

August 3, 2007

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Re: Comments on proposal for Not a Cough in a Carload: hiding the Hazards of Smoking by Robert Proctor, Robert Jackler and Laurie Jackler

Dear Matthew:

Thanks for the opportunity to review the above referenced book proposal. Below are my comments on the proposal following the outline you sent me. In brief, I would give this proposal a thumb's down recommendation, based on my assessment that there is nothing especially new or original about the proposed book. There are already extensive collections of cigarette advertisements and commentaries available online.

1. What does the author propose to accomplish?

The authors have compiled and are proposing to publish a collection of some 300 cigarette advertisements that they have collected. The advertisement which will be sorted into different categories by loosely on advertising themes (doctor's promoting smoking, pseudo-scientific promotions, claims about the health benefits of a given ad, etc.) with a small amount of text written around different categories of ads.

2. What are the chief books on the subjects, and how do they compare to the author's proposal?

There are numerous books and government reports that have written on the subject of tobacco and tobacco advertising. Among these Richard Kluger's Pulitzer prizing winning book entitled, *Ashes to Ashes: American's Hundred-Year War, the Public health, and the Unabashed Triumph of Philip Morris* is probably the best known. Probably closest to this book project are two special issues of the New York State Journal of Medicine that that were devoted to tobacco in the 1980's. The BMA journal – Tobacco Control ([www.tobaccocontrol.com](http://www.tobaccocontrol.com)) is another frequent source of material on tobacco advertising including regular commentary on different types of ads. The best historical sources of print tobacco advertising can be found online today at: <http://tobaccodocuments.org/>. The Pollay ad collection includes over 7,000 examples of cigarette brand advertising

8. Would you be inclined to buy the book?

No

9. Is the author well suited for the project?

Dr. Proctor is a noted scholar who has written several excellent books and papers on tobacco and is well suited to this project. His co-author, Dr. Jackler has written over 100 papers in the otolaryngology literature and zero in the tobacco literature. His interest in this project is personal and understandable, but he is not a scholar of tobacco advertising and his collection of old time tobacco ads is not original.

10. How can the proposal be improved?

- a) Obtain comments from the persons who created the ads, the companies that ran the ads, and from smokers of the brands depicted so the reader has a sense of the context for the campaigns that are discussed.
- b) Acknowledge and reference the work of others who have amassed and displayed similar collections of tobacco advertising (don't try to present this as a unique collection – it isn't).
- c) Consider enlisting the support and collaboration of more knowledgeable and serious collectors of tobacco advertising such as Alan Blum or Rick Pollay. Either would have been an obvious choice to include in this project. Both should be known to the authors of this book.

Sincerely,