

Banning tobacco advertisement:the necessity of a consequent solution



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Bonded Tobacco Co.: " Making smoking ' safe' for smokers.", Old Gold Cigarettes: " Not a cough in a carload.", Camel Cigarettes: " More doctors smoke Camels than any other cigarette." (http://www.tvacres.com/tobacco_slogans.htm, 12/12/09).

These are just some examples of slogans common in cigarette advertisement in the history of tobacco ads. The belittlement of the harmfulness of smoking in advertisement is one of the main reasons why Health Organizations and Governments worldwide enforce the banishment of cigarette promotion from the world of advertisement. The progress of this enforcement varies from country to country but most of the above the line promotion is already tobacco free and many sponsorship promotions follow this example. The following essay displays the necessity of regimenting advertisement in the tobacco industry and explains why a consequent realization is requisite.

First, a brief look at the historic development of tobacco advertisement and the beginning of its regulation. In 1789 the first advertisement on tobacco products was placed in the New York daily paper by P. Lorrillard & Company (Petroni, G. S., 1996, p. 7). In the 1920s Bull Durham was the first brand name which was advertised on a large scale by picturing a golfer swinging his club while smoking and introducing the slogan: " On every green they all roll " Bull". It's easy for YOU to roll your own Genuine Bull Durham." (<http://www.owdna.org/History/history25.htm>, 12/12/09).

The tobacco industry took advantage of the development of color lithography in the late 1870s and new approaches to advertisement arose such as the idea of James Buchanan Duke, of W. Duke & Sons, to create cigarette boxes with the imprint of the cigarettes brand name and a decorative picture which was part of a collectable series (<http://library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/eaa/tobacco.html>, 12/12/09). The cigarette packet is still one of the greatest marketing tools of the industry. The first restrictions on tobacco advertisement were executed in Germany during World War II and signed by Heinrich Hunke, the President of the Advertising Council on 7 December 1941 with the justification of the negative influence smoking has on one's health. Any advertisement illustrating smoking as being harmless and a symbol for masculinity was forbidden.

As were print advertisement at sport events and in the country side (<http://www.smokersnews.com/cigarette-advertising/301/smoking-banned-by-nazi-germany/>, 12/12/09).

The law on these restrictions have changed and have become more relaxed over the decades but are nowadays again at a point where a consequent prohibition of tobacco advertisement is demanded.

In this context one may ask what effect advertisement really has on the behavior of the consumer and if advertisement can be made responsible for the alarmingly high number of smokers worldwide. According to Professor George Stigler (1963), author of the book "The Intellectual and the Market Place", "The advertising industry has no sovereign power to bend men's will [...] Moreover, advertising itself is a completely neutral instrument, and lends

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itself to the dissemination of highly contradictory desires” (p. 91). The tobacco industry refers to these kinds of opinions and arguments that advertisement meliorates the market share of certain brands and does not engage new smokers.

There are however a great number of scientific studies providing evidence of the coherence of tobacco advertising and consumption (Redmond W. H. 1999), showing the effects on tobacco consumption before and after an advertisement ban (Rimpelä M. K., Aaro L. E., Rimpelä A. H. 1993) as well as acknowledge the success of anti-tobacco measures (Laugesen M., Meads C. 1991) which shall be further described hereafter.

The majority of econometric studies came to the conclusion that increasing investments in tobacco advertising stimulate and increase the demand for cigarettes,

whilst an advertisement ban diminishes tobacco consumption (http://www.globalink.org/en/advertising.shtml#_edn3; 12/12/09). This has been confirmed in the latest surveys by the United States Institute of Medicine (Lynch B. S., Bonnie R. J. (ed) 1994), the United States Department of Health and Human Services (USDHHS 1994) and the World Health Organization (Roemer R. 1993).

The research on the effects of an advertising ban on the number of smokers cumulate convincing data, showing that a consequent advertising ban significantly contributes to the reduction of the quantity of smokers as seen in Finland in 1977, where tobacco ads were banned, smoking in public

building was prohibited and a strong public information campaign was put <https://assignbuster.com/banning-tobacco-advertisementthe-necessity-of-a-consequent-solution/>

into action, which reduced the cigarette consumption by 6, 7% (Smee C., Parsonage M., Anderson R., Duckworth S. 1992).

It is common knowledge that the goals of advertisement are to create awareness among existing and potential customers, to create customer loyalty by identifying with the product and its brand and to gain new customers. In the tobacco industry the target audience for recruitment is young people. For cigarettes being an addictive product it is more profitable to win young people for the smoking habit, since they bear the potential of becoming life-long customers. Due to this fact and the persuasive power of advertisement, especially young people need to be protected from the marketing influence of the tobacco industry.

Advertisement in general and specifically tobacco advertisement wants to deliver a statement to which the existing and potential new customer identifies with and feels connected to. Brand statements and brand images influence young people in particular no matter if

dealing with clothes, technological devices, alcohol or cigarettes.

(http://www.globalink.org/en/advertising.shtml#_edn13; 12/12/09). Some brands are perceived as especially cool, casual or hip and therefore higher frequented. In order to contain the severe influence of advertising an attitude of life, tobacco promotion of any kind needs to be banned.

The tobacco industry has been very clever finding more indirect ways to promote their products than any other industry (http://www.globalink.org/en/advertising.shtml#_edn13; 12/12/09). This inventive talent has

become a necessity for tobacco marketing departments due to the increasing and very strict regimentation on advertisement already

existing. Sponsorship of cultural events and sports, merchandise products available for free, point of sale promotion displays and even the use of cigarette

brand names for products of a different industry, e. g. Marlboro Classics clothing (<http://www.marlboroclassics.com>; 12/12/09), and especially the design of the cigarette package are just some examples of the tobacco industry's creative output. But again, all these promotion types transport the pretended positive lifestyle the customers are supposed to identify with and after all one fact not being transported by the industries advertisement is how harmful smoking is to the health.

Smoking does not only have a negative effect on the smoker's health, but also effects passive smokers, especially children. Contrary to many other stimulants such as alcohol or sweets, cigarettes have a damaging effect on the body after the first consumption. No other legal product is as addictive as cigarettes. The consequences of smoking are evident in a variety of diseases, e. g. blocked arteries, which can lead to a heart attacks and strokes, lung cancer, withdrawal syndromes when the body is under supplied of nicotine and general unfitnes. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention claims in its 2007 published Best Practice Report an annual death of 438. 000 people worldwide by the aftermath of cigarette consumption (p. 7). In March 2005 a report was published by the British Medical Journal providing authoritative data on the impact of passive smoking and stating

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that passive smoking is assumed to kill 11, 000 people a year in the UK only
([http://www.independent.co.](http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/health-news/passive-smoking-is-there-convincing-evidence-that-its-harmful-476472.html)

[uk/life-style/health-and-families/health-news/passive-smoking-is-there-convincing-evidence-that-its-harmful-476472.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/health-news/passive-smoking-is-there-convincing-evidence-that-its-harmful-476472.html); 12/12/09).

An evidentiary amount of documents describe the severe impact tobacco advertising has to embolden non-smokers to begin smoking. Advertising is especially effective among young people. The number of smokers can be considerably decreased if a consequent ban on tobacco advertisement and its manifold promotion activities is put into action. Also prohibiting the display of brand details on the cigarette package, promotion at sponsorship events, distribution of merchandise products, as well as any public print, tv, cinema or radio advertisement. Additionally Dr. Murray Laugesen from the Department of Health in New Zealand subsumes the figure of tobacco consumption can be reduced by 6% if a coherent advertising ban is joined by a public information campaign on the health effects of smoking, this conclusion is supported by the latest report of the World Bank (http://www.globalink.org/en/advertising.shtml#_edn13; 12/12/09). To finally conclude a consequent solution of banning tobacco advertisement is necessary, because the tobacco industry will continue to work out ways to promote their product and by this influence the consumers, convincing them only of the positive effect a certain brand has on the personal image rather than distributing the risks of the dangerous habit of smoking.