

The QUILL



FASTEST WAY
to SMOKING PLEASURE
VIA Chesterfield *They Satisfy*

Copyright 1938, Liggett & Myers Tobacco Co.

**Is it time to end
the tobacco ad joyride?**

Established 1912

The
QUILL

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Job hunting?

The February 1987 issue of The QUILL will contain stories geared to helping journalists find jobs. Whether you're a graduating student or a veteran, you may place a free "position-wanted" ad in the issue, if you are a member of The Society of Professional Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi. The ad cannot be longer than 30 words; it must be typed; it must be classified (newspaper, magazine, television, radio, photography, public relations or other); and it must be in our hands by January 5, 1987. Up to five words may be all caps. No ads will be accepted by telephone.

The tobacco shell game

Once in a while on the subway, a shell game artist settles back against an upright and begins his jive-talk patter.

He's skillful and funny, and his shill — whom I have come to like even more than the guy with the three little plastic cups — is so good at playing the cool black dude that he ought to be recruited for a part in the next Eddie Murphy flick.

I wish I were quick enough to follow the scam. But the twenties change hands so fast that I'm usually hard-pressed to figure out who's doing what to whom. It looks as if the mark "wins" once or twice before losing track of the little ball, and eventually losing the original twenty.

The shell game man seems never to take more than one twenty-dollar bill from a customer, and he only works a car for \$40 to \$60. He wants to keep people laughing, I suppose, lest the crowd turn nasty.

I thought of the shell game man while putting together this month's 15-page section on the tobacco ad ban issue. The tobacco industry has been conducting a shell game, it seems to me, for decades.

But unlike the game on the subway, the tobacco game is not harmless. And it's clear who is doing what to whom. The press — with individual exceptions — simply hasn't kept its eye on the ball.

From a medical standpoint, there simply are not "two sides" to the tobacco issue, as the tobacco industry would have us believe. To buy that idea requires one to accept the tobacco industry's proposition that smokers get sick more often than the rest of us and die prematurely in greater numbers because the sort of people who smoke are fundamentally different from people who remain non-smokers.

That is, some people may have a genetic make-up that encourages them to use tobacco *while* predisposing them to illness and an early death. There's no proof that tobacco causes health problems, goes the argument; sickly genes may be the culprit. (What do Marlboro Men and Women Who Have Come a Long Way, Baby, think of that unhappy tobacco industry notion?)

Also from the tobacco industry: Tobacco users may have a tendency, either inborn or environmentally nurtured, to lead more active lives in which they incur greater health risks. We non-smokers, I suppose, tend to be namby-pambies.

In truth, the tobacco guys come up with all sorts of arguments, most of which are logically circular in nature, thus making it functionally and conceptually improbable that medical researchers will ever produce the kind of evidence that the tobacco industry would accept as "proof" that tobacco use can be injurious.

The tobacco industry arguments sound like a flim-flam to me, and they could surely use more rigorous journalistic scrutiny than they usually receive.

As perhaps you can tell, I'm not neutral on the matter of tobacco, though I've never been known as a crusader on the issue, either.

However, Dr. Alan Blum, the author of the article beginning on page 17, is a crusader. And he makes a compelling case that the news business has done a rotten job of covering one of the most important stories of our time.

Obviously, Blum's views are his, and not an expression of opinion of the organization that publishes this magazine. Ditto for me. My views are mine alone, not the Society's.

But now, we'd like to get your views. And print them. Meanwhile, a toast: To your health.

— Mike Moore
Editor of *The QUILL*



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The great tobacco ad ban debate

It's time to treat it as a life-or-death story

By Alan Blum, M.D.

Tallyho!

Michael J. Davies, editor and publisher of *The Hartford Courant*, is an articulate and respected journalist. His fireside chat columns, which appear regularly in the *Courant*, consistently explain the dynamics

Alan Blum is a family physician in Manhasset, New York, who founded DOC (Doctors Ought to Care) in 1977. DOC is a national activist group that counters the promotion of unhealthful products with its own ads. As the editor of *The Medical Journal of Australia* (in 1982) and the *New York State Journal of Medicine* (1983-86), Blum created three special issues that looked critically at tobacco use and its promotion.

and peculiarities of the news business to readers with candor.

But we all have bad days now and then, and surely Davies' column of September 7 represented one of his.

That day, Davies took on what he called the anti-tobacco people, particularly those men and women who advocate banning the advertising and promotion of tobacco products.

"Americans," he wrote in constructing a classic *ad hominem* argument, "have the peculiar ability to periodically whip themselves into a lather and set out willy-nilly on a sort of national fox hunt.

"Either the victim is run to ground or, as is often the case, it escapes, allowing the hunters to then take up another cause. The most energetic are able to chase several foxes at once. In recent memory the fox has assumed the shape of landfills, missing children and pesticides. Most recently, a popular quarry has been the

tobacco industry."

Davies generally writes an informal column. But this day, his tone was imperial, rather like the newspaper industry's — when the industry speaks collectively about the movement to ban tobacco advertising.

If I rightly understand Davies as well as newspaper and magazine industry statements, people who have reservations about tobacco ads are fickle, naïve prohibitionists who are generally unable to grasp the grave constitutional implications of their proposals.

Davies noted in his column that anti-smoking groups claim that 350,000 people die each year from smoking-related diseases, a figure he neither disputed nor affirmed.

But, he added, "it is equally true that scores of thousands are killed each year in automobile wrecks. Thousands die from gunshots. Some die from the side effects





ing. The Surgeon General Has Determined
Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health

"Light my Lucky?"

Lights & 100's.



K-Miss America!
thank you for your patronage

Lucky Strike ads: Now and 55 years ago. It's time, says the author of this article, that journalists take a close look at the history of tobacco advertising and promotion in an effort to more accurately evaluate current tobacco-industry claims about the nature and goals of tobacco advertising.

"It's toasted"

Your Protection—against irritation—against cough

TUNE IN ON LUCKY STRIKE—60 minutes, minute, with the world's finest dance orchestra, and famous Lucky Strike features, every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday evening over N. B. C. network.

LUCKY
STRIKE
CIGARETTE

Copyright 1954,
The American
Tobacco Co.



of eating too much red meat or salt or bacon or dairy products. Should all be barred from advertising? Of course not."

In that formulation, the fact that people die in auto accidents or from the complications of obesity or from gunshot wounds becomes a defense for tobacco advertising. Indeed, that's an argument assiduously cultivated by the tobacco industry. But no matter who uses it, it lacks intellectual coherence.

People don't die from riding in cars. They die because someone drives too fast, or passes on a curve, or falls asleep at the wheel, or drives while intoxicated. They die when someone has failed to have the brakes worked on or has let the tires go bald. They die when a prankster rips down a warning sign or a highway worker forgets to post one. They die when a manufacturer makes an unsafe car and keeps that fact quiet.

Contemporary medical evidence suggests that people don't die from eating hot fudge sundaes or red meat or salt or bacon. They die for very complex reasons having to do with the interaction between their genetic make-up and their dietary and exercise habits.

And when it comes to guns, the National Rifle Association has it about right. A gun is just a gun. It takes a human being to load it and fire it, either by accident or by design. Even if the gun discharges because a cat teases it off a shelf, it was a person who left it there.

Davies comes closest to the mark on booze. Alcohol is addictive all right, and alcohol abuse, whether chronic or one-shot, can have frightful and devastating consequences for the user as well as for innocent bystanders. But "abuse" is the operative word. A large body of medical evidence suggests that alcohol — used in moderation — may even have beneficial effects on one's health.

Many products, like cars and guns and alcohol, can kill. That's not a stop-the-presses insight. How many of you keep a baseball bat near your bed? Whacking someone on the head with a Louisville Slugger will not do that someone much good. Television would have us believe that the automobile is the nation's murder weapon of choice.

Michael Davies' rhetoric aside, if everyday products kill, it's usually because they have been misused, abused,

negligently maintained or defectively made.

Tobacco, however, is the only legally manufactured and legally advertised product in this nation that, according to a preponderance of scientific and medical opinion, in the United States and abroad, kills a significant and predictable percentage of its users — as a side effect of its *intended* use.

And all of those deaths, with the exception of those caused by fires started because of the careless use of smoking materials (of which there were about 1,600 such deaths in 1984, according to the National Fire Protection Association), are a consequence of tobacco being used precisely as its manufacturers say that it ought to be used.

If Davies is still looking for an appropriate tobacco analog to auto accident deaths and the like, deaths caused by fires that were in turn caused by smoking is the logical candidate.

In his September column, Davies worked himself into a lather over the peril to the First Amendment rights of commercial speech posed by the ban-tobacco-advertising folk. "If the hunters succeed in killing off tobacco advertising," asked Davies, "where will the next chase lead?"

That's a reasonable question, and it is easily answered. There may not be a next chase.

Tobacco is a singular product. And that fact presents the mass media, which as a collective entity promotes tobacco products with a fiery passion, with moral and ethical problems that are not like those posed by anything else.

Deceptive 'balance'

A year ago this month, the American Medical Association, an organization not noted for radicalism, proposed that Congress ban the advertising and promotion of tobacco products. The ban would be a step toward a "tobacco-free society" by the turn of the century, a goal promoted by United States Surgeon General C. Everett Koop.

That goal must be achieved, say Koop and the AMA, because in the United States, tobacco-induced illnesses now kill more than 350,000 people a year before their time, while causing economic damage to the nation — from needlessly

high medical bills and lost productivity — that can be measured in the tens of billions of dollars annually.

News people are always looking for fresh pegs from which to hang stories. One would think that the symbolic importance of the historically conservative AMA joining the American Public Health Association, the American Heart Association, the American Lung Association, the American Cancer Society, the American Academy of Family Physicians and a host of similar organizations in the anti-tobacco fray would inspire journalists to scale reportorial Everests to get the definitive story.

Not so. As of early November, reporting of the tobacco advertising issue in the nation's press during the last year strikes me as having been largely perfunctory, as if it were really not much of a story at all.

Perhaps that was predictable. But to those of us who believe that the news industry is a powerful and creative and essential force in American life, it was a dispiriting performance, rather like learning that Arnold Schwarzeneger is regularly trounced by 98-pound weaklings.

To be sure, there were news stories aplenty last summer on the tobacco ad issue, when the House Subcommittee on Health and the Environment, chaired by Henry Waxman, a Democrat from California, held hearings on a variety of proposals aimed at curtailing tobacco ads.

For that matter, there have been, I suppose, many thousands of stories on various aspects of the tobacco controversy since 1964, the publication date of the first surgeon general report indicting tobacco as the nation's chief preventable cause of death and disease.

I've read or skimmed hundreds of those stories. I suspect that many of the QUILL's readers have done the same.

Retrieve some of those stories from the files. You'll discover, I think, that the majority of them merely reported actions and assertions — in the tradition of if-you-got-the-quotes-you've-got-the-story journalism.

The usual piece is generated by the surgeon general or some anti-tobacco group issuing a new report. The report is quoted. For balance, alternate viewpoints are sought. The Tobacco Institute says



*According to
WHO, tobacco use
kills more than
a million people
a year, worldwide*

that the report of [fill in the blanks] is based on statistical associations, which prove nothing, and that more research is needed. Such stories leave the reader dangling, not knowing who's right, if anyone.

That's a curious situation. Modern journalists like to get to the bottom of things. If the surgeon general is right, and he is, the tobacco issue could be reasonably perceived as one of the most complex and important stories in the world today, regularly worth more space or air time than NFL football, New Trends in Yuppieville, and Star Wars combined.

After all, according to the World Health Organization, tobacco use kills more than a million people a year worldwide, and thanks to aggressive marketing efforts by the multinational tobacco companies, the yearly total grows apace.

In today's news business, the conventional wisdom says reporters and editors and news directors are impelled by the dynamics of their profession to go beneath the surface in dealing with difficult and controversial and important issues.

No longer are journalists content to be conduits through which quotes from "both sides" are passed — scarcely touched by reportorial interpretation — to the reader or viewer or listener.

And yet, if I'm right about what you'll find in the story files over the last couple of decades, and particularly in recent years, you'll not find much evidence of journalistic passion to seek the truth, no matter how difficult (and expensive in staff time) that search might be.

(There are always exceptions, and one of the finest was George Seldes, the distinguished writer and editor — now 96 years old — who began exploring the medical case against tobacco use in the early 1940s.)

Killer soup

Suppose for a moment that a majority of the nation's doctors and medical researchers suddenly began saying that the ingestion of plain, uncontaminated tomato soup was quietly killing a thousand people a day in the United States.

Suppose further that the tomato soup

industry — through its "institute" — asserted that causal links between tomato soup consumption and disease and death had not been proven, and continued research was needed to settle the matter. Suppose even further that many scientists, though still a minority in the scientific community, supported the tomato-soup industry point of view, in whole or in part.

Given that set of facts, one cannot imagine that the nation's reporters and editors and news directors would be satisfied to merely report claims and counterclaims.

Rather, the soup issue would be perceived as a terrific story, loaded with conflict and social significance. And, of course, it would be defined as a subject of vital importance to consumers of tomato soup — and surely every news-consuming family has at least one such person.

Newspapers and news magazines would dispatch platoons of reporters to investigate the truth or falsity of the respective scientific claims from every conceivable angle. The TV networks would field armies.

Meanwhile, editorial writers would thunder that it was irrelevant whether 365,000 or 365 people a year were killed by tomato soup. "Even one tomato soup death is one too many," would be the refrain. No editorial writer would sleep easily at night as long as a single can of killer soup remained on grocery store shelves.

And you can be certain that tomato soup would not return to store shelves until the matter had been definitively investigated to the satisfaction of editorial writers, reporters, editors, producers, news directors, commentators, columnists — no matter how many months or years that investigation might take.

Some unregenerate libertarians, of course, would suggest that tomato soup ought to be left alone, though it would be prudent to attach some sort of health warning to the cans so that consumers

over the age of, say, 18 or 21 could make reasoned and informed choices as to whether or not they would use the product.

Journalists, most of them anyway, would dismiss that idea out of hand, noting that since the days of rough riding Teddy Roosevelt, it increasingly has been government policy to ensure that products designed for human consumption are safe and wholesome.

There would, of course, be no ads for tomato soup and no multimillion-dollar promotion campaigns, since there would be no tomato soup for sale.

A rose is a rose is a rose

The tomato soup business is a straw man, of course, and it is almost certainly an imperfect analogy. After all, tomato soup, which is merely a food, performs no vital function in our society, and we could easily get along without it if it should ever turn out to be bad stuff.

Tobacco, on the other hand, must surely perform a monumentally vital role in society, even though it is not a food. Otherwise, a national legislature dedicated to ensuring that no one in the United States should be exposed, willingly or unwillingly to any carcinogenic substance, no matter how mild the carcinogenic effect, would have barred its cultivation and sale long ago.

And yet, one wonders. . . . Where are the investigative pieces that attempt to get a handle on the actual truth of competing scientific claims in the tobacco controversy — claims that say that tobacco use kills or, conversely, that no causal link has been established between tobacco use and health problems?

And, too, where are the think pieces that analyze whether or not the First Amendment would truly suffer irreparable damage by the banning of tobacco advertising, as the newspaper, magazine and tobacco industries — and the American Civil Liberties Union — assert?

Where are the science pieces that explore the physiological nature of tobacco addiction, and the implications of that fact — if it is a fact — for the standard libertarian arguments that are trotted out in defense of tobacco advertising?



A hot marketing area is the placing of billboards for maximum TV exposure

There is an endless supply of good story ideas centering on the tobacco issue, and it's irrelevant whether a journalist who looks into them is "for" tobacco or against it — or merely indifferent toward it. A story is a story is a story.

And one of the most intriguing stories would be a thorough exploration of the economic links between the tobacco industry and the nation's newspaper, magazine and television industries. Links that — in my view — involve news organizations in a fundamental conflict of interest.

Tobacco is the world's most heavily advertised and promoted product. In the United States, tobacco use is backed by advertising budgets of more than \$2 billion a year.

Newspapers once railed editorially against televised tobacco advertising in the '60s, because so many children watched TV. Since 1970, newspapers (along with consumer magazines) have become the chief financial beneficiaries of the switch from broadcast to print advertising. Since then, newspapers have become awfully quiet regarding the tobacco controversy.

Despite the claims of publishers and editors that the tobacco issue is adequately covered, only a handful of daily papers — *The Boston Globe*; *The Charlotte Observer* (North Carolina); the *Chicago Sun-Times*; the *Greensboro News & Record* (North Carolina); the *Lexington Herald-Leader* (Kentucky); *The Courier-Journal* (Louisville); *The Miami Herald*; the *St. Petersburg Times*; *The Journal* in Providence, Rhode Island; *The Wall Street Journal*; *The Washington Post* — have in recent years delved consistently and creditably into the subject of cigarette advertising.

This paucity of journalistic enterprise regarding the tobacco advertising issue is striking — but perhaps understandable, if one recalls the maxim about people being reluctant to bite the hand that provides food.

The financial investment by cigarette companies in the print media, I believe, has paid off handsomely.

Although it pulled overt cigarette advertising off television in 1970, the tobacco industry remains the most powerful advertiser in the mass media, including TV. That's because the tobacco

companies, through mergers and acquisitions, have expanded into a host of other products — grocery store items, fast food, beer, beverages and the like — that are amply advertised on TV.

Is it possible that some publishers and editors and broadcasting executives are mindful of their vulnerability to advertiser pressure, and that that cools their ardor toward taking a tough look at the tobacco story?

I think so. In any event, the hypothesis is potentially newsworthy enough to bear intense examination.

Conflicts of interest

Newspapers and magazines are not always passive or reluctant recipients of tobacco

advertising dollars. Many of them hustle for those ads. Take a look, for instance, at the advertising trade press, either now or in recent years. A small sampling:

"Where there's smoke . . . there's a hot market for cigarette advertisers in *Time*," reads the head for a full-page ad in a July 1985 issue of *United States Tobacco and Candy Journal*.

The copy begins, "Ask seasoned tobacco manufacturers, 'How's business?' and they're likely to tell you, 'More challenging than ever.' In today's competitive marketplace, delivering the right message to the right audience has become critical to success. . . ."

Time, of course, is a terrific vehicle for promoting tobacco, because, the ad informs us, "Time's audience is growing most rapidly among the tobacco industry's best prospects."

A competing magazine offers a simpler message in the *Journal*: A cigarette rests in an ashtray, smoke curling upward. The artwork is elegant — heavy black lines on a pure white background. The message: "Light up your sales. Target-market impact. Prestigious national magazine. *Newsweek*."

The New York Times likes the *Journal*, too, and advertises in it regularly. The head in a 1983 ad says, "I saw it in *The Times*." The copy reads, "Life styles are made, not born. And they are made more satisfying for many adults across America with *The New York Times*. Three million weekday readers and four million Sunday readers believe in the trend-setting advertising they see in its atmosphere of quality and credibility. . . ."

In an effort to promote their cigarettes, tobacco companies, partly at the urging of media companies, pour a considerable amount of money into the print media as well as into television — though in the latter case, it's done indirectly, through the total or partial sponsorship of sporting events that can be televised at a profit: the Marlboro Cup horse race, the Winston Cup and Camel GT auto races, the Winston Rodeos, the Virginia Slims tennis tournaments and the like.

One of the hottest areas in marketing today — and this can be easily documented in the marketing press — is placing billboards in sports arenas where they often will be in the line of sight of TV cameras. Those who are good at it like to brag about it.

Marlboro, which my research indicates has an overwhelming lock on the teen-age smoking market, is especially adept at billboard placement. During the recent professional baseball play-offs and World Series, Marlboro billboards were frequently and plainly visible in all 21 games.

By adding up the total amount of time that Marlboro billboards were plainly visible, and by multiplying that time by the rates being charged for advertising segments, one comes up with at least \$6 million in free TV advertising.

Tobacco company-mass media advertising and promotion links constitute a clear conflict of interest, it seems to me, in analyzing news coverage of the tobacco issue.

Though a journalist might not agree with my admittedly conspiratorial theories, it's reasonable to assume that any journalist can smell a conflict-of-interest story, even one that may involve just an apparent conflict.

Reporters and editors and news directors love conflict-of-interest stories, real or imagined. Such stories are newsroom staples. Let a mayor participate



A newspaper kicks the habit.

By Harris Rayl

I'm glad the American Medical Association asked Congress last December to ban all tobacco advertising, including that in newspapers.

Mind you, I don't want Congress to go along. I don't think it is Congress's place to dictate newspaper ad content when legal products are involved. But I also am confident that Congress will never pass the AMA's proposal, given the powerful tobacco, advertising and publishing lobbies opposed to it.

The AMA's plea has nonetheless prompted discussion among publishers on the issue of cigarette advertising. That is welcome.

The issue: Should newspapers accept advertising for a product that, even when used as intended, kills more than 350,000 Americans every year? Cigarettes are the No. 1 cause of preventable death in America today. Can publishers, in good conscience, accept ads that urge people to use this product?

"No" was my newspaper's answer. *The Salina Journal's* decision to ban cigarette ads was the logical extension of an editorial-page campaign against smoking. We had already backed up that campaign, which called for restrictions on smoking in public places, with a ban on smoking in our own plant. That rule took effect January 1, 1984. It prohibits all smoking in our building; smokers must go outside to light up.

Also in January 1984, we offered smoking employees a financial incentive to kick the habit. Any smoking employee who could shun cigarettes entirely for three months would win \$500. All 30

smokers in our plant (we have about 100 employees) took up the challenge. Twenty-four succeeded and won the prize money. Some of them are non-smokers today.

The paper stopped taking cigarette advertising in January 1985. Management had discussed the idea for some time, and we finally decided that if we wanted to be consistent in our stand against cigarettes, we should put our money where our editorial mouth was. We knew we could afford to do so. Cigarette advertising represented a small percentage of the paper's total income.

Philip Morris, the tobacco company, labeled our move "censorship." But readers praised us. One wrote: "I'm elated. This is the most courageous act I have heard of in a long time." Another reader wrote: "Bravo, *Journal*. And here's hoping other members of the media will take the football and run with it, even though it means sacrificing advertising revenue."

My paper is part of Harris Enterprises, a small Midwestern newspaper-broadcast chain. The company's management took a neutral stance toward our ad ban, honoring a long tradition of giving local editors and publishers considerable autonomy. No other paper in the group followed our example.

At other newspapers, the reaction was subdued. Some reported our story in their news columns, but I recall few editorial-page comments.

When we did hear from other papers, the comments sometimes were critical. One response: A newspaper shouldn't be in the business of censoring viewpoints it

opposes or information it finds disagreeable. "We're not your mother," announced the headline of one publisher's column explaining why her newspaper would not drop tobacco advertising.

The argument is a diversion. Most newspapers are unwilling to give up tobacco advertising for one reason: money.

Of course newspapers should present a wide range of information and opinion to their readers. But there also is a lot that newspapers should, and do, censor. That's why God invented editors. Part of their job is to keep undesirable material — libel, obscenity, inaccuracy, unfairness, deception — out of their pages. Editors also guard their papers against material considered to be simply "in bad taste." Newspaper advertising managers play the same role in their jobs.

At *The Salina Journal*, we still run news stories about the tobacco industry and its products, and we leave in all the self-serving quotes from the tobacco people. We accept letters to the editor from the tobacco companies as well. But we think splashy full-page advertisements hawking cigarettes as tickets to maturity and glamour go too far.

For those publishers who cringe at the thought of throwing away advertising revenue, let me remind them that the price of doing so in this case is not high. Cigarette advertising accounts for only about one percent of all U.S. newspaper ad revenue. The paper that gives up that one percent, as we did, will win back much more in respect from its readers. □

Harris Rayl is editor and publisher of *The Salina Journal* in Salina, Kansas.

in awarding a lucrative contract to a crony, and he or she will be in big trouble with the local news media, if not always with the voters.

Nevertheless, tobacco leads a journalistically charmed life. If it were a

new product, no one, including the endlessly creative minds at the Tobacco Institute, would be able to construct a plausible scenario that would permit it to be legally sold and advertised.

And yet, the health and economic

aspects of tobacco use are consistently and grossly under-reported in the press, compared with, say, the presumed actual or potential consequences of a nuclear power plant accident, or the alleged threat of asbestos to the general



population, or even when compared with coverage of the very real horrors of the AIDS epidemic.

Why, then, are news organizations so apparently reluctant to employ their resources to take a definitive look at the tobacco advertising issue?

Preserving news credibility

It is particularly unnerving that journalists so readily accept at face value the tobacco industry's self-serving claims that cigarette advertising is solely intended to maintain "brand loyalty" among the existing pool of smokers. Or, conversely, that it's designed to persuade smokers to switch brands.

Never, say tobacco spokespersons, would they design advertising that might encourage non-smokers, particularly young people, to take up the habit.

Last August, in fact, Horace R. Kornegay, chairman of the Tobacco Institute, reminded the subcommittee conducting the tobacco ad hearings that the tobacco industry has sponsored a variety of advertisements encouraging parents to intercede with their children to prevent them from smoking.

In addition, he noted, the Tobacco Institute had developed, in cooperation with the National Association of State Boards of Education, a "Helping Youth Decide" program designed, he alleged, to actively discourage youngsters from smoking.

A few minutes later, he amplified the point that cigarette advertising was directed solely at people who already smoke.

"The fact is," he said, "that cigarette advertising does not cause smoking — any more than soap advertising causes people to bathe or detergent advertising causes people to wash their clothes.

"Cigarette advertising is brand advertising. It is designed to prompt smokers to switch brands or to keep them loyal to the brand they already smoke. To perform either of those functions, of course, the advertising must be sufficiently lively, distinctive and targeted to be noticed, which accounts for the images that one sees in cigarette advertising."

Nevertheless, more than 90 percent of those who take up smoking do so before

the age of 21, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse. More than 50 percent of those who acquire the habit begin smoking before the age of 15.

Testifying last summer at the congressional hearings on cigarette advertising, Kenneth Warner, chairman of the Department of Public Health Policy and Administration at the University of Michigan, said his studies suggest that the tobacco companies must, in fact, make a special effort to gain new recruits to smoking.

Warner noted that the tobacco business annually loses more of its customers than any other industry. Since 1964, the year of the first surgeon general report on tobacco health risks, an average of 1.5 million Americans have stopped smoking each year, he said. In addition, cigarettes kill several hundred thousand users each year.

When the number of smokers who die of other causes is factored in, said Warner, one must conclude that roughly 2.5 million Americans must start smoking each year for the industry simply to maintain the size of the smoking population.

Warner calculates that this includes at least 5,000 teen-agers who begin smoking each day. Although the 5,000 may not be recruited solely by advertising, Warner said, clearly the industry "has a powerful incentive to use whatever tools it has available to ensure that kids become smokers."

I believe that a reasonable person might be justified in suspecting that the ubiquity of cigarette advertising and promotion in public places helps in that recruiting effort. Advertising and promotion socialize children to the idea that smoking is an acceptable, even exciting, activity.

It's equally reasonable for a journalist to ask why tobacco companies have shown such enthusiasm for linking cigarettes (and, lately, smokeless tobacco) to all manner of sports, rock climbing, cowboys, fashion models and sex ("Light my Lucky") — all of which, one supposes, are the stuff of most 14-year-olds' pubescent fantasies.

If there is, in fact, a common teen-age dream in which Marlboro Man lights up the life of Ms. Virginia Slims, is it a match made in heaven — or on Madison Avenue?

In 1981, I attended an *Advertising Age* creative workshop in Chicago. After one of the seminars, I had a private conversation, which I tape recorded, with an executive of one of the world's largest advertising firms.

He had worked on tobacco accounts in the past, but no longer did so because they had become so distasteful to him.

Among the things he said that day were:

"When I was working at [the name of the agency], we were trying very hard to influence kids who were 14 years old to smoke. The entry age is 14. I was laughing on the outside and crying on the inside. My experience tells me never to believe any noble notions about advertising men — that they won't aim at kids. They will aim at whomever the client and they have determined will sell the product. They do not care what the product is."

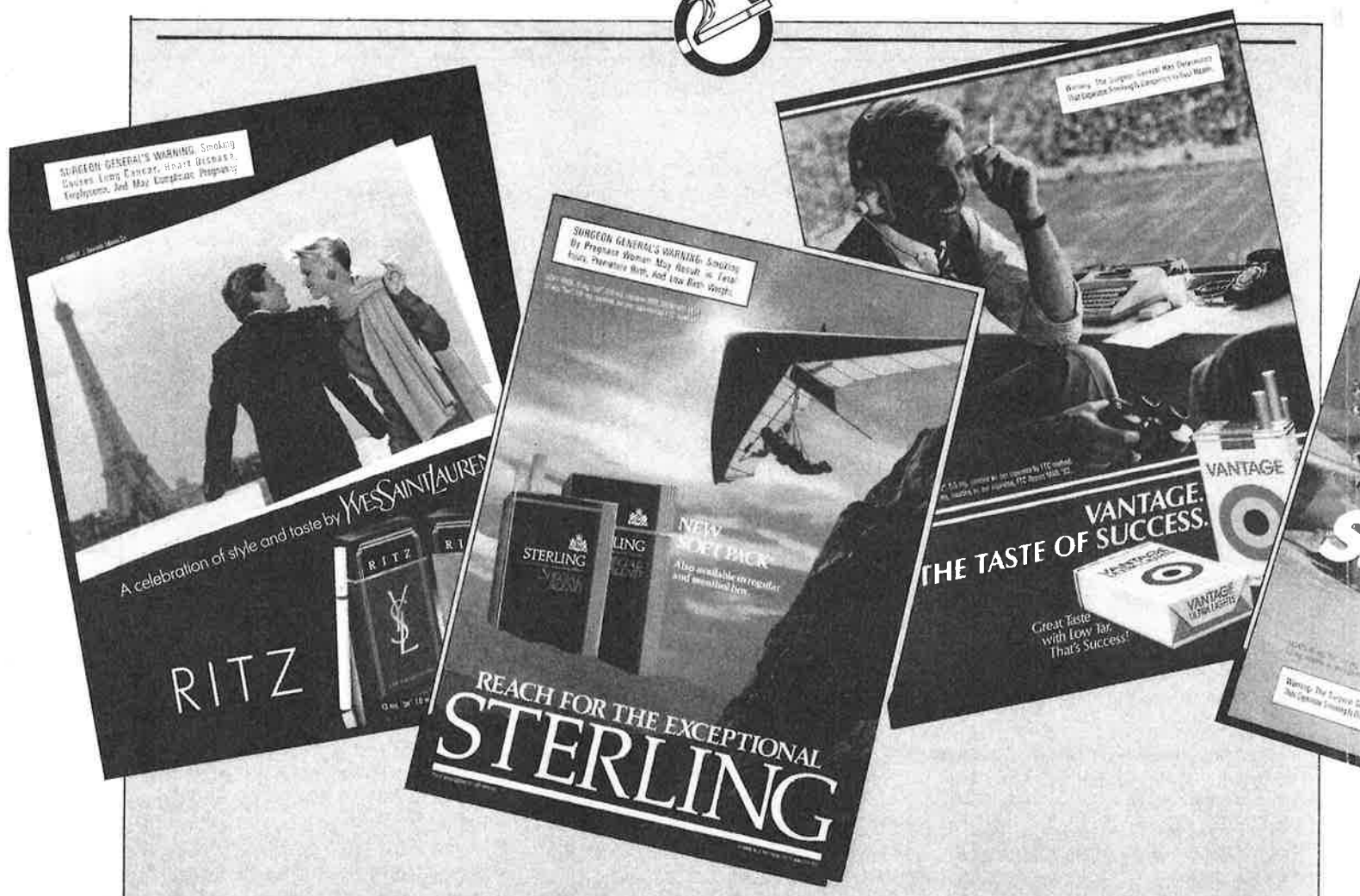
There are good guys and bad guys when it comes to the tobacco issue. But journalists, with the exception of editorial writers, columnists and commentators, must forget preconceived good-guy/bad-guy notions. They need to retain a rigorous neutrality in their work.

I don't argue with that. I merely ask that journalists assume, as they would in digging into any other contentious issue, that *everyone* involved in the tobacco issue may have an axe to grind — and that includes anti-tobacco crusaders like me, medical researchers, tobacco lobbyists, advertising execs, and perhaps even newspaper and magazine publishers.

Furthermore, news organizations are very much concerned with the issue of credibility. It's something that must be preserved because, in the end, that's all any newspaper or news organization really has.

Meanwhile, there are many people, such as the University of Michigan's Kenneth Warner and me, who allege — based on our examination of the available evidence — that the editorial content of newspapers and consumer magazines is compromised by the financial relationship such publications have with the tobacco industry.

We could be wrong about that. But from a journalistic perspective, one imagines that the best way to dispel that idea — and ultimately to preserve the credibility of the news business — would be to investigate the full spectrum of the



tobacco issue with unmatched intellectual vigor.

In short, it's time for the world of journalism to treat the tobacco controversy as a major and continuing story, rather than as a ho-hum, we-covered-that-20-years-ago topic. Herewith, a few leads:

- Study the accepted methodologies of medical research, particularly the protocols of epidemiology, and then dig into the competing health claims of researchers on both sides of the tobacco issue.

News organizations, in the tradition of modern investigative journalism, will then be in a better position to determine for *themselves* which side has the better case.

The issue of causality is an especially tricky business in such investigations. There are profound ethical constraints involved in conducting medical experiments involving human beings, constraints that make it difficult to prove causality in the same way that a chemist can demonstrate, say, that if two atoms of hydrogen are linked to one atom of oxygen, the result is water.

The tobacco lobby uses the difficulty

of pinning down cause-and-effect relationships involving human beings with great skill in its attempts to befuddle reporters by making them believe that there really are two sides to the issue. There aren't. But, again, don't take my word for it.

- Look into what I suggest are economic ties between the tobacco industry and the newspaper, consumer magazine and television industries. Determine who owns what in this conglomeratized, multinational media world we live in. Try to determine if any of those ties might have a bearing on the way the tobacco story is treated.

While you're at it, determine if contracts for tobacco advertising contain restrictions regarding the placement of unfavorable editorial matter in the vicinity of the tobacco ads. If so, does that have any implications for a publication's overall editorial content?

And take a look at the kind of advertising clout that may have resulted from the recent acquisition of Nabisco Inc. by R.J. Reynolds, as well as General Foods by Philip Morris.

Does the fact that two tobacco-based

companies alone control \$2 billion in advertising expenditures for tobacco and non-tobacco products have potential implications for news coverage of the tobacco story?

Check out the surveys conducted by the American Council on Science and Health, which suggest that magazines that carry tobacco advertising under-report the health aspects of tobacco use in relationship to their coverage of other health and fitness issues.

(Another anecdote: Recently, I spoke against tobacco advertising at a meeting of the Deadline Club of New York City. Afterward, I became involved in a private conversation with Rebecca Greer, articles editor of the CBS-owned *Woman's Day*, a magazine that carries a lot of cigarette advertising.

(Lung cancer had recently become the leading cause of cancer death among women, and I asked her why her magazine did not and does not write about that. She said *Woman's Day* readers already knew that smoking caused lung cancer, and that they didn't need to be told that again and again.

("But I don't know what causes breast



FYI

• The United States cigarette manufacturers have taken . . . steps with respect to their advertising — steps that, so far as I am aware, have not even been considered by the manufacturers of any other product. These include not placing cigarette advertisements in publications directed primarily to people under 21 years of age and not advertising in college or university publications, even though the great majority of college students are old enough to purchase tobacco products under the laws of the various states.

The cigarette manufacturers also do not depict in their advertisements anyone under 25 years of age — and they do not include in their advertising testimonials from sports figures or other celebrities.

In addition, such advertising may not suggest that smoking is essential to social prominence, distinction, success or sexual attraction. Neither may it show a smoker participating in, or obviously just having participated in, a physical activity requiring stamina or athletic conditioning beyond that required in normal recreation.

— Excerpts from the August 1, 1986, testimony of Horace R. Kornegay, chairman of the Tobacco Institute, to the House Subcommittee on Health and the Environment.

cancer,” she explained when I asked her why that topic was covered so frequently in her magazine.

(I failed to ask her why diet and fitness articles pop up month after month in her magazine, even though there surely is not a WD reader anywhere who does not know what causes excess pounds, or how to take them off.)

• There is a common perception, I think, that tobacco-based companies are beleaguered and unprofitable. They may be under attack, all right, but test that second proposition against the evidence offered by actual financial statements, and by talking to market analysts.

You will find that the tobacco operations of tobacco-based companies produce a rate of profit that is the envy of the industrial world.

And I do mean “world.” Tobacco marketing has lately become very aggressive in the developing nations, where people are presumed to be starving for cigarettes.

• While admitting that smokers are likely to have picked up the habit as teen-agers, tobacco spokespersons say there is considerable research that

suggests that peer pressure is the greatest causal factor in the “decision” to smoke, rather than advertising or promotion activities.

Most anti-smoking activists, like me, readily concede the importance of peer pressure. But I suggest that reporters talk to sociologists and marketing experts in an attempt to piece together a more complete picture of what this thing called “peer pressure” is.

Is it just something that’s out there, like rocks and trees and crowded buses? Or is it, in part, a very carefully crafted and nurtured thing?

• The tobacco companies assert that their advertising is aimed solely at people who already smoke. Test that assertion against a detailed study of the history, recent and not so recent, of tobacco marketing strategies.

In a 1981 issue of the *Journal of the American Association*, Emerson Foote, former chairman of the board of McCann-Erickson, the world’s second largest advertising agency, once responsible for \$20 million in cigarette accounts, was quoted: “[T]he cigarette industry has been artfully maintaining

that cigarette advertising has nothing to do with total sales . . . [T]his is complete and utter nonsense. The industry knows it is nonsense . . . I am always amused by the suggestion that advertising, a function that has been shown to increase consumption of virtually every other product, somehow miraculously fails to work for tobacco products.”

And while you’re at it, don’t forget to examine the burgeoning field of tobacco-related promotions, particularly the love affair tobacco companies have with televised sports events.

The First Amendment, RIP

P ublishers and tobacco industry spokespersons, I suspect, would suggest that all or most of the foregoing has been irrelevant to the tobacco ad ban issue.

They would assert that tobacco advertising and promotion is already greatly circumscribed by federal law, as well as voluntarily by the tobacco industry itself. Both assertions would be factual. And anyone can see that each pack of cigarettes and each cigarette ad has a



A few sources

Reporters looking into the tobacco advertising controversy will surely have addresses and phone numbers for organizations such as the Tobacco Institute, the American Civil Liberties Union, the American Medical Association, and other obvious contacts.

Alan Blum, the author of this article and the founder of Doctors Ought to Care, is another possible source. He can be reached at 116 Webster Ave., Manhasset, NY, 11030; (516) 627-0405.

(While editor of the *New York State Journal of Medicine*, Blum put together two special issues — December 1983 and July 1985 — that explored the health implications of tobacco use as well as the history and worldwide impact of tobacco advertising and promotion.)

A few other sources that might be helpful:

- Kenneth E. Warner, chair of the Department of Public Health Policy at the University of Michigan, has written a short but comprehensive book, *Selling Smoke: Cigarette Advertising and Public Health*. It is available from the American Public Health Association at 1015 Fifteenth St. NW, Washington, DC, 20005; (202) 789-5600.

- The American Council on Science and Health (Elizabeth M. Whelan, executive director) has looked into the tobacco ad issue for many years. Its address and phone number: 1995 Broadway, New York, NY, 10023; (212) 362-7044.

- Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) has also investigated the tobacco advertising issue. Indeed, its executive director, John Banzhaf, filed the suit that eventually eliminated cigarette advertising on television. ASH's address and phone number: 2013 H. St. NW, Washington, DC, 20006; (202) 659-4310.

- The New York State Bar Association has gone on record, after substantial debate, as favoring the banning of tobacco advertising. It hopes to get the tobacco ad ban matter on the agenda at the February meeting of the American Bar Association in New Orleans. Bradley G. Carr, director of communications and public affairs for the state association, can be reached at: NYSBA, One Elk St., Albany, NY, 12207; (518) 463-3200.

federally mandated warning label.

An irony: The warning labels have been a grand asset for the tobacco companies in defending product liability lawsuits. They can argue in court that smoking does not cause illness and death. But even if it did, the victim was surely warned. The tobacco companies haven't lost a product liability case yet.

That's a little like the situation 16 years ago, when the tobacco companies were particularly eager to get cigarette advertising off the nation's TV screens.

In 1967, a court decision (resulting from a suit brought by John Banzhaf III under the Federal Communications Commission's Fairness Doctrine) had mandated that television networks carry anti-smoking ads if they carried cigarette ads.

Tobacco company executives were so alarmed by the anti-smoking ads that the companies banded together and voluntarily agreed to pull their ads off the air, even before Congress acted to ban them. The tobacco companies were not so greatly in favor of free speech in those days, if it meant that anti-tobacco ads could be aired.

The Congress complied. The ads were taken off the air. And then the Congress voted to ban cigarette ads on TV.

Today, those who defend the right of tobacco companies to advertise their wares insist that the debate, such as it is, be framed solely in legalistic rather than in medical or moral terms.

Editor & Publisher, a respected journal that serves the newspaper industry, probably expressed that industry's collective opinion with precision in a December 21, 1985, editorial that said the AMA proposal had "provoked a debate that in unreasonableness seems to equal the discussion of the Volstead Act. . . ."

"What is being suggested . . . is that the dangers inherent in smoking are so great that the American people must be willing to give up a little bit of their First Amendment rights to combat it. . . ."

The American Newspaper Publishers Association and the Magazine Publishers Association said jointly that "products that can be legally sold in our society are entitled to be advertised; if it is legal to sell a product, it should be legal to advertise it."

The National Newspaper Publishers Association, which represents the black

press, called the ad ban proposal "a travesty against due cause and fairness and an issue that should be waged via increased education and not by elimination of advertising in newspapers and other print media. . . ."

The law firm of Covington & Burling said in a brief prepared for the Tobacco Institute that the proposed advertising and promotion bans "would represent a forbidden attempt by government to manipulate consumer choice by restricting the flow of truthful information about lawful products, irrationally impeding the intelligent exercise of consumer choice. . . ."

"If Congress wishes to discourage tobacco product consumption, its only options under the First Amendment are to restrict the sale or purchase of such products or to foster speech that promotes the anti-tobacco point of view."

And the American Civil Liberties Union, in announcing its opposition to the AMA's proposal, said that "eliminating much of the speech of the tobacco industry from the public arena is no way to have a fair and robust debate on smoking in our society."

Publishers are censors

The pro-tobacco-ad line-up includes some heavy hitters, and that fact was probably instrumental in ensuring that the ad ban proposals made little headway in the recently ended congressional session.

And yet, when First Amendment partisans such as the above take swings at the supposed foes of free speech, they should be careful, lest they bruise their own friends and colleagues.

When defending tobacco advertising, publishers of mainstream newspapers and magazines often sound like First Amendment absolutists, insofar as commercial speech is concerned.

If a product is legal, goes the argument, then it ought to be legal to advertise it. And if it's legal to advertise it, we will run the ads. We publishers will *not* be censors of commercial speech.

One has to admire the flexibility of mind demonstrated by that argument. Publishers of mainstream publications *are* censors. Everybody inside and outside the business knows that. Being a publication's chief censor is part of a publisher's job description, though the actual task of blue



penciling ads is usually delegated.

It's perfectly legal to make and sell personal sexual aids, but I suggest that the five boroughs and Newark, too, will be free of litter and muggers before you'll see a full-page ad for such devices in living color in *The New York Times*.

Don't count on seeing any Little-Miss-Homemaker ads in *Ms.* magazine, either, or soldier-of-fortune-style knife-and-gun ads in *Time* or *Newsweek* or *U.S. News & World Report*.

And please don't look for ads for "Sexual Perversity in Chicago" on the movie pages of your local paper. When that sharply witty play was made into a movie last summer, so many newspaper ad execs objected to the title that it was retitled by the producers to "About Last Night."

It's standard operating procedure for publications to reserve the right to reject certain ads if they do not fit within good-taste or even the-right-image

guidelines. *The Hartford Courant's* Michael Davies, to his credit, conceded that in his September 7 column:

"Any company," said Davies, "that sells a legal product or service should be allowed the freedom to advertise if reasonable community standards of taste and decency are met."

Stirring words, those, but consider the following odd juxtaposition, which — it should be noted — had nothing to do with Davies:

On page 45 of the October 25, 1986, *Editor & Publisher*, there was a piece headlined, "Cigarette company exec sounds off on ad censorship."

Stanley S. Scott, vice president for corporate affairs for Philip Morris, was quoted in the article as having told delegates to the National Newspaper Association convention that the banning of tobacco ads would be a threat to other kinds of advertising. *E&P* quoted him thusly:

"Do we say goodbye to ads from McDonald's, Burger King and Wendy's? Is it the end for advertising from Oscar Mayer, Heinz, Campbell and Kraft . . . Seven-Up, Coke and Pepsi?"

"Could it really get that bad? We don't know, but we do know that you can never count on a zealot to exercise restraint."

Speaking of zealotry, turn to page 46 of the same *E&P* issue, and read an unrelated article titled, "New York City newspapers reject 'negative' ads."

The gist of that piece was that a real estate developer in Florida wanted to advertise his project in New York newspapers. Unfortunately, his ads were unkind to the Big Apple, featuring headlines such as, "Get out of Manhattan — While you've got the time."

The ad copy piled on the insults, noting, for instance, that commercial space cost a heck of a lot more to rent in New York than in the developer's Florida project and that a Manhattan address includes such extras as "gridlock, pollution, subway thrill rides and crowded steam grates."

The New York Times, presumably mindful that it must protect fragile New Yorkers from the effects of rough speech, rejected the ads. A *Times* spokesman offered a ray of hope to the developer, though, saying the ads could run if they were recast so as to be more "positive."

Newsday rejected the ads, too. A spokesman was quoted as saying, in the best First Amendment tradition: "[The ads] were casting aspersions against New York. We had no legal problems, we just thought they were inappropriate."

The Wall Street Journal, demonstrating its commitment to free speech, accepted two of the four ads that were submitted to it. The two that were rejected were specifically directed toward New York real estate developer Donald Trump and Mayor Edward I. Koch.

"We thought they [the rejected ads] were too disparaging," a *Journal* spokesman told *E&P*.

The Supreme Court is enamored of libertarian definitions of free speech, and no one — including me — would want the High Court to compromise those free-speech guarantees.

But commercial speech is clearly a lesser kind of speech, a fact that the courts have long recognized.

Whether or not certain classes of

TIME

Where there's smoke...

...there's a hot market for cigarette advertisers in TIME.

Ask seasoned tobacco manufacturers, "How's business?" and they'll likely tell you, "More challenging than ever." In today's competitive marketplace, delivering the right message to the right audience has become critical to success. The good news is that certain demographic groups are hotter than ever: women, singles, 25-40 year olds, and high school grads + adults showing substantial growth in cigarette volume.

Ask the same smart marketers their first investment choice for reaching these receptive audience segments, and they'll tell you TIME Magazine. Because TIME is always contemporary, reflecting the wide-ranging interests of its vast audience. Because the active lifestyles of TIME's 22 million men and women readers lead them to buy and try their products. And because, compared to other magazines, TIME's audience is growing most rapidly among the tobacco industry's best prospects.

Would you like to know more? Ask Ronni Goldberg, TIME's Tobacco Category Manager, at (212) 841-4984.

TIME

Get more out of it.

DOC Archives

Newsweek

Light up your sales. Target-market impact. Prestigious national magazine.

Some newspapers and consumer magazines hustle tobacco advertising in the trade press. Shown are two ads from the United States Tobacco and Candy Journal



commercial speech — such as the advertising and promotion of tobacco products — can be legally regulated or banned is an issue still to be fought out in the Congress and perhaps in the courts.

Nevertheless, one wonders how effectively publishers can argue for First Amendment guarantees for commercial speech when they routinely censor it in putting out their own publications.

Libertarian myths

Even though there is often a gap between publishers' rhetoric and the actual performance of their newspapers, it would be unreasonable to suggest that there is *no* constitutional issue involved in Congress banning tobacco advertising and promotion.

Such a ban would be a coercive act, and we live in a society in which libertarian notions of government, which look askance at governmental regulation, are deeply enshrined. Indeed, the Constitution is the written embodiment of 18th-century libertarian ideals.

Nevertheless, the libertarian argument has a hard time contending with the central fact of present-day American life: The United States, despite Fourth of July and Bicentennial assertions to the contrary, is only partly a free-market, free-enterprise, libertarian society.

We live in a highly regulated society in which one's ability to do as one pleases, whether one is an individual or a corporation, has been greatly circumscribed for reasons that have to do with conceptions of the public interest or the general welfare.

Just one example: One cannot imagine a "war" on drugs in a libertarian society, a war that has found substantial support on the nation's newspaper editorial and op-ed pages, not to mention a Michael Davies column in the September 21 *Courant* — "Fighting the rot within — a campaign against drug abuse."

Davies' column introduced a hard-hitting *Courant* series on illicit drugs. Unfortunately, the fact that tobacco is a pharmacologically and behaviorally addictive drug that kills far more people each year than all illicit drugs combined was an insight that once again escaped Mr. Davies.

In a libertarian society, the purchase and use of marijuana, cocaine, morphine, heroin and such would be legal for adults,

though not for children. Libertarian definitions of "crime" simply do not include substances that men and women of mature years buy for their own consumption and, perhaps, pleasure.

That our nation has drug laws, and sometimes even enforces them with enthusiasm, suggests that the body politic is committed to a conception of society that is something other than libertarian.

While we assuredly do not live in a true libertarian society, the pro-tobacco-ad folk would not be home free even if we did.

At the center of the libertarian argument is the idea that adults ought to be free to make informed choices about how they want to live their lives — even if those choices happen to have destructive consequences for the individual.

However, since tobacco is physiologically addictive, and since tobacco use is a habit that is usually acquired at an age at which one is thought not to be fully capable of making mature choices, the libertarian argument is fatally compromised.

Finally, the libertarian argument rests in part on the assumption that one's free and informed choices will not impinge upon the rights of others to live their lives as they see fit.

But if it is true, as I believe it is, that tobacco-induced health problems cost tens of billions of dollars each year in direct medical costs and in lost productivity, that fact affects everyone.

Furthermore, those economic effects are unpredictable and clearly are not matters of free choice insofar as non-smokers are concerned.

In one way or another, all of us pay those medical bills. And in a highly competitive and global economy, we also pay — collectively — for losses in productivity.

Sending a message

Michael Davies made sense, after a fashion, in his September 7 column when he said, "If tobacco is the menace critics claim, Congress should summon up the courage to make it illegal to manufacture, sell or possess it."

That, of course, is a pipe dream. In a perfect world, Congress might act thusly. But in the real world, it becomes a kind of argument for inaction.

Prohibition taught the American people — and Congress — a powerful lesson: An attempt to end quickly an entrenched and socially accepted addiction by legislative fiat is certain to fail, while making gangsters rich.

The road to a tobacco-free society will be long and arduous. Congressional action to ban tobacco ads and promotion would be merely a first step.

Meanwhile, though, if the publisher of a newspaper or a magazine became convinced that the preponderance of scientific evidence proved beyond any reasonable doubt that tobacco products cause disease and premature death on a staggering scale, it wouldn't be difficult for him or for her to construct an ethical case for rejecting tobacco advertising — on a voluntary basis.

As noted, ample precedent exists for rejecting whole categories of advertising. It's done every day and everywhere by publishers.

(A handful of daily papers in North America has done just that, including one published by another Michael Davies, *The Whig-Standard* of Kingston, Ontario. Two other papers in Ontario, *The Recorder and Times* in Brockville and *The Globe and Mail* in Toronto also reject tobacco advertising.)

(In the States, the list is also short. So far as I can determine, it includes *The Christian Science Monitor*; the *Daily Record* in Morristown, New Jersey; *The Deseret News* in Salt Lake City; the *Kirkville Daily Express & News* in Missouri; the *News-Banner* in Bluffton, Indiana; and *The Salina Journal* in Kansas.)

If a publication voluntarily chooses to ban a category of advertising, no conceivable violence to the First Amendment will have been done.

Furthermore, at a time when journalists are calling for the greater accountability of physicians, politicians, manufacturers and virtually any other group one can think of, such a publication will have sent a message to its readers — a message that says it no longer wants to be on the morally wrong side of the most critical public health issue of the 20th century.

Of course, journalists are not supposed to be activists, and "sending a message" is clearly the act of an activist.

But then, in light of the clear and present dangers of tobacco use, carrying ads for that addictive drug is also an act that sends a message. □



A ban on tobacco advertising would be ineffective

And dangerously paternalistic

On August 1, 1986, Scott Ward, a marketing expert, appeared as a witness for the Tobacco Institute during hearings conducted by the House Subcommittee on Health and the Environment, which was then exploring the merits of curtailing tobacco advertising.

Ward, a professor of marketing at the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, is the author of several books, including Problems in Marketing; Consumer Behavior; How Children Learn to Buy; and Consumer Behavior: Theoretical Sources.

Ward has directed major research grants from the National Science Foundation, National Institute of Mental Health, the Ford Foundation, and CBS; He serves on the editorial boards of the Journal of Consumer Research and the Journal of Advertising Research.

A recent specialty of his has been research into children's reactions to advertising. In the 1970s, he was engaged in government-sponsored research to improve drug-abuse prevention advertising. The main body of his testimony follows.

By Scott Ward

The distinction between 'new' and 'mature' product markets

Underlying the proposals to ban or further restrict tobacco product advertising is an apparent lack of awareness of what cigarette advertising really involves.

Proponents of such measures treat cigarette advertising as though cigarettes were a new product and advertising were required to make its existence known, or as though cigarettes as a product category were competing against other product categories and needed advertising

to maintain or expand aggregate demand. Both of these views of advertising for cigarettes — a "mature" product category — are mistaken.

It is a truism that companies — including cigarette companies — use advertising to promote the sale of their products. But advertising serves vastly different functions depending on whether the product being advertised is "new" or "mature," and depending on whether the product category is in competition with other product categories.

In the case of a "new" product — recent examples would include video cassette recorders, personal computers and cellular telephones — advertising attempts to inform people about product attributes and benefits. Because the product category is new, advertising (together with information disseminated through other sources) is the means by which consumers learn that the product category exists and how it might be useful to them.

At this stage, advertising promotes demand for the product category in the course of promoting demand for particular brands — although all advertisers ultimately are interested in promoting their brands against competitive brands.

As awareness of the product category spreads, advertising matters less and less in stimulating aggregate demand. In fact, demand flattens because there are few people who have not either tried the product (and become settled users or non-users) or decided that they have no interest in the product category.

Consumers no longer need advertising to appreciate the miracle of home video, soft drinks or laundry detergent. These products have become, or are becoming, a part of everyday life for those consumers

who are likely to want them.

The aim and effect of advertising for such "mature" product categories is to promote particular brands of the product, not to promote the product category itself. Many studies have found that advertising in such markets is not significantly related to aggregate product demand.

There is an exception to this rule. Even after a product category has matured and advertising is no longer necessary to create awareness of the product, the product category may be in direct competition with other product categories. Electricity competes in many areas with natural gas. Milk competes with soft drinks and other beverages.

In such cases, it is not uncommon to see advertisements that promote a product category rather than a particular product brand. But cigarettes, like laundry detergents, are not in competition with other product categories, and you will never see an advertisement promoting cigarettes or laundry detergent as such. What you see exclusively are advertisements promoting particular brands of cigarettes or laundry detergent.

The primary objectives of advertising in 'mature' product markets

In promoting a brand within a mature product market, an advertiser immediately encounters two challenges — selecting a consumer to whom to promote the brand and getting the attention of that consumer. Meeting these two challenges accounts for the content of such advertising.

Although selecting a target audience is a step that logically must be taken before figuring out how to attract attention, there are certain principles that govern regardless of the audience chosen. I therefore turn first to the challenge of reaching the consumer.

● Advertisers typically use attractive models in attractive settings to promote their products. Attractive men and women are used to sell brands of everything from floor polish to mouth wash, and in doing so advertisers are not attempting to persuade consumers that scrubbing floors or gargling is attractive. The goal is to catch the viewer's attention for the advertised brand.



Studies have documented the fact that consumers are potentially exposed to hundreds of advertisements and promotions each day. On television, at least 20 minutes of each broadcast hour are consumed by commercials, and advertisements account for more pages than text in most newspapers and magazines.

The result is "commercial clutter." Numerous studies demonstrate that various measures of advertising effectiveness — such as recall and positive attitudes — decrease as the amount of "clutter" increases in the media environment. Viewer attention is a limited resource, and advertisers intensely compete for it.

The advertiser who offers the most arresting image reaps the reward of a viewer's momentary focus and has a chance to "speak" to the viewer. The image offered to catch the viewer's eye does not need to bear any special relation to the product being advertised. Attractive models such as Cliff Robertson (for AT&T) and Suzanne Sommers (for Ace Hardware) are cases in point. There certainly is nothing dishonest or deceptive in using the most effective means available to get a message noticed.

● In mature product markets, as discussed, advertising promotes particular brands rather than the product category itself. Broadly speaking, an advertiser can promote a particular brand in either of two ways — by pointing to objective characteristics of the brand that make that brand superior to other brands, or by identifying the brand subjectively as the brand that is desirable for members of discrete consumer blocs.

There are many product categories in which an advertiser can point to objective characteristics of a brand that distinguishes that brand from competing brands. One make of automobile may have better mileage or require fewer repairs than another, and of course automobiles vary dramatically in price.

Similarly, laboratory studies may in fact show that some antacids work faster and more effectively than others. When such objective characteristics allow an advertiser to distinguish his brand from others, the advertiser is likely to stress those characteristics in the advertising.

In other product categories, however, brands are more or less interchangeable

in "objective" terms. With cigarettes, for example, there are some objective brand characteristics to which an advertiser can point — the "tar" and nicotine content of a particular brand, its type of filter, taste or length. But cigarette brands, like soft drinks and soaps, are far more difficult to distinguish from one another on the basis of such objective characteristics than are product brands in many other mature product categories.

An advertiser attempting to promote a brand that is not objectively distinguishable from other brands therefore tries a different approach. He aims to promote his brand with particular groups of consumers by saying, in effect, "If you are this kind of consumer, Brand X is for you; if you are that kind of consumer, Brand Y is for you." The advertiser, in other words, chooses a particular consumer group at which to aim his message and tailors his message in a way that will strike a responsive chord with that group.

People in our society cluster in "taste cultures," and it is at these groupings that advertisers direct their messages — particularly in mature product categories in which objective differentiation of the constituent product brands is difficult. The time is long past when advertisers treated the public as an undifferentiated mass. That approach simply is not cost-effective, and it is particularly inefficient when many interchangeable brands of a product are competing for a share of the market.

Many cigarette advertisements depict attractive people. But that is about the only generalization that one can make. Sometimes the people portrayed are rugged, outdoor types; sometimes they are rich and sophisticated; sometimes they are confirmed individualists; sometimes they are emphatically sociable creatures.

The various cigarette manufacturers, like advertisers of soaps and colognes, attempt to attract the attention of each of these target audiences. Thus, it is not the advertisement that "shapes" the consumer; it is the consumer (that is, those in the target audience who already smoke) that "shapes" the advertisement.

To be sure, cigarette advertising, like other advertising, seeks to portray the brand being advertised in a "positive" manner. But for those who smoke,

smoking is a pleasurable activity. There is nothing deceptive about the depiction. In targeting their advertising at particular audiences, and in seeking to gain their attention and preference, cigarette manufacturers are doing exactly what other advertisers do — and must do — to engage in brand competition.

Consumer response to advertising

As discussed above, proponents of banning or further restricting tobacco product advertising overestimate the power of advertising. Correspondingly, they underestimate the intelligence and will of the target audience. Their view of consumers is actually a view that prevailed in advertising theory earlier in this century — a view that has been supplanted by a view that gives consumers far more credit, and far more control over their own power of choice.

It used to be thought that advertising (indeed, all mass communication) had a direct and powerful effect on consumers. Advertisers would say, "Buy Brand X because it is superior to Brand Y," and if the advertisement were cleverly enough executed the consumer would buy the advertised brand.

But the real world does not and never did operate in the way portrayed in this "one-way flow" model. Advertisers soon realized that simply disseminating a commercial message does not ensure that it will be noticed. They also came to learn that, even when noticed, commercial messages are not necessarily retained, and that even when viewers find a particular advertisement memorable, they do not always remember what product brand was being advertised.

Moreover, even when consumers do remember an advertisement, as well as the name of the advertised brand, there is no guarantee that they will have any interest in buying the product.

Only part of the problem can be traced to "commercial clutter." Additionally, the failure of advertising to get consumers to behave like Pavlovian dogs stems from the fact that people are not hapless recipients of advertising. Rather, they are — when they notice advertising at all — active participants who ignore, selectively attend to, laugh, counter-argue, forget or



just say "No."

The distinguished psychologist Raymond Bauer put it this way 20 years ago:

"The time may well be at hand to revise the traditional communications formula, 'who does what, with which, and to whom.' The suggested revision is that we view communications as a transactional process in which both audience and communicator take important initiative. A successful communication is usually a good 'deal' in which each party gives and takes in some pattern that is acceptable to him."

Bauer's "transactional" model suggests what should today be obvious on reflection — that audiences are comprised of individuals who are not blank slates or malleable putty. Individual audience members are the sum of myriad experiences and beliefs who evaluate commercial messages not in a vacuum but in the context of their lives.

Part of my own research, for example, has sought to assist government agencies develop more effective drug-abuse prevention promotions. In testing such promotions, we found that parents and teen-agers often engaged in mental "counter-argument" when watching particular anti-drug promotions. One promotion showed parents arguing violently with their teen-age son about drugs. The message stimulated many parents to think to themselves while watching this promotion, "Parents shouldn't do that; *we* shouldn't do that."

Counter-arguments are a pervasive part of the exchange between advertiser and consumer. You may resist the most appealing advertisement for a fast-food chain because you are on a diet or do not like "junk" food. You may resist a clever advertisement for a domestic automobile because you trust reports that foreign-made cars are more reliable. You may decide against chewing gum — despite the young surfers and sexy blondes who inhabit gum advertisements — because you think that chewing gum is disgusting and unattractive.

This kind of counter-argument goes on all the time, most often in the form of an internalized debate. What is striking about the counter-argumentation that occurs in the case of cigarettes is that the viewer is not allowed to miss the counter-argument. Cigarette advertising

carries the surgeon general's rotating messages. Indeed, the anti-tobacco point of view is one of the most widely disseminated consumer messages.

The influence of advertising

Those who favor banning or restricting tobacco product advertising assert that such advertising influences adult smokers to continue smoking and causes children and teen-agers to decide to smoke.

In fact, the available evidence indicates that advertising is among the least influential factors involved — certainly not influential enough to warrant an advertising ban, even if we agreed that it is proper for the government to try to manipulate consumer behavior by suppressing information.

So far as young people are concerned, I share the view of the Director of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, who testified before this Subcommittee [on Health and the Environment] only three years ago that "the most forceful determinants of smoking are parents, peers, and older siblings."

That observation is in accord with the results of my own research with preteen-age children, which indicates that parents and peers are much more important determinants of children's developing consumer behavior patterns than advertising.

Among teen-agers, data gathered for the American Cancer Society by Lieberman Research, Inc., suggest that, as early as 1969, "a large majority of youngsters oppose cigarette smoking and recognize it as a cause of cancer."

The ACS study concluded that "persons in the environment are clearly very important in shaping smoking behavior: Where parents or other frequently seen adults smoke, youngsters are more likely to take up the habit. . . . Most influential of all seem to be friends."

This early ACS report concluded that smoking "seems firmly established in only a small minority of teen-agers." Perhaps that finding best encapsulates the point: Most teen-agers choose not to smoke, responding to the positive and negative influences in a manner that should satisfy anti-tobacco advocates. My own study of

over 600 children and their parents demonstrated that even young children can and do develop skills to evaluate advertising.

Conclusion

My purpose has been to explain the cigarette advertising that we see. Cigarette advertisers, like other advertisers of mature products, seek to break through advertising clutter and attract the attention of smokers — obviously, no small task.

They attempt to do so by identifying target audiences of smokers, and creating advertising that will be noticed by those target audiences. The ultimate objective is to prompt a shift in brand loyalties or to defend the advertised brand against the brand shifts that may be prompted by competitive advertising.

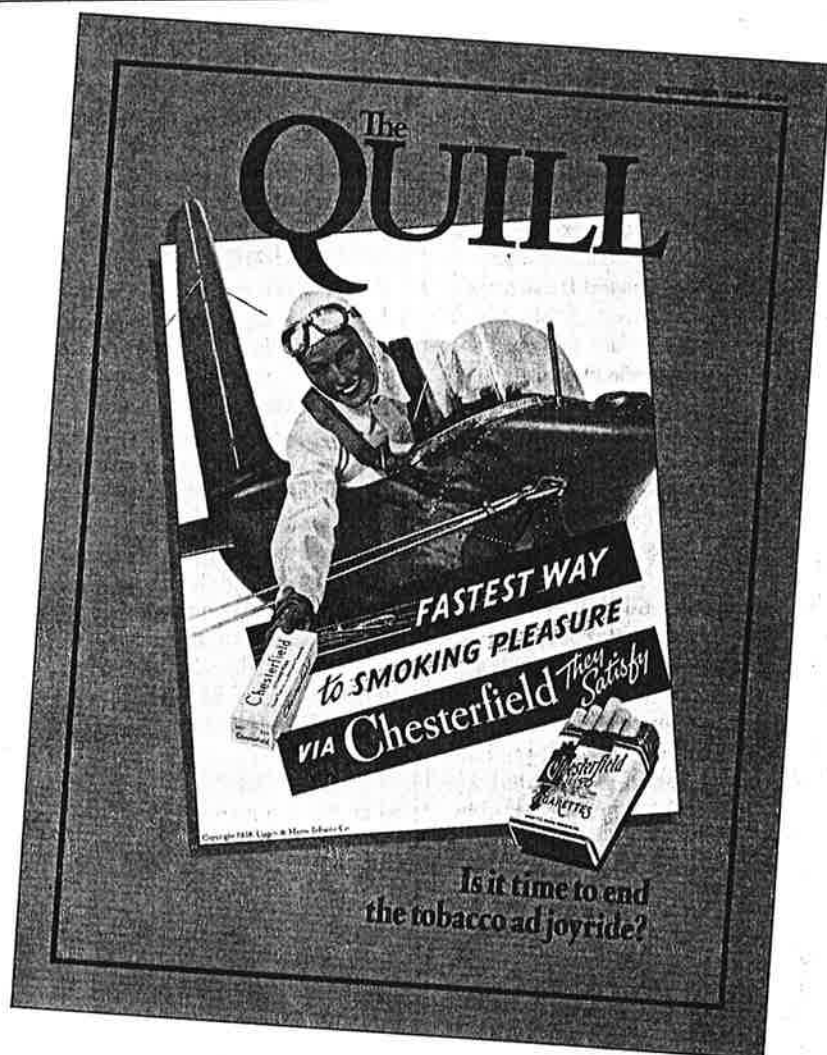
Banning or eliminating tobacco product advertising simply would remove a vehicle of brand competition. But it would not reduce tobacco product use or prevent people, including some young people, from deciding to smoke in the first place. Such measures would, however, introduce into government regulation of advertising a dangerous paternalism that has no precedent and no limiting principle.

The government traditionally has been in the business of keeping commercial messages truthful — not attempting to manipulate consumer behavior by closing off advertising, but assuring that such behavior is fully informed. The proposals before you today represent a fundamental departure from that approach.

Rather than ignoring the limits of advertising in an effort to justify a ban on cigarette advertising, government programs concerning smoking should be based on respect for and acknowledgment of the intelligence, will and complexities of individuals.

That requires, among other things, careful pretesting of any mass communications to make sure that they are effective and not counter-productive, and taking advantage of the essential role played by parents, peers and others in the decision to smoke. That clearly was the lesson that emerged from my work with the government in designing better drug abuse programs. The lesson applies here as well. □

The great tobacco ad ban debate II



The December 1986 QUILL contained three pieces regarding the debate over whether the Congress should ban or limit tobacco advertising and promotion.

Dr. Alan Blum, an anti-tobacco activist, argued in a long essay that it would be sound public policy to legislate such a ban. He also suggested that newspapers and magazines that accept tobacco advertising routinely place themselves in a conflict of interest vis-a-vis their coverage of tobacco-related issues.

In a sidebar to the Blum piece, Harris Rayl, a Kansas publisher, described why his newspaper recently gave up tobacco advertising.

In another article, Scott Ward, a marketing expert, defended tobacco advertising, saying that it is not aimed at causing people to begin smoking, but is designed only to promote loyalty and brand switching.

On this and the following pages, The

QUILL publishes a few of the letters it received regarding the tobacco ad ban debate.

Shameful history

Dr. Alan Blum is correct in his description of the shameful history of the major media in covering the impact of tobacco on public health. This history, true to this day, is the leading exhibit as to how the major media let advertising revenues condition what they do in their news columns, magazine pages and billboards.

Newspapers and magazines are regularly filled with heart-rending and systematically pursued stories about other diseases that have less impact on the public but that happen not to have such a highly profitable commercial sponsor.

I disagree with Blum's support for a

legal ban on printed tobacco ads. I distrust state power once it discovers a way to mandate or censor printed information.

But if legal censorship of tobacco ads is attempted, the major newspapers, magazines and billboard companies will have themselves to blame: Most of them self-righteously volunteer to ban ads for other products and services that they believe will offend or hurt the public.

Why do they not do it with tobacco ads? Let us not mince words: they make too much money from tobacco.

BEN H. BAGDIKIAN

Dean

Graduate School of Journalism
University of California
Berkeley, California

Money talks

Publication in The QUILL of Dr. Alan Blum's article on tobacco advertising should push the press a step closer to confronting and resolving a pressing and persistent paradox: its claim to serve as public watchdog and conscience while purveying an instrument of death.

Stripped of First Amendment rhetoric, the [tobacco ad ban] debate has always revolved around money, and, as we know, money has no conscience. In 1972, Thomas Whiteside wrote a book about the matter, *Selling Death: Cigarette Advertising and Public Health*. His pleas that something be done were ignored.

In 1978, writing in the *Columbia Journalism Review*, R.C. Smith said:

"A survey of the leading national magazines that might have been expected to report on the subject reveals a striking and disturbing pattern. In magazines that accept cigarette advertising I was unable to find a single article in seven years of publication that would have given readers any clear notion of the nature and extent of the medical and social havoc being wreaked by the cigarette-smoking habit. The records of the magazines that refused cigarette advertising, or that do not accept cigarette advertising at all, were considerably better."

When Elizabeth Whelan [executive director of the American Council on Science and Health] was asked to do a magazine piece with the title "Protect

Your Man from Cancer," she said that she "emphasized the contribution of tobacco to cancer of the lung, prostate, oral cavity and other sites."

Whelan said the beginning was changed because, she said, an editor told her: "I can't open the article with smoking." The material was moved to the end, the editor told her, "so it wouldn't jump in the face of every cigarette advertiser." Several parts were cut, Whelan said, because of her frequent mention of tobacco.

As Blum points out, some newspapers and magazines have not let the fears of advertiser reaction — real or imagined — concern them. They print stories that show the toll tobacco takes. Nevertheless, they continue to accept tobacco advertising. They have sneaked under the horns of the ethical dilemma.

The question is not whether tobacco advertising should be banned but whether the press should refuse to accept such advertising, as it does for other advertisers. Blum is asking journalists what they intend to do about resolving the moral paradox.

MELVIN MENCHER
Professor

Graduate School of Journalism
Columbia University
New York, New York

Disinformation

You are to be congratulated for taking on what is perhaps the most provocative — and important — journalistic issue of this century: the failure of the American media to give on-going, in-depth coverage to the leading cause of preventable death. Dr. Alan Blum's article was comprehensive, and right on target.

Surveys conducted by my group, the American Council on Science and Health, indicate that not only do magazines which carry cigarette advertising fail to give the hazards of cigarette smoking the attention they deserve, but a sinister type of disinformation phenomenon emerges.

For example, in September 1986 *The New York Times Magazine* published a special supplement, *The Good Health Magazine*. The announced goal of the 115-page magazine was to increase awareness "in a wide variety of health and related issues, such as new methods of health care, preventive measures, fitness,

nutrition and mental health." There was only one passing reference to cigarette smoking.

Highlighting less significant modes of preventive medicine while omitting in-depth coverage of the dangers of smoking is analogous to preparing a guide to "reducing your risk of death and injury on the road," and waxing eloquent about the desirability of having your windshield wipers changed frequently while omitting discussion of the desirability of seatbelt use and the dangers of driving while intoxicated.

ELIZABETH M. WHELAN

Executive Director
American Council on Science and Health
New York, New York

A matter of freedom

One aspect of the tobacco story is the tobacco-ad-ban-idea story. That aspect of the debate has been around for years and has been well aired, most recently in the exhaustive House hearings in which the America Newspaper Publishers Association participated.

I'm glad *The QUILL* is interested in continuing to air this debate. Questions of tobacco and health are one issue; another is solving any public problem — health or otherwise — by having the government ban public speech, discourse and advertising. I have in my office a copy of a newspaper published without ads, in a society we wouldn't like here, where the government decides what people may know and not know. The paper is called *Pravda*.

The *QUILL* and all journalists can feel quite comfortable insisting that tobacco health matters be approached in ways that enhance, not diminish, the freedom of speech and the citizen knowledge that underpin our society, and our profession.

JERRY W. FRIEDHEIM
Executive Vice President

ANPA
Reston, Virginia

Collectivism and liberty

As an editor I enjoyed playing with some of Dr. Alan Blum's ideas and assertions. As a citizen I went rooting around for my gun oil and reloading equipment.

"Commercial speech," says Blum, "is clearly a lesser kind of speech, a fact that the courts have long recognized."

Warped it may be, but this interpretation

of some courts having recognized the publisher's property right in his publication offers us grounds for a philosophically consistent position on tobacco advertising, if not one that will satisfy all editors.

If a pedophilic sadist with a strong side interest in Bengal tigers and wringer washers submits a lengthy and lucrative personal advertisement, I am at liberty to say, in effect, not in *my* magazine, you don't.

If a notorious criminal prepays a year's worth of four-color, full-bleed ads with certain clear provisions as to accompanying editorial content, I am likewise free to be just as corrupt as I please. In either case, readers of my magazine can assess pretty accurately how much ad revenue influences policy, and vice versa.

Particularly in a pluralist society — i.e., in any society that includes both me and Blum — there's a virtual guarantee that readers will have alternatives to either philosophy of magazine management.

But Blum admits the market's solution as an interim measure only, while we forge a consensus for positive, legislated prohibition on tobacco advertising; and here I react as a citizen.

Society, he asserts, has a property right in my production (page 28), and so I am not to be allowed to harm my health, my productivity. Asserts, not demonstrates. Shall I assert that as a member of the Universal Body of Christ, to which all believing men have an obligation to belong, I have a direct interest in Blum's moral welfare, and he must therefore not be permitted to damage it? — must be forbidden adultery and even fornication, must be compelled to honor his parents and prevented at all costs from Sabbath-breaking?

There is probably rather less consensus on society's ownership of my production than on these latter matters, in case consensus is to be the measure of morals; and, to extend Blum's argument, there is no proper use of adultery or Sabbath-breaking.

One premise of a ban on tobacco advertising is collectivism: Blum's ownership interest in my future production outweighs my own interest in my liberty. The other is thoroughgoing materialism: illness and premature death are evils to be avoided at all costs.

I propose a social contract wherein I

refrain from the forceful imposition of my moral premises, and Blum refrains from the forceful imposition of his.

WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.
Editor
National Review
New York, New York

No civil liberties issue

An attempt has been made to interpret a proposed ban of tobacco advertising as a civil liberties issue. Indeed, the American Civil Liberties Union appears to have taken a pro-tobacco industry position in this respect. I was a longtime member of the ACLU national board of directors, but I have resigned from the organization on account of that position. I see no valid civil liberties issue here. Is a civil liberties issue involved if a newspaper or magazine declines to accept advertising for men's socks if the appropriate government agency finds that the synthetic fibers in the socks produce a dangerous rash on the wearers?

It is perhaps arguable to hold that if the government permits the sale of cigarettes, so long as a warning label appears on the package, the same rubric should apply to this advertising. A publisher might reasonably argue that if the government permits the sale of cigarettes — with full knowledge of the harm being done by them — his publication would operate within responsible limits if it runs tobacco advertisements.

When I was editor of *The Saturday Review*, the magazine refused to accept cigarette advertising following the publication of the surgeon general's first report on the risks of smoking. I was able to hold my ground against the publisher and the advertising manager until the government came up with the warning-label requirement. So long as the warning label was included in the advertising, the ground for exclusion thinned out rapidly.

If I were still editor of the magazine, however, in the light of all the independent evidence on the dangers of cigarette smoking that has developed in recent years, I would refuse to accept cigarette

advertising, with or without the warning label.

NORMAN COUSINS
Former Editor
The Saturday Review
Los Angeles, California

Challenge to publishers

We in the American Medical Association hope that Dr. Alan Blum's article will stimulate more in-depth and critical coverage along the lines he suggests. The articles by Blum and publisher Harris Rayl should also encourage publishers to take a critical look at their policies of accepting tobacco advertising.

The AMA publishes 10 journals that are distributed in more than 130 countries. We voluntarily stopped accepting tobacco ads in AMA publications in 1954. But when we attempted to convince the publishers of the nation's largest newspapers and magazines to reject tobacco advertising in 1982, we met with no success.

Now we have asked Congress to

Need to find out what it costs to insure a flea circus?

Sorry. We can't help.

But if it's family insurance — auto, home, health or life — you have a question about, we probably can.

You've got our number(s).

NAME MARK BRANDT
TELEPHONE (309) 766-2063
LIFE & HEALTH INSURANCE

NAME DAVE HURST
TELEPHONE (309) 766-2845
PROPERTY INSURANCE

NAME JERRY PARSONS
TELEPHONE (309) 766-6103
AUTO THEFT, FRAUD & TRAFFIC SAFETY

NAME BOB SASSER
TELEPHONE (309) 766-2625
AUTO INSURANCE, RATING & COVERAGES

NAME JIM STAHL
TELEPHONE (309) 766-2714
GENERAL INFORMATION

NAME RON ARNOLD
TELEPHONE (309) 766-2521
PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT
STATE FARM INSURANCE COMPANIES
ONE STATE FARM PLAZA
BLOOMINGTON, IL 61710



prohibit all forms of tobacco advertising and promotion, an action that we believe to be consistent with the Supreme Court's interpretation of the First Amendment. The AMA has called for a tobacco-free society by the year 2000, and we believe that banning tobacco ads is an important first step toward that goal.

In 1987, we will work for enactment in Congress of this legislation, as well as legislation to eliminate smoking aboard aircraft and other measures to reduce the premature death and disease caused by tobacco.

In recent years editorial writers have repeatedly warned their readers about the harmful effects of tobacco products. I think it's time that publishers also demonstrate their commitment to promoting healthier lifestyles by refusing to accept tobacco advertising.

ALAN R. NELSON, M.D.
Chairman
Board of Trustees
American Medical Association
Chicago, Illinois

Publishers not helpless

Publishers are not as helpless as some of their spokesmen would make them seem. Every day they exercise discretion in rejecting certain advertisements. Wouldn't it be refreshing to see them agree, voluntarily and collectively, to refuse cigarette advertising? Wouldn't their standing in public opinion be enhanced if they gave up that one percent of advertising revenue to do what is good for their readers?

Most papers take great pride in their service to the community and generosity in funding such activities as athletic tournaments and scholarships; wouldn't helping some youngster avoid the tortures of lung cancer be an even more important gift?

Those questions await answers. I am confident *THE QUILL* would print any publisher's response. And if any media executives want to nudge their associates to get something started, I am sure the news would receive attention — and loud applause.

SAM ZAGORIA
Former Ombudsman
The Washington Post
College Park, Maryland

Story leads

Examined objectively, America's love-hate relationship with tobacco should be the story of the century. The surgeon general identifies smoking as "the nation's leading cause of premature death and the most important public health issue of our time." A former director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse labels tobacco use "the most widespread form of drug dependency" in the country.

Yet Americans recently ranked "not smoking" 10th among the nation's leading health and safety priorities, behind such measures as having smoke detectors in the home. Fire kills *one-sixtieth* as many people as does tobacco and, ironically, the leading cause of fires is the cigarette.

Tobacco is so commonplace, and tobacco deaths so removed from the immediate act of smoking (or chewing), that it is easy to underestimate the slaughter that is wrought by this product. Consider, however, that cigarettes alone annually kill more people than the sum total of *all* of the following: heroin, cocaine, alcohol, fires, automobiles, homicide, suicide, and AIDS. Each of these creates enormous suffering, none of which is strictly comparable with, nor necessarily more tragic than, that of the rest. Yet a simple "death count" makes tobacco the undisputed king of the nation's killers.

Most journalists, like most Americans, do not appreciate the toll of tobacco. In addition, many journalists believe that smoking and health is old news, stale news. For those seeking a new angle, consider the following possibilities:

- If injected directly into the blood stream, the nicotine in three cigarettes would be instantly fatal.

- The first three recipients of artificial hearts collectively had smoked over a million cigarettes.

- Among its 4,000 chemicals, cigarette smoke contains formaldehyde, hydrogen cyanide, ammonia, benzene, naphthalene, arsenic, DDT, and radioactive polonium 210, all of which are inhaled by the average smoker more than 100,000 times per year.

- Smoking *alone* is responsible for the increase in the cancer death rate.

As the tobacco ad ban debate intensifies, I urge journalists to examine the many dimensions of tobacco and

health policy. Probe the argument that advertising should be permitted for tobacco because it is a legal product. Question *why* it is legal.

Today it must be legal, of course. As Blum observes, making it illegal would instantly make criminals of 56 million honest but addicted Americans. But explore why the Food and Drug Administration has repeatedly refused to consider the safety of cigarettes. Learn how Congress specifically prohibited the Consumer Products Safety Commission from investigating cigarettes. Ask why the Environmental Protection Agency and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration do not regulate the single most important environmental source of cancer — tobacco smoke in the air.

Consider, too, the validity of the "legal to sell, legal to advertise" argument in light of the fact that in most states tobacco is *not* legally sold to minors; yet 90 percent of all tobacco users had become addicted as children — 60 percent before the age of 14.

The tobacco ad ban debate affords journalists an excellent opportunity to dig into the tobacco story. But don't be surprised if you run into difficulties in getting your findings published.

Like Blum's, my research suggests that tobacco is not a popular topic with publishers dependent on advertising revenues from the tobacco companies. That dependency has increased rather radically in recent years, since R.J. Reynolds bought Nabisco and Philip Morris acquired General Foods. The tobacco companies now manufacture everything from Miller Beer to Smurfberry Crunch cereal.

KENNETH E. WARNER, Ph.D.
Professor and Chair
Dept. of Public Health Policy
and Administration
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Wrapped in a free-speech flag

In 1983, the American Lung Association — the Christmas Seal people — called for a ban on all forms of cigarette advertising and promotion, and in that same year we created an award to honor magazines that refuse to accept cigarette advertising.

And, along with the American Cancer Society, the American Heart Association, and the American Medical Association, the ALA is working to educate the public and our lawmakers to the dangers of the glamorization through sophisticated advertising of such a health-destroying product.

Smoking-related death and disease now have reached epidemic proportions in the United States. In fact, smoking has become the number-one preventable cause of premature death and disability in our country. Each day enough people die of smoking-related diseases to equal the casualties of two jumbo jets colliding in midair and killing everyone on board.

In addition, smoking imposes an enormous economic burden on the nation's economy, to the tune of \$53 billion annually in medical costs and lost productivity.

Studies show that regular daily smoking usually begins between ages 12 and 14 and that most adult smokers became hooked by the age of 16. Though the tobacco industry denies it, most cigarette advertisements are aimed at young people. The ads are filled with sexually attractive role models in glamorous and exciting situations — images that appeal to youthful fantasies, despite the fact that tobacco is not a legal product for children.

Although the tobacco companies are wrapping themselves in the flag of free speech to counter any suggestion of a ban or restriction on their print advertising, the Supreme Court recently stated in the *Posadas* case of Puerto Rico, "products or activities deemed harmful, such as cigarettes, alcoholic beverages, and prostitution," can be prohibited and so can the advertising of such products. This ruling is entirely consistent with 200 years of past court decisions distinguishing commercial from private speech.

Blum makes many salient points in his article regarding the need for a ban on cigarette advertising and promotion that bear repeating:

- Tobacco is unique; it is the only product legally available in this country that is harmful when used as intended.

- The claim by cigarette companies that cigarette ads are only created to maintain brand loyalty or to get people to switch brands is full of smoke. Only 10 percent of smokers switch annually and it is hardly cost effective for the industry to spend more than \$2 billion in advertising

and promotion for this purpose alone.

- Publications in this country should more frequently report on the health hazards of smoking both as a service to their readers and as recognition of the magnitude of the smoking problem in our society.

It is not just smokers who should be concerned about this health toll taken by tobacco; research now suggests that non-smokers are also being harmed. The latest report by Surgeon General C. Everett Koop has found that the hazards of tobacco smoke can reach beyond the smoker to his or her children, friends and co-workers and are endangering their health as well.

If the ALA can help clear the air with a ban on cigarette advertising, the dream of having a smoke-free society by the year 2000 will be closer to becoming a reality.

ROBERT G. WEYMUELLER
Acting Managing Director
American Lung Association
New York, New York

Lawyers and the First Amendment

On behalf of the New York State Bar Association, which supports [a proposed] ban on tobacco advertising, we compliment you for the December issue of *The QUILL*.

Advertising is undeniably effective. Cigarettes are the most heavily advertised product in the world. Images of healthy, athletic young people engaged in glamorous and happy activities insidiously invade the consciousness of young people, helping to make smoking socially acceptable. After six years of heavy advertising targeting young females, smoking among teenage girls doubled. How long can society tolerate such a threat?

The surgeon general has written, "It is nothing short of a national tragedy that as much death and disease are wrought by a powerful habit often taken up by unsuspecting children, lured by seductive

American Psychological Association



Announcing the

1987 National Psychology Awards for Excellence in the Media

To recognize and encourage outstanding, accurate coverage which increases public knowledge and understanding of psychology.

\$1,000 CASH AWARD AND TRIP TO APA CONVENTION IN NEW YORK CITY IN EACH CATEGORY

Entries are now being sought in the six categories of newspapers, magazines, books/monographs, radio, television/film (news/documentary) and television (drama/entertainment) for the 31st annual media awards program of the American Psychological Association and American Psychological Foundation.

Materials submitted must include references to psychology and/or psychologists and depict the activities, ideas and findings of individual psychologists or applications of

psychological science. Entries must have been published or aired, for the first time, on or after April 1, 1986 and before April 1, 1987.

Deadline for receipt of entries is April 15, 1987.

For rules and an entry form, contact:
Public Affairs Office
American Psychological Association
1200 Seventeenth St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036
Telephone: (202) 955-7710.

American Psychological Foundation

multimillion dollar cigarette advertising campaigns."

In response to this great threat to the national health, the American Medical Association, the American Cancer Society and the American Lung Association all support the recommendation of the National Advisory Council on Drug Abuse for a total ban on the advertising and promotion of tobacco products. We at the New York State Bar Association, feeling that this is no longer a medical issue, concluded, after vigorous debate, that the ban is essential.

As a body of lawyers deeply committed to the principle of freedom of speech embodied in the First Amendment, we concluded that those who would lure our children into this destructive addiction could find no refuge in the Constitution. Deceptive speech is never entitled to protection. Even if glamorous images of tobacco usage that do not inform our children of the death and disease awaiting them is held not to be deceptive, the Supreme Court of the United States has made it clear that, under certain circumstances, truthful advertising of a harmful service or product may be prohibited. We concluded that those circumstances clearly existed in the case of tobacco advertising.

We hope the journalists of America will raise their voice in support of the effort to achieve a smoke-free society by the year 2000.

HENRY G. MILLER
Past President
New York State Bar Association
White Plains, New York

Reject official censorship

Dr. Alan Blum's charges that the press has not covered the smoking/cancer issue as thoroughly as it should have because of a financial conflict of interest is a damning indictment of the media and, unfortunately, a valid one.

The tobacco issue has been a continuing nomination to Project Censored as an uncovered story for the past 10 years — including 1979 when the tobacco lobby's successful fight in Congress against the self-extinguishing cigarette was exposed by *Mother Jones* magazine, but overlooked by the rest of the media; 1980, when an article in the

American Council on Science and Health *News & Views* documented how tobacco companies and print media cooperated in a "conspiracy of silence" about cigarettes and cancer; and in 1983 and 1984, when Blum's extraordinary series of articles in *The New York State Journal of Medicine* were ignored by the media.

However, it should be noted that censorship of the tobacco story predates this media research by some four decades.

Media critic Robert Cirino, in his excellent analysis of bias in the media, *Don't Blame the People*, 1971, warned that "information that would have convinced many to quit smoking was available beginning in 1938, but for years such information was censored or played down by the media."

Given this history, I find it ironic that the tobacco industry cries "censorship" in self-righteous indignation as efforts are made to set the record straight on tobacco and cancer even at this late date.

But while the media's long term connivance with tobacco interests would appear to make a government ban on cigarette advertising a reasonable response, I would totally reject any such form of official censorship. The First Amendment must take precedence over any past or current inequities in information flow.

Nonetheless, there is no question that the media's failure to fully report the tobacco/cancer issue since 1938 constitutes one of the longest running cases of press self-censorship (with a little help from its friends in the tobacco industry).

In the final analysis, the media must share with the tobacco industry the responsibility for many of the lives lost to cancer caused by cigarette smoking.

As Cirino said, "It is now clear that had the media done [their] job in informing the public on the danger of smoking when [they] should have, countless millions of Americans who died an early death would still be alive today."

CARL JENSEN
Director
Project Censored
Sonoma State University
Rohnert Park, California

Creating a backlash

Too often, we in the media invoke First Amendment rhetoric when anyone else can see that crass commercial

interests are also involved.

A shrill insistence on First Amendment "rights" in inappropriate situations doesn't enhance freedom of the press. In the long run, it creates a backlash undermining far more important work than cigarette marketing campaigns.

ANDREW KREIG
Hartford, Connecticut

Self-righteous rhetoric

The QUILL's tilt toward banning tobacco ads is astounding!

Where would lawmakers draw the line? Assuming a smoker takes on a risk, and with no evidence at all that an ad prohibition would make fewer smokers take fewer risks, what is the point?

Perhaps SPJ,SDX can get up a vigilante committee to draft an omnibus bill to ban all the ads presumed to encourage risk-taking:

- Sporting goods (football players break limbs).
- Beverages (lots of them have alcohol or sugar).
- Candy (cavities).
- Guns (hunters shoot each other).
- Luxury goods (the poor squander too much money).

● Magazine circulation promotions (editorials such as *The QUILL's* undermine the First Amendment!).

Your self-righteous rhetoric makes me wonder about the Society's First Amendment Center and its commitment to the statement, "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press." (Emphasis mine.)

It appears you only support the First Amendment when it is necessary for journalists, not for everyone.

REGINALD L. LESTER
Lester Public Relations
Raleigh, North Carolina

Wisps of smoke

Congratulations on your issue on tobacco advertising. It's time the publishing industry began grappling with this thorny subject.

You'd think that our business would act on behalf of the health and welfare of our readers, 1,000 of whom are dying

each day from tobacco-related disease. Instead, we are in cahoots with the people who make this deadly product.

Publishers — and the tobacco industry — argue that a tobacco-ad ban would cause irreparable harm to the First Amendment. The First Amendment is worth defending, but the case for commercial free speech appears as solid as wisps of cigarette smoke.

The U.S. Supreme Court recently ruled that the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico had the right to ban advertising of gambling to local residents because it had the right to ban gambling itself. Likewise, the decision, written by now Chief Justice William Rehnquist, said the same principle could be applied to other government-regulated activities, including prostitution and selling tobacco.

Our business can save face and, possibly in the long run, save some lives. We could head off an ad ban by voluntarily refusing tobacco ads.

As the *Chicago Sun-Times'* medical reporter, I have broken stories about the American Medical Association's ownership of tobacco stocks and even about an AMA president and board member who grew the golden leaf in Georgia. But one year ago [December 1985], the AMA placed itself on the side of health by calling for a variety of anti-smoking measures, including the ad ban, to try to achieve a smoke-free America by the year 2000.

It's a worthy goal. If the AMA can forgo its profits from tobacco stocks, we ought to be able to give up the tobacco advertising habit.

HOWARD WOLINSKY
Chicago Sun-Times
Chicago, Illinois

A nod to Kirk Douglas

As a medical editor, I am infuriated by the profit-motivated shilly-shallying about "whether" tobacco is a health hazard. Anyone who questions the deadly effects of cigarette smoking (after reading the surgeon general's pronouncements and the frequent clinical studies on the subject) need merely scan the hard-facts, no-tears actuarial tables used to determine insurance rates. Smokers pay more because they are at a greater risk of dying before their time. It's that simple.

Years ago I saw a movie in which Kirk

Douglas played an advertising copywriter who was undergoing a crisis because he felt he had sold his soul for money, prestige and power. I still remember the agonized look on his face as he watched the screening of a cigarette commercial he had written that showed a young couple cavorting about in a meadow. Maybe the film should be shown at tobacco and advertising conventions.

MARCIA RINGEL BARMAN
Senior Editor
Contemporary Ob/Gyn Magazine
Ridgewood, New Jersey

Activist physicians

Dr. Alan Blum is recognized widely as one of the most articulate spokesmen in a growingly effective struggle against the health hazards of tobacco use. I will not attempt to add to what he has said, and said well, about tobacco advertising, other than that the American Academy of Family Physicians has taken a position against such promotion in the mass media.

Blum has stated one part of the problem with wit and eloquence. The academy supports his premise, philosophically and practically. Family physicians are standard bearers of preventive medicine in the U.S. medical profession. We have accepted the challenge of creating a smoke-free society by the turn of the century. Attacking tobacco use on all fronts is necessary to achieve this objective.

Our primary goal, of course, is to cut the appalling annual death toll from smoking-related diseases and accidents (home fires). As family physicians, we believe we can be most effective in this struggle by actively helping our patients to stop smoking, or stop using smokeless tobacco.

We are doing this in the context of a well organized program of motivating and teaching our members how to teach smoking cessation and providing them with the tools to initiate and follow through. Continuing medical education is one of our hallmarks; we are recognized as having "written the book" on practical CME programming.

The American Academy of Family Physicians is on record as opposing tobacco advertising. But it goes beyond that to actively help its thousands of member doctors to actively help millions

of patients to actually stop smoking.

ROBERT H. TAYLOR
President
American Academy of Family Physicians
Kansas City, Missouri

Tobacco company pressure

The influence of tobacco companies and their advertising efforts are of major concern to the American Heart Association simply because cigarette smoking is the most important of the known controllable risk factors contributing to heart attack, stroke, high blood pressure and other cardiovascular problems.

I believe the potential for conflict of interest exists when publications rely upon cigarette advertising for much of their revenue. And, as Dr. Alan Blum pointed out, with tobacco companies expanding into areas such as food distribution and processing, their advertising clout is increasing.

The AHA has been very public and outspoken in expressing concern about the growing potential for tobacco companies to hinder the free flow of important health information. That's why our quarrel is with the tobacco industry, not with the editors and reporters across the country who are doing an excellent job of educating the public about disease prevention. But I agree with Blum that more needs to be reported about the dangers of tobacco use to help eliminate so many needless deaths.

Allow me to point out a few specific examples of tobacco company pressure:

- At least two writers for women's magazines have told the AHA about problems getting anti-tobacco information into health-related stories. One was told: "We don't want to upset the advertisers."

- After its acquisition by R.J. Reynolds, Nabisco withdrew financial support for the American Cancer Society's annual Great American Smokeout.

- Greg Louganis, the Olympic gold medal diver, was asked to serve as 1984 Great American Smokeout chairman. However, his manager was told that if Louganis became involved with the Smokeout, he could not use Olympic training facilities owned by Philip Morris.

- Del Monte was reportedly ordered by its parent company, R.J. Reynolds, to

retract an offer of funding for a nutrition program produced by KERA, a public television station in Dallas, after KERA had produced several shows about the hazards of smoking.

● Fleischman's margarine representatives told the AHA that when they learned their company was acquired by R.J. Reynolds, they removed Fleischman's name from the list of supporters of a public health program that included anti-smoking material.

Some national magazines, such as *Reader's Digest*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Prevention* and *The Saturday Evening Post*, do not accept cigarette advertising. Not surprisingly, they have scored highest for alerting the public to tobacco's dangers.

The AHA has also joined the American Medical Association and others in supporting a ban on cigarette advertising. Meanwhile, the AHA is most concerned about advertising that portrays smoking as a pleasurable activity associated with social, sexual or athletic success. Ironically, these ads — common in newspapers and magazines and on billboards — go against the tobacco industry's own advertising code.

Until a total ban is enacted, the AHA recommends eliminating such imagery through "tombstone" advertising, with no models, slogans or scenes. The ads could, however, feature pictures of a cigarette pack with a listing of the tar and nicotine content and the surgeon general's warnings.

To close, I want to reiterate that the AHA has great faith in the integrity of this country's journalists as well as their commitment to covering important health and science issues — including the dangers of smoking.

We must be aware, however, of the potential dangers of pressure, both blatant and subtle, by the tobacco industry to keep life-saving information from the American public. We are confident the Fourth Estate will be vigilant and resistant to these pressures.

DUDLEY H. HAFNER
Executive Vice President
American Heart Association
Dallas, Texas

Out of context

I was very disturbed to find myself quoted by Dr. Alan Blum — without my permission and totally out of context

[page 24, December 1986 *QUILL*].

Blum chose to ignore the point of my private remarks after his speech to the Deadline Club — namely, that the decisions on what to publish in *Woman's Day* are made *not* by the advertising department or publisher, but by the editors. And we make those decisions on the basis of what we believe will interest and serve our readers best. If management decided to stop accepting cigarette advertising tomorrow, the editorial policies of *Woman's Day* would not change.

The fact is we publish anti-smoking messages regularly. Since activists like Blum don't really read the magazine, they miss the numerous paragraphs about the hazards of smoking in articles on cancer prevention, heart disease, stroke, bronchitis, living longer, preventing aging and even skin care. (I'm enclosing several examples, the most recent from our current — January 20, 1987 — issue, which also contains five-and-a-half pages of cigarette advertising.) These messages may well be more effective than a major article on "The Health Hazards of Smoking," because the latter is more likely to be ignored by smokers who already know they shouldn't smoke and don't want to read about it.

Blum equates the hazards of smoking (which have been proven) with the hazards of cigarette advertising (which may not exist). In at least two countries that have banned all cigarette advertising (Italy and Poland), the consumption of cigarettes has gone up since the ban. It could be argued that the strong surgeon general's warning that's prominent on every cigarette ad discourages far more smokers than it entices.

Since Blum asked why breast cancer is "covered so frequently" in *Woman's Day*, I checked back and found that in the last five years we've published exactly two articles on the subject. That's far less frequent coverage than we've given anti-smoking messages. The breast cancer articles were announced on the cover, I admit, but we think we provide a real service to readers by encouraging frequent breast examinations and informing them about new treatment options.

Diet articles do appear with greater frequency, but there are good reasons for that, too. Although the majority of our readers do *not* smoke (and even those who do are not seeking advice on it), every

reader eats, and the millions who fight a constant battle with being overweight are eager for all the help they can get.

Although Blum makes some valid points, he loses credibility when he says — as he did to the Deadline Club — that magazines should give as much space to anti-smoking messages as they do to cigarette advertising.

Such foolhardiness would, of course, put the magazine out of business. How would that help our readers? I'd love to find a way to convince smokers to stop smoking and drunks to stop driving, but it's going to take more realistic thinking and practical suggestions than Blum offers.

REBECCA GREER
Articles Editor
Woman's Day
New York, New York

Editor's note: As Greer noted in her letter, she enclosed examples of Woman's Day articles that mentioned the hazards of smoking. They were:

● "Heart Attacks and Women," which said, "It is estimated that heavy smokers have two to three times as many heart attacks as nonsmokers." The remainder of the paragraph quoted a physician who said that the chances of a smoker avoiding heart disease improves if she quits smoking. (July 13, 1982.)

● "When a Cough Means Trouble," in which a paragraph noted that the most important risk factor for bronchitis is the smoking of cigarettes. (January 8, 1985.)

● "Stroke: Easier to Avoid Than You Think," in which a sentence noted that "women who smoke and are on the birth control pill" are at a greater risk than the norm to have a stroke. (July 29, 1986.)

● "Ten Ways to Slow Down Aging," in which point number six was to stop smoking, because smoking may tend to wrinkle the skin, or produce gauntness or an off-color complexion. (January 20, 1987.)

The QUILL welcomes letters concerning the contents of the magazine, as well as letters about matters that may be of general interest to members of the Society. We reserve the right to edit letters for length and style.

Casey Bukro, therefore, deserves special thanks for his January 1987 *QUILL* cage-rattler on ethics. So do those like-minded convention "upstarts" who form the heart and soul of the organization and who, one would hope, speak for the majority in the profession regarding ethics.

Poor ethical judgments by second-rate journalism practitioners are helping to erode the First Amendment. We harp on physicians and attorneys for their watered-down peer review systems, and yet we claim that we should be immune altogether from scrutiny and censure of a similar kind. How hypocritical and, ultimately, how dangerous.

Waffling and lack of leadership on this fundamental issue of professional responsibility — as recently evinced by the Society's current officeholders — notwithstanding, those of us who prefer not to equivocate on journalism ethics might want to stick around in view of Bukro's and others' dynamic insistence that we are professionals of substance.

MARY A. KANE
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Tobacco ad ban debate III

The December 1986 *QUILL* contained an essay by Dr. Alan Blum, who supported proposals for a congressional ban of tobacco advertising and promotion. The February 1987 *QUILL* contained eight pages of letters generated by Blum's article. This month, we offer additional comments.

Dr. Alan Blum's suggestion to prohibit tobacco advertising in newspapers loses sight of the true issue — not a ban on advertising of anything that is legal to sell, but whether to ban the sale of a substance itself.

The National Newspaper Association, representing some 5,000 community newspapers, does not sanction any government imposed ban on advertising anything that is considered a legal activity.

NNA believes the choice of newspaper publishers to accept or reject an

advertisement is an individual choice with each publisher. Publishers do reject some ads that they feel may not be compatible with their newspapers or their communities.

Dr. Blum's implication that this position is dictated by avarice among community newspaper publishers across the country ignores the fact that national advertising represents, on the average, no more than one percent of the ad revenues of these papers, and cigarette advertising only a minuscule part of that.

Any move to restrict the free flow of information, commercial or no, is the true issue in this matter and is dangerous to the health of a democracy.

DAVID C. SIMONSON
Executive Vice President
National Newspaper Association
Washington, D.C.

Congress must act

Dr. Alan Blum does an excellent job of synthesizing the major issues involved in this debate and posing valid

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Need to find out what it costs to insure a flea circus?

Sorry. We can't help.

But if it's family insurance — auto, home, health or life — you have a question about, we probably can.

You've got our number(s).



questions for consideration by members of the journalism community.

While I believe a ban on the advertising of tobacco products is both necessary and appropriate, I agree with the sentiment expressed by Harris Rayl, editor of *The Salina Journal*, that it should not be necessary for Congress to take such action.

The promotion of smoking is nothing short of a national — but largely unrecognized — scandal. The cigarette manufacturers and their customers in the advertising and publishing industry do not believe advertising has an effect upon demand for the same reason they deny that smoking is a cause of human disease. Economics!

Twenty years' experience has demonstrated the failure of voluntary regulation or control. The cigarette industry has an ethical code for advertising, but it is fraught with loopholes and is, by definition, unenforceable.

While the media could exercise independent controls, as Dr. Blum points out with respect to other consumer products, their conduct to date, with notable exceptions, confirms the maxim about the influence of the person who pays the piper.

If media companies are unwilling to act as *The Salina Journal* did by banning cigarette ads or as does *The Washington Post*, which continues to accept ads but does a vigorous job of reporting the smoking and health issue, it will fall to Congress to legislate.

Early in the 100th Congress, Representative Michael Synar and I will introduce legislation regarding the advertising and promotion of what the Surgeon General has called the most preventable cause of premature death and illness confronting our nation. Concern over public health demands the attention of and action by the Congress.

HENRY A. WAXMAN
Member of Congress
(D., California)
Washington, D.C.

Media info

As noted in Dr. Alan Blum's article, there are many publications that no longer carry controversial reports on the many aspects of the tobacco issue, fearing

a withdrawal of tobacco advertising if they do.

This, as Ken Warner points out in his new monograph, *Selling Smoke: Cigarette Advertising and Public Health*, has happened with alarming regularity since tobacco interests have assumed control of many of the major food producers in the United States. Now, many publishers are also worried about their food ads.

Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights and the American Nonsmokers' Rights Foundation provide media information on the rights of individuals to a smoke-free environment at work, in public places and in restaurants.

Our educational work, through the American Nonsmokers' Rights Foundation, has included the release of *Death in the West*, a Thames Broadcasting film about what has happened to real "Marlboro cowboys."

We can be reached at 2054 University Avenue, Suite 500, Berkeley, CA 94704, or by telephone at (415) 841-3032.

VIOLA WEINBERG
Executive Director
Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights
Berkeley, California

Prodding the president

Where there's so much smoke, it's apparently difficult for the media to keep their eyes on the ball. Dr. Alan Blum has helped clear the air.

While the media may be faulted for not fighting the good fight — by rejecting tobacco ads, for one thing — Blum's criticism of us was a bit heavy. It was a reporter for *The Washington Evening Star* who helped prod the federal government into undertaking its landmark study on the effects of smoking on health in the early 1960s. I know. I was that reporter.

I asked President Kennedy at a White House news conference what he was going to do about the problem of cigarette smoking and lung cancer. It was a question [press secretary] Pierre Salinger had not prepared him for. The president said he would give me his answer at his next news conference.

Before the next news conference, which was held about two weeks later, Kennedy announced that the surgeon general of the United States would begin a full-blown study of the effects of smoking on health. Later, at the press conference, I asked the president if the

announcement had been, in effect, a reply to my question. He said it was.

Now, I am certain that Kennedy or perhaps Lyndon Johnson would eventually have ordered such a study, but perhaps I may be permitted the belief that my question accelerated the process. In any event, I feel good about it.

And, I might add, Kennedy's decision to order the study, which did not go down well in the seven (then Democratic) tobacco-growing states, will come to be regarded as perhaps the most important one of his abbreviated presidency.

L. EDGAR PRINA
Syracuse, New York

Hotline addendum

My delight in seeing the story "LDF grants to start Wyoming FOI hotline, help student newspaper" in the January *QUILL* was somewhat tempered by a major omission in the Wyoming portion.

The Wyoming hotline project developed as a direct result of two or more years of work by Associate Professor Dal Herring of Northern Arizona University and attorney David Bodney of the Phoenix law firm of Brown and Bain.

The law firm received an SPJ,SDX First Amendment Award in 1983 for its work with the Arizona First Amendment Coalition. Herring has worked as a volunteer, one-man FOI task force in 10 western states, and he is a past president of the First Amendment Coalition.

With the cooperation of the Society's national FOI Committee chairman, Peter Prichard, Herring received funds from SPJ,SDX to attempt to get FOI hotlines established in western states, using the Arizona hotline as a model.

Establishment of a Wyoming hotline followed Herring's trips to the state to meet with members of the Wyoming Professional Chapter of SPJ,SDX and other Wyoming journalists. Herring and Bodney have also played a major role in working toward the establishment of a hotline in Montana, and they have initiated contacts in New Mexico, Colorado and Utah.

BERT N. BOSTROM
Professor
Department of Journalism
Northern Arizona University
Flagstaff, Arizona