



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF ALAN BLUM, MD

From the archives of Doctors Ought to Care Cigaret advertisements in the 1930s and 1940s often carried wide-ranging medical claims. In addition to targeting consumers, tobacco industry ads

hen more doctors smoked Came

By Steve Carrell

AMN CORRESPONDENT

The amusing face of evil. Hard evidence of ignorance. A call to activism for physicians. Alan Blum, MD, sees all these in his exhibit, "When More Doc-

these in his exhibit, "When More Doctors Smoked Camels."

The exhibit's title comes from a consumer-oriented ad in 1946: "24 hours aday your doctor is 'on duty.'... A few winks of sleep ... a few puffs of a cigaret ... and he's back at that job again... More doctors smoke Camels than any other cigaret." About 20 years earlier, Lucky Strike had run a similar campaign, claiming thousands of physical constants. campaign, claiming thousands of phy-

Anti-smoking group looks at early cigaret ads

sicians thought Luckies were "less irri-

tating to sensitive or tender throats."

The exhibit is skimmed from more than 250 file boxes in the archives of Doctors Ought to Care (DOC), an antiby Dr. Blum, who is an assistant pro-fessor of family medicine at Baylor College of Medicine, Houston.

According to Dr. Blum, consumer-oriented ads from the 1930s and 1940s often carried wide-ranging medical claims that placed cigaret-touting physicians in the company of endorsers such as Santa Claus ("Luckies are easy on my throat"), movie stars, sports heroes, and steady-nerved circus stars. Similar ads appeared in medical jour-nals, where other ads were directed solely at physicians. One, for example, touted the Camel cigarets booth at the AMA's 1942 Annual Meeting.
In the New York State Journal of

Medicine, Chesterfield ads began running in 1933. They often carried claims such as, "Just as pure as the water you drink ... and practically untouched by human hands" human hands.

The New England Journal of Medi-cine, Journal of the American Medical Association, and The Lancet published cigaret ads from the 1930s through the 1950s. In some other medical journals, the ads endured even longer. MD magazine carried cigaret advertising in the early 1960s, and, in 1978, Medical Dimensions ran an ad for Vantage cigarets, headlined: "Why I Choose to Smoke." As late as 1983, the Bostonbased *Physician East* published an ad for Carlton, Dr. Blum said.

For 15 years, Philip Morris used various claims, including this one from JAMA in 1949: "Why many leading nose and throat specialists suggest, 'Change to Philip Morris'..." In 1935, the New York State Medical Journal ran an ad touting scientific studies that showed Philip Morris cigarets were less irritating. An ad by the company in a 1943 issue of the National Medical Journal read: "'Don't smoke' is advice hard for patients to swallow. May we

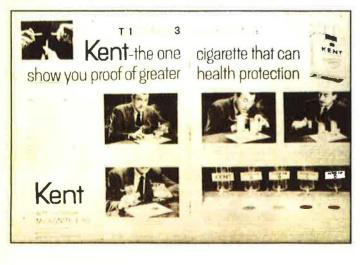
suggest instead, 'Smoke Philip Morris?' Tests showed three out of every four cases of smokers' cough cleared on changing to Philip Morris. Why not ob-serve the results for yourself?" Other companies added different an-

gles for physicians, said Dr. Blum. Camel cigarets paid tribute to medical pioneers and concluded: "Experience is the best teacher ... experience is the best teacher in cigarets, too." Old Gold reacted to early negative medical studies with the slogan: "If pleasure's your aim, not medical claims. ..." Some companies hired attractive women to deliver cigaret samples to physicians and the patients in their waiting rooms.

Medical journals did carry anti-smoking information during this era of free-wheeling advertising, but the edi-torials and studies were far fewer than the cigaret ads, Dr. Blum said.

Cigaret advertising in medical publi-cations slackened when tobacco companies shifted their advertising budgets to television, and eventually scientific studies compelled journals to drop the ads, Dr. Blum said. In the early 1950s, 67% of physicians smoked, he said, but as the scientific research mounted, physicians were among the first to quit.
The first issue of JAMA in 1883 con-

tained an article on the hazards of smoking for children, but the scientific research remained scattered until the appearance of landmark studies such as the 1952 JAMA article on smoking and bronchial carcinoma, by Alton Oschner, MD, and others. JAMA's decision to ban cigaret ads came in reac-See CIGARET ADS, next page





Extinguishing smoking

Cigaret ads included one for Camel's booth at the 1942 AMA Annual Meeting. Some journals ran cigaret ads from the '30s through '50s, but ads endured longer elsewhere.

Cigaret ads

Continued from preceding page tion to such studies, in accordance with the AMA's general approach of formulating policy based on scientific evidence, said the journal's editor, George Lundberg, MD.

The tobacco industry has

The tobacco industry has developed sophisticated campaigns in response to the preponderance of evidence linking smoking with cancer and lung disease, Dr. Blum said. The key to an effective

counter-response, he said, is to study and understand the industry's marketing strategies. "The solution to the tobacco problem is not scientific research," he said. "It's market

and advertising research."
He urged all physicians to become anti-smoking activists.
"An individual physician may feel good telling a 20-year-old to stop smoking," he said, "but that good deed does not compare with the effect a physician can have by impacting

an entire community."
He suggested other avenues

for activism: boycotting products made by tobacco company conglomerates, canceling subscriptions to magazines that carry cigaret ads, and working to ban cigaret bill-boards. DOC distributes stickers, to be placed on magazine covers, that read: "Many of the ads in this magazine are misleading, deceptive, and/or a rip-off. For example, smoking does not make one glamorous, macho, successful, or athletic. It does make one sick, poor, and dead. We care about you and your health. Love,



DOC." The stickers cost 10 cents each and are available from DOC, 1423 Harper St., Augusta, Ga. 30912.
Medical and health groups

Medical and health groups also have materials available. A Massachusetts Medical Society kit includes more mildly worded stickers and an office sign saying the MD boycotts magazines with cigaret ads. The free kit is available from the society at 1440 Main St., Waltham, Mass. 02154.



