaggerated coughing or calls of 'cancer!' fill the cinema. The practice
seems to have begun with a handful of people seeking to ridicule the ads, but has snowballed to become commonplace to the point where the industry must be seriously wondering about the wisdom of continuing to use cinema advertising.

It is also worthwhile to encourage people to complain to cinema management about their running tobacco ads. Explain that you don't appreciate paying money to watch an advertisement for an established cancer agent. Little interactions like this can stick in people's minds, especially when they start happening regularly. Perhaps the management may agree with you and decide to refuse tobacco advertising voluntarily.

INfiltration.

The axiom about 'knowing your enemy' should apply very firmly in your dealings with the industry. Aside from subscribing to the industry journals and keeping press files of its public utterances, you can get some privileged peeps inside by using a little stealth. But remember that infiltration works in both directions; paying security and private investigation firms to infiltrate your movement presents little difficulties to an industry as wealthy and with as much to lose as the tobacco industry.

Letter Writing

The industry employs public relations specialists to work up position statements on issues that might do it harm. These are distributed to influential people in the community such as politicians, journalists, editors, media barons, usually in super-glossy covers and written in an entertaining mixture of pop science, tub-thumping free market talk and Orwellian newspeak. If you cannot get hold of these gems from a friendly journalist, try the following.

'Write a tobacco company a letter (using a pseudonym and address that they are unlikely to suspect) feigning that you are a smoker who is tired of being belittled and lied to by what you suspect to be some sort of puritan conspiracy about smoking. Ask them for their own information on the smoking and health issue, and add that if there's anything you can do to help.... You never know what they might have brewing.

Or....

Keep an eye out for advertisements in the press seeking applications for junior executive positions in the industry. It may be that you know someone who is in a situation to apply for such a job and who is sympathetic to the smoking control effort. If this person succeeds in being employed in the industry, they will be in a good position to divulge a great deal of invaluable.
Information before their cover is blown. Properly handled, there is nothing illegal about doing this.

Such a coup requires the right person to be available, the job to be available, your person to be selected and a host of other contingencies. It is less likely to happen than carrying off a successful 'retrospective' infiltration. This most often happens purely fortuitously such as when you meet socially an ex-industry worker or someone who knows someone currently working for them and has some useful second-hand information.

One way of making contact with lapsed industry workers or with current disillusioned ones willing to help your efforts is to simply advertise for such people. Place an ad in a magazine, journal or newspaper that is likely to be read by industry workers - advertising journals are ideal. You could word the ad something like this:

"Past and current employees in the tobacco industry sought for confidential discussions with anti-smoking activists. If you're tired of the duplicity and lies, why not act in the public interest and spill some company secrets? Marketing strategies to teenagers, tactical plans, news of politicians in-the-pocket especially cherished."

There is evidence that trust and consequently morale in the industry are very tenuous. A recent protracted episode in Australia, involving a tobacco company slavishly trying to deny the bona fides of leaked company data on advertising expenditure showed the industry's hand to be very shaky indeed on the issue of how to deal with leaks. An employee used advertising data in a correlation exercise for an external university course report. The data showed an astonishing near perfect correlation (.97) of the company's advertising expenditure with increases in teenage smoking, over an eight year period. The employee/student, being taken aback by the magnitude and implications of the relationship, made the course paper available to some health workers who gave it publicity.

Eventually the company traced the source of the data through handwriting analysis after the report had been given to them by a government committee. They then pedantically and painstakingly set about denying that the data were authentic and that the employee had access to such data. The company tried to have pressure put on the health workers who were publicising the data, to withdraw their claims to its authenticity. The whole episode illustrated the extraordinary lengths that the industry will go to to cover up any leakages from within. Its lesson is that one can generate considerable disarray within industry management by deliberately and openly setting out to whitewash security. This may percolate down to a public defensive performance of such ineptitude that the industry's public image will sink even lower.

This pamphlet is being sent to thousands of well-known sportsmen and women, actors, actresses, musicians, entertainment celebrities, and sporting and cultural bodies around Australia in response to the tobacco companies' promotional activities.

This action follows a growing number of incidents in Australia and overseas where individuals have declared their refusal to allow their talents to be used to promote tobacco.

We hope you will take time to read the facts and arguments we set out below. As a person in the public eye, you are in a privileged and responsible position where you can influence public opinion by your actions over tobacco promotion.

The Australian Consumers' Association, publisher of CHOICE, is co-ordinating this action. ACA is an independent, non-profit, non-party-political organisation. Our income derives solely from subscriptions to CHOICE which currently number over 180,000. Associated and assisting with this action are leading health, sporting and medical bodies around Australia:

- the Anti-Cancer Council of Victoria
- the Australian Council on Health, Physical Education and Recreation
- the Australian Council on Smoking and Health
- the Australian Foundation on Alcohol and Drug Dependence
- the Australian Institute of Sport
- the Australian Medical Association
- the Doctors Reform Society
- the Movement Opposed to the Promotion of Unhealthy Products
- the National Heart Foundation
- the NSW State Cancer Council
- the Royal Australasian College of Physicians
- the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners
- the West Australian Sports Federation

In taking this stance, we are working towards one of the main policy recommendations of the World Health Organization: that there should be a complete ban on all forms of tobacco advertising and promotion.
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THE ‘CRUSH’ REGISTER

We invite you to add your name to a register we have established – the CRUSH Register (Celebrities Resisting the Unhealthy Smoking Habit).

Actor Warren Mitchell, launching CRUSH in Sydney in August, 1982, declared he would never again knowingly work for a theatre in a performance sponsored in any way by a tobacco company. Mitchell is a light smoker, but nonetheless believes the issue of promoting smoking is quite distinct from what he describes as his own reluctant addiction. His stand is remarkably courageous. Mitchell has worked for leading theatre companies in Australia and Britain that accept sponsorship from tobacco companies. His action may have sown seeds of doubt in the minds of the theatres’ managers about the ethics of accepting tobacco money.

On its own, his gesture may not change much. But we hope that his action won’t be a lone voice in the wilderness. Think about the effects on theatre managers if 100 leading actors and actresses took a similar step and registered with CRUSH. Think, for example, what the effect on the NSW Rugby League’s thinking about their “deal” with Rothmans would be if 70% of graded league players told them to find a more acceptable sponsor.

By including your name on the register, you will be making a statement that may influence administrators in your field to think hard about continuing their association with tobacco companies. Your action will certainly fuel a wider community debate on this issue. Many people don’t spare a second thought when they see a tobacco name associated with sport and culture. A flood of names of prominent people like yourself, taking a tobacco name associated with sport and culture, will throw the issue into a completely different light.

Your neck on the block?

There are principles, and there are costly principles you might be thinking. We can understand a reluctance to join the register, feeling that you might be one of just a handful and therefore vulnerable to being victimised. To overcome this, our activity will be in two phases. The first is just a gathering of names – in strict confidence. If you register with CRUSH we will not release your name in any way until we contact you to discuss it and get your permission. When we contact you, we’ll tell you how many others in your field have joined, and then you’ll decide if you want to take it further. We think early registrations will have a tremendous snowballing effect among others. If you’re agreeable, we’ll publish your name among all the others on the CRUSH Register and organise widespread publicity.

Naturally you’ll be free at any time to withdraw – although we hope you won’t! The register is not a legal contract. It is a professional boycott and a public statement.

The arguments... and the FACTS!

What’s all the fuss about tobacco and tobacco promotion? The World Health Organization heads a long list of expert bodies that have named smoking as the leading cause of early death in the developed world. Since the first definite reports on the relationship between smoking and disease were published in the 1950s, there have been over 30,000 scientific articles confirming this. There is little in medicine that is so well established. In Australia, the former Federal Minister for Health, Mr MacKellar, wrote in a letter to the Australian Council on Smoking and Health that over 16,000 Australians die each year from medical conditions attributable to smoking. Think about this. It represents over four times the national road toll; it is three-and-a-half times our average annual loss during the six years of the Second World War; and it represents more deaths in one day than occurred to Australian troops in an average year of the Vietnam war. A smoking death is seldom a sudden thing – it doesn’t happen to everyone who smokes, but as a risk factor for heart disease, lung and other cancers, emphysema, chronic bronchitis and circulatory disease, it’s out on its own. One in four heavy, long-term smokers will die prematurely because of their habit.

If it’s so bad, why don’t they ban it?

The health effects of smoking were realised about 30 years after smoking had become widespread. By this time, a large industry was established and governments had become dependent on the large taxes to be creamed from its sale and so were reluctant to act. We also know that prohibition of widely used social drugs only produces a black market.

If tobacco were invented in a laboratory tomorrow and we knew what is known about it today, there is not a government in the world that would permit its sale.

This makes the tobacco industry’s cry “because it’s legal to sell it, it should remain legal to advertise it” sound very hollow indeed.

The government claims it wants to reduce tobacco consumption in the community and yet continues to allow over $60 million worth of advertising and promotion every year. Such empty rhetoric forces us to organise campaigns like this.
What does tobacco promotion do?

It doesn't work on people in the way that a virus causes illness or a hammer drives a nail. The role of tobacco promotion in smoking is far more complex. It gets our attention, it makes us aware, it directs our attitudes and it shapes emotional connections between tobacco and certain feelings. When a child, excited by the personalities, the intrigues, the action and the drama of a favourite sport, sees it associated literally thousands of times each season with a tobacco company, it's understandable that the effects of smoking on health would take a back seat in the child's associations with tobacco, and the advertised virtues will take a front seat in the association of smoking with sport, glamour and health.

The general idea is to give smoking a set of associations that will make it seem a desirable, almost necessary part of life: freedom, independence, potency, good taste, masculinity/femininity and even health. The other side of the coin is of course to distract people from thinking about the unhealthy effects of smoking.

Who is it aimed at?

The tobacco industry, like all others, is interested in new consumers. It has to be. With adults giving up smoking in droves, children are the most important target for advertising.

The industry knows only too well that if it gets a child smoking early, it will often have a customer for life. Yet it continues to maintain the facile posture that advertising is only directed at adult smokers. The industry knows too well that an open admission that children are the highest priority in its marketing efforts would bring widespread community outcry.

Isn't brand switching the main purpose of advertising?

This justification is another industry favourite. Certainly each company wants to win customers over from other brands, but this is just icing on the cake in the effort to replace quitting and dying smokers with new recruits. In Kenya and Austria there are tobacco monopolies, so brand share to the company in each country is irrelevant. Yet advertising in both countries is extensive, indicating its role in getting new smokers to start.

Banning advertising doesn't affect sales

This is a strange argument indeed. Why spend $60 million a year on advertising if dropping it would make no difference? We need hardly answer. Advertising isn't by any means the only factor that promotes smoking but it is one that governments can act against. And an important one because it has a snowball effect on other influences.

But sponsorship isn't advertising...or is it?

The industry makes out that its gifts to sport and culture aren't advertising, but something called 'corporate relations' and 'community participation'. Unless you were born yesterday you can see that sponsorship is a device to get tobacco brand names in front of the public cheaply by riding on the back of events with wide popular appeal. It's been estimated that in the 1981/82 cricket season, the Benson & Hedges brand name was seen on the 9 TV network alone over 40,000 times - immeasurably cheaper than buying the advertising time directly (if this were still allowed).

Cultural events like theatre, art exhibitions and opera are sponsored to establish in the public mind a connection between excellence, discernment, quality and all that high culture stands for... and cigarettes.

Not biting the hand that feeds you

Another important yet hidden function of tobacco advertising and promotion is to silence potential criticism from those being sponsored.

It has been shown in the USA that magazines which take tobacco advertising rarely publish anti-smoking
articles despite vigorous attention to other health issues. Similarly, people receiving funding from the industry are hardly likely to actively discourage smoking or to speak out against the industry's ambitions with children. In fact, well-known Australian sporting identities have recently been seen actually to defend the industry.

**Tobacco and sport: the ultimate hypocrisy**

What could be less appropriate than mixing the healthy associations of sport with the leading cause of early death, smoking? Unfortunately, some sporting administrators don't see it this way. Blinded by their own desire to gain sponsorship for their team, they fail to see how they are being used:

*The great majority of dedicated athletes don't smoke, and yet have their talents signed over to help market tobacco, usually without consultation.*

**Sport would be nowhere without tobacco sponsorship**

Tobacco sponsorship is prevalent because the industry has been able to out-bid other sponsors – car, insurance, soft drink, liquor, oil, and many other companies. Money has seemed to be the only consideration, with the ethics of the matter quickly elbowed aside. Business involvement in sport and culture is arguably a good thing – certainly there can be no denying that it financially benefits both the fields as a whole, and individual participants who receive awards. But that's not the point. The point is the undeniable ability of sport and culture to survive, as they always have done, without tobacco money.

*TV and radio didn't go off the air in 1976 when cigarette advertising was banned from those media – plenty of others just took cigarette advertising's place.*

**The thin end of the wedge?**

The industry encourages the view that if tobacco promotions go, next it'll be the turn of a host of other products that are said to be unhealthy – sweets, fast foods, and especially alcohol. The fact is that the arguments against tobacco advertising are even stronger than those against alcohol.

*It is established beyond doubt that there is no safe level of use for tobacco – the same cannot be said for alcohol, or foods with an over-abundance of fats, salt, sugar and additives. Because nicotine is addictive, only a very small proportion of smokers are able to smoke lightly or occasionally.*

Continued promotion of nutritionally doubtful foods could, if handled properly, even play a part in promoting healthy dietary standards; tobacco advertising, because of the addictive nature of the product, can never do this. The argument is an attempt to distract from the case against tobacco advertising by using half-truths.

The only case for participating in tobacco company promotions is one that is morally bankrupt. We hope you will take this opportunity to take a stand with your colleagues against efforts to channel your talents into the tobacco spotlight. We hope too, that you might convince others to join with you in registering with CRUSH.

Please complete the registration form below, cut it off and mail it to The Co-ordinator, CRUSH Register, Australian Consumers' Association, 28 Queen Street, Chippendale 2008. We'll be in touch.

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**I would like to register with CRUSH (Celebrities Resisting The Unhealthy Smoking Habit). I understand you will keep my name strictly confidential until I give you permission to use it.**

Name

Address for mail


Occupation

Phone

Recent or notable roles, achievement or team

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Please complete the registration form below, cut it off and mail it to The Co-ordinator, CRUSH Register, Australian Consumers' Association, 28 Queen Street, Chippendale 2008. We'll be in touch.
APPENDIX 2: SMOKING AND HEALTH RISK DATA

[taken from US Surgeon Generals' and Royal College of Physicians Reports. Data derived from US and British sources]

Overall Deaths From Smoking

* Currently, the overall excess death rate in a year from all causes, irrespective of the quantity of cigarettes smoked, is 70% higher than that for non-smokers. This means that for every 100 non-smokers who die during a year, 170 smokers will die.

* Smoking deaths are greater in those who have smoked longer, from earlier ages and who inhale.

* 40% of heavy smokers now aged 35 (more than 25/day) will die before reaching the age of 65, compared to only 15% of non-smokers.

* The average loss of life for a 20/day smoker is about 5 years. For the 40 a day smoker, life expectancy is eight years less. This means the average habitual smoker's life is shortened by about 5.5 minutes for each cigarette smoked - not much less than the time it takes to smoke it.

* Between 2.5 and 4 out of every 10 smokers will die because of their smoking.

Heart Disease

* Smoking is a major risk factor for myocardial infarction, sudden cardiac death and arteriosclerotic peripheral vascular disease. This last disease can result in gangrene and loss of a limb. The effect is greater the more cigarettes smoked, if other risk factors are present (high blood cholesterol, high blood pressure, &c) and is more pronounced at younger ages.

* Death from heart attacks 3 times more common in smokers than in non-smokers. For those smoking more than a pack a day, the risk is about 5 times greater. Once a smoker quits, risk of heart attack tends to fall fairly quickly to that of the non-smoker.

* Among men aged 40-50, deaths from coronary heart disease are nine times more common in smokers than in non-smokers.

* Smoking increases the possibility of heart attack recurrence in survivors of earlier attacks.

* Both nicotine and carbon monoxide aggravate exercise-induced angina.

* Women smokers who use oral contraceptives are at significantly greater risk of myocardial infarction.
Cancers

*When 12 people die from lung cancer, 11 will have been smokers. Smokers who consume two or more packs a day have lung cancer death rates 15-25 times greater than non-smokers.

* Since the early 1950s, lung cancer has been the leading cause of cancer death among males. The rate among females is accelerating and should pass that of breast cancer in the 1980s.

* Cigarette smoking is the major cause of laryngeal, mouth and oesophageal cancer and a contributory factor in the development of many bladder, kidney and pancreatic cancers.

Respiratory Diseases

* Smokers are 6 times more likely to die from the crippling respiratory diseases, emphysema and chronic bronchitis.

Birth Weight and Foetal Growth.

* Babies born to women who smoke during pregnancy are on average 200 grams lighter than babies born to non-smoking women. The more the mother smokes, the greater tends to be the drop in birth weight. Reductions in babies' body length, chest and head circumference have been observed.

* There are indications that retarded fetal growth from smoking may affect physical growth, mental development and behavioural characteristics of children up to the age of 11.