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Talk is Cheap: The Tobacco Companies' Violations of Their Own Cigarette Advertising Code

JEFFREY JENSEN ARNETT

University of Maryland, University Park, Maryland, USA

In two studies, adolescents and adults were shown a series of cigarette advertisements and asked to respond to a variety of questions concerning aspects of the Cigarette Advertising and Promotion Code, specifically, their perceptions of the ages of the models in the ads and of whether the ads depicted smoking as essential to sexual attraction or essential to success. For many of the ads, especially ads for brands most popular among youth, a majority of the participants perceived the models to be less than 25 years old. A majority also perceived many of the ads to depict smoking as essential to sexual attraction or essential to success. Thus, despite their public pledge, the tobacco companies routinely violate a variety of aspects of the Cigarette Advertising and Promotion Code.

Critics of the tobacco industry have argued with increasing vigor in recent years that the industry targets youth in their advertising. Research has shown that youth (under age 18) are three times more responsive than adults to cigarette advertising, and that the most heavily advertised brands are the brands most popular among youth but not adults (Pollay et al., 1996). The top "youth brands," such as Marlboro, Camel, Newport, and Kool, produce ads that are viewed by many youth, especially those who smoke, as making smoking more appealing (Arnett, 2001; Arnett & Terhahan, 1998). Ads for these brands appear especially in magazines with a high proportion of youthful readers (Biener & Siegel, 2000; King, Siegel, Celebucki, Connolly, 1998; Krugman & King, 2000).

Furthermore, litigation against the major tobacco companies has led to the release of previously confidential tobacco industry documents that demonstrate the companies' preoccupation with attracting youth to smoke (Cumplings, 2002). Many of the quotes in the documents are shockingly direct in their declarations of youth targeting: "Today's teenager is tomorrow's potential regular customer" (Philip Morris); "Realistically, if our Company is to survive and prosper, over the long term we must get our share of the youth market" (RJR); "KOOL's historical source of business has been starters" (Brown & Williamson); "the base of our business is the high school student" (Lorillard). The documents show that the tobacco companies have long realized that most people who smoke begin as minors—typically, around age 14—and maintain brand loyalty for many years after they choose an initial brand (Cohen, 2000; Cumplings, 2002). Consequently, the documents indicate, the tobacco companies have concluded that the key to success is to attract youth through their advertising.

Address correspondence to Jeffrey Jensen Arnett, Research Professor, Department of Psychology, Clark University, 950 Main Street, Worcester, MA 01610. E-mail: arnett@jeffreymarrett.com

As criticism and litigation against the major tobacco companies has grown in the past decade, the tobacco companies have been increasingly concerned with repairing their public image, especially with respect to the targeting of youth in their advertising and promotion. Most of the released industry documents are from the 1970s and 1980s. While not conceding any wrongdoing in the past, the tobacco companies have tried to reassure their critics and the general public that they take seriously their responsibilities as corporate citizens and hence do not target vulnerable youth in their advertising. The goal of their advertising, they claim, is to persuade adult smokers to switch brands, not to persuade youth to smoke (Cohen, 2000).

One key part of the tobacco industry's self-proclaimed assertion of good corporate citizenship is the Cigarette Advertising and Promotion Code, which pledges various self-imposed restrictions on cigarette marketing (Richards, Tye, & Fischer, 1996). The Code was first presented in 1964, the same year as the first Surgeon General's report on smoking, as part of a successful attempt to elude federal regulation of cigarette advertising. New versions of the Code were announced in 1982 and 1990. The new versions included additional restrictions on cigarette marketing, especially on promotional activities (such as providing free samples).

The core of the Code with respect to advertising has remained essentially the same from 1964 to the present. The focus of the Code is the industry's pledge not to target youth: "The cigarette manufacturers have adopted the following Code to emphasize their policy that smoking is solely for adults" (all quotes are from the 1990 Code). Specifically, the Code promises that "No one depicted in cigarette advertising shall be or appear to be under 25 years of age"; that "Cigarette advertising shall not suggest that smoking is essential to . . . success or sexual attraction; and that "Cigarette advertising shall not . . . show any smoker participating in, or obviously just having participated in, a physical activity requiring stamina or athletic conditioning beyond that of normal recreation." Additional clauses of the Code prohibit payments for featuring cigarettes in movies, sports or celebrity testimonials, and prohibit advertising "in publications directed primarily to those under 21 years of age."

Two previous studies have examined adherence to the Code in cigarette advertising. Mazis and colleagues (1992) surveyed 561 persons aged 13 and over in shopping malls in 1987, and had them estimate the ages of models in 50 cigarette advertisements (65 models). They found that 22% of the models in the ads were judged, on average, to be less than 25 years old, and 49% of the models were perceived by at least one-fourth of respondents to be under 25. Barbeau and colleagues (1998) surveyed 913 early adolescents (ages 10-15) in a classroom setting in 1994, and showed them four cigarette ads (for Marlboro, Camel, Newport, and Virginia Slims) depicting six models, along with four ads for other products. They found that, for four of the six models in the cigarette ads, the median estimated age was under 25, and that for all of the cigarette ads except Marlboro, "sizable percentages of students estimated the models' ages to be under 25" (p. 481). They also found that, for the Marlboro ad, nearly 80% of the adolescents believed that "What the people are doing in this ad requires exercise and physical energy," to test adherence to the Code's prohibition against depicting "any smoker participating in, or obviously just having participated in, a physical activity requiring stamina or athletic conditioning beyond that of normal recreation." It was also found that a majority of adolescents agreed that the models in the cigarette ads are "supposed to look"

cool, popular, successful, sexy, and athletic, which the authors interpreted to be in violation of the Code's prohibition against depicting smoking as essential to success or sexual attraction. The authors concluded that "the vast majority of students believed that the ads communicate ideas that are in violation of the Code's standards" (p. 485).

The two studies described in this article were intended to extend and update the studies by Mazis and colleagues (1992) and Barbeau and colleagues (1998). In Study 1, adolescents (ages 12-17) were asked to respond to 16 cigarette ads, 15 of which were for the top 5 "youth brands" (Marlboro, Camel, Newport, Kool, and Winston). Data collection for the first study took place in 1998. In Study 2, adolescents (ages 11-17) and adults (ages 18 and older) responded to 16 ads for youth brands as well as for adult brands. Data for the second study were collected in 2002.

The present studies extend the findings of previous studies in several ways. Unlike previous studies, the present studies provide a comparison of responses to ads for "youth brands" most popular among minors and ads for "adult brands" smoked almost exclusively by adults. Adolescents' responses to ads for youth brands are especially important, as these are the ads they are most likely to see in magazines (Krugman & King, 2000) and these are the brands they are most likely to use if they begin smoking (Centers for Disease Control, 1994). Like the Barbeau and colleagues study (1998), Study 2 examined responses to a wide variety of aspects of the Cigarette Advertising and Promotion Code, but for a wider age range than in the Barbeau and colleagues study, including both adolescents and adults. Unlike the Barbeau and colleagues study, questions in Study 2 used language taken directly from the Code, rather than using similar language and inferring Code violations from the responses.

The research questions for the present studies were as follows:

1. Do people judge the ages of models in cigarette ads to be under 25? Are some ads seen as depicting smoking as essential to sexual attraction? Are some ads seen as depicting smoking as essential to success? Are some ads seen as depicting physical activity requiring stamina and athletic conditioning beyond normal recreation?
2. Are the judgments on these questions different for adolescents than for adults? For smokers than for nonsmokers? For males than females? For "youth brands" than for "adult brands"?

The method and results for each of the two studies will be presented, followed by a general discussion.

Method, Study 1

Participants

Data were collected on adolescents in two states, Arizona and Washington. In Arizona, the participants were 200 adolescents ages 12-17. There were 99 males and 101 females. Data from half the participants in Arizona were collected in Phoenix, and from the other half in Tucson. Seventy-five percent of the participants in Arizona were White, 13% Latino, 4% African American, and 8% other ethnic groups. In the state of Washington, the participants were also 200 adolescents ages 12-17. There were 89 males and 111 females. Data from half of the adolescents in Washington were collected in Seattle, and from the other half in Spokane. Among

the adolescents in Washington, 80% were White, 5% Asian American, 5% Latino, 3% African American, and 7% other ethnic groups.

Socioeconomic status, as measured by mother's educational attainment, varied widely among participants in both states. For the two states combined, 28% of adolescents had mothers with a high school education or less, 21% had mothers with some post-high school education but short of a college degree, 36% had mothers with a college degree, and 15% had mothers with post-college education.

Procedure

Data were collected in public places, mainly shopping malls. People who appeared to be in the target age range were approached and asked if they would be willing to take part in the study. Once it was confirmed that potential participants met the age criterion, they were offered a \$10 voucher toward purchases at a mall music store in return for their participation. In both Arizona and Washington, more than 80% of the adolescents who were approached agreed to participate. The questionnaire took about 15–20 minutes to complete. All data were collected by research assistants who were blind to the purposes and hypotheses of the study.

Measures

The first part of the questionnaire contained various questions on background information, including questions about smoking behavior and attitudes, with most of the items taken from previous studies (Pierce, Choi, Gilpin, Farkas, & Berry, 1998). Smoking/nonsmoking status was measured by asking participants whether or not they had smoked one or more cigarettes within the past 30 days. This is a measure of smoking status used frequently in research on smoking (U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, 1994).

The second part of the questionnaire asked for participants' responses to various cigarette advertisements. Research assistants presented participants with two magazine advertisements for each of the five brands most likely to be smoked by adolescents aged 12–17: Marlboro, Newport, Camel, Kool, and Winston. The determination of the five top "youth brands" was based on national data from the Centers for Disease Control (1994). The ads were selected to be representative of the ad campaigns currently running for each brand.

Participants were also shown a magazine ad for an adult comparison brand, Merit. Merit was chosen as the adult comparison brand because it has been identified as a brand that has substantially more market share among adults than among adolescents (King et al., 1998; Pollay et al., 1996). Merit was also the adult brand most advertised in the magazines from which the ads for this study were selected. Ads were taken from magazines on the newsstands in May 1998. In the 11 ads shown, there was a total of 15 models.

The ads can be described briefly as follows:

Marlboro A: Cowboy crouched by camp fire lighting cigarette from burning stick. No caption.

Marlboro B: Cowboy on horse herding other horses. No caption.

Newport A: Male and female climbing artificial rock wall. Caption: "Newport Pleasure! Fire it up!"

Newport B: Three African Americans, male in hot tub while male and female outside of hot tub slap hands. Caption: "Newport Pleasure! Fire it up!"

Camel A: "Farmer's daughter" scene—young man running out of house with unbuttoned shirt chased by old farmer with gun; blonde woman can be seen through window, in bed. Caption: "Mighty Tasty!"

Camel B: Woman holding martini, legs crossed. Caption: "What you're looking for."

Kool A: Hand holding cigarette. Caption: "Nu Look."

Kool B: Woman in bar looking at man holding cigarette and pack of Kools. Caption: "B Kool."

Winston A: Dark-haired, bare-shouldered woman looks out at viewer. Caption: "Do blondes have more fun? If you can find a real one, ask her."

Winston B: Woman holding cigarette looks out at viewer. Caption: "Yeah, I got a tattoo. And no, you can't see it."

Merit: Woman in rocking chair on porch. Caption: "You can do it!"

Results, Study 1

Table 1 shows the percentage of adolescents who perceived the models in the cigarette ads as less than 25 years old. Of the 14 models in the ads for the five youth brands (i.e., not including Merit), 6 were perceived by a majority of adolescents as

Table 1. Perceived ages of models, study 1

Ad/model	% perceiving model as less than 25 years old
Marlboro A/male	12
Marlboro B/male	7
Newport A/male	56
Newport A/female	69
Newport B/female	70
Newport B/male1	34
Newport B/male2	40
Camel A/female	45
Camel A/male1	82
Camel A/male2	2
Camel B/female	48
Kool B/female	55
Winston A/female	64
Winston B/female	46
Merit/female	31

being less than 25 years old, and 4 others were perceived by at least 40% as being less than 25 years old. In contrast, the model in the ad for the adult brand, Merit, was perceived by only 31% of participants as being less than 25 years old. Except for Marlboro, all the youth brands depicted at least one model who was perceived by a majority of adolescents as being less than 25 years old.

Logistic regression analyses were conducted to assess whether perceptions of models being under age 25 were related to participants' age, gender, socioeconomic status (SES, represented by mother's education), state (Arizona or Washington), and smoking status (smoker [at least one cigarette in past 30 days] or nonsmoker). Few significant relations were found, and no consistent patterns. For age and gender, none of the analyses was significant. For SES, for the Marlboro B ad higher SES was related to seeing the (male) model as younger (odds ratio = .64, $p < .05$), and for the Merit ad lower SES was related to seeing the (female) model as younger (odds ratio = 1.26, $p < .05$). For state, for the Marlboro B ad Washington adolescents perceived the (male) model as younger than Arizona adolescents did (odds ratio = .34, $p < .05$). For smoking status, for the Camel B ad smokers perceived the (female) model as younger than nonsmokers did (odds ratio = .51, $p < .01$).

Study 2 was conducted to replicate the findings of Study 1 and extend them by including adults as well as adolescents and by asking additional questions about issues related to the Code.

Participants

There were, 1701 participants, including 597 adolescents (ages 11–17) and 1,101 adults (ages 18 and over). Adolescents were oversampled because comparisons between adolescents and adults were of special interest. There were 955 females and 728 males. The ethnic distribution of the sample was as follows: 812 White, 197 Black, 278 Asian American, 242 Latino, 15 Native American, and 143 other. There was a wide range of SES backgrounds in the sample. Among the adults, 24% had a high school degree or less, and 39% had a college degree or more. Among the adolescents, 37% had mothers with a high school degree or less, and 36% had mothers with a college degree or more.

Procedure

The study took place in eight cities in California, four in Northern California and four in Southern California. Data were collected during April–October 2002. Participants were approached in public places (mostly shopping malls) and asked to fill out a questionnaire in return for a gift certificate to a local book, music, or clothing store. The participation rate was over 80% of those approached. The research assistants collecting the data were blind to the purposes and hypotheses of the study.

Measures

Participants filled out background information on the first part of the questionnaire, including various questions concerning smoking. Then they were shown a series of 16 cigarette print advertisements. The ads were selected to represent the ad campaigns

for the major brands of each of the major tobacco companies during the period from the early 1990s through 2001, including "youth brands" as well as "adult brands." The ads can be described briefly as follows:

Camel A: Buxom blonde woman reclines on pillows, smiling, smoking cigarette and talking on cell phone but looking outward toward viewer. Caption: "Pleasure to Burn."

Camel B: Joe Camel and camel friend drive along smoking in red convertible with top down. One camel extends cigarette pack toward ad viewer as if offering a cigarette.

Carlton: Smiling man declares, "I switched to lowest tar" and goes on to explain virtues of smoking Carlton.

Eve: Couple smile, smoke and drink coffee at dining room table. Caption: "Who says length doesn't matter?"

Kent: Woman in bathing suit, smoking, looks out toward viewer. Caption: "Long Lean Light."

Kool: Woman in short skirt sitting in convertible looks at man holding pack of Kools as her male companion pumps gas.

Kool Natural: Pack of Kool Naturals with leaf. Caption: "No artificial flavors added to tobacco. Always a smooth, fresh taste." No human figures.

Lucky Strike: Blonde waitress in short, slit black skirt awaits order of man in denim jacket sitting at table smoking. Caption: "An American Original."

Newport A: Man and woman climb large boulder with rope. Caption: "Alive with pleasure!"

Newport B: Two women and man play water volleyball in pool. Caption: "Newport Pleasure! Fire It Up!"

Marlboro: Cowboy on horseback leads horse and foal at sunset. Cowboy is in shadow; face not visible. No caption.

Merrit: Smiling woman in rocking chair on porch. Caption: "You know it! Smooth, satisfying taste in ultra-low tar? It's true!"

Parliament: Woman in bathing suit reclines by pool as man in bathing suit approaches. Caption: "Perfect Recess."

Virginia Slims: Woman sits at desk writing on pad, looking up and smiling. Caption: "Some days I need a closet organizer just for my thoughts."

Winston A: Nerd in horn-rimmed glasses sits on brick wall while long-haired blonde in short skirt smoking cigarette drapes her legs over one of his legs.

Caption: "At least when I wake up, my smokes will be real."

Winston B: Print ad proclaiming "No Additives/True taste" and other claims about additives.

For each of the 16 ads they were shown, participants responded to a series of questions. The focus of the present paper is on the questions that pertained to the Code, specifically:

- What would you say is the *age* of the person(s) in the ad?
- Do you think the ad suggests that smoking is essential to sexual attraction?
- Do you think the ad suggests that smoking is essential to success?
- Do you think the ad shows a person participating in a physical activity requiring athletic conditioning beyond that of normal recreation?

For each question except the question pertaining to age, the possible responses were "yes, very much," "yes, somewhat," "no, not very much," and "no, not at all." The question pertaining to age was asked for all but 3 ads. Of the 3 ads for which this question was not asked, 2 were print only and had no human figures, and for one (Marlboro) the human figure was shadowed and the face was not visible. Some ads had more than one person, so there was a total of 20 models in the ads for whom participants judged ages.

The other questions were asked for ads for which the question appeared to be a reasonable hypothesis. Thus the question on sexual attraction was asked for 9 ads, the question on success for 5 ads, and the question on physical activity for 1 ad. The language used in these questions was taken verbatim from the Code.

Results, Study 2

Participants' perceptions of the ages of the models in Study 2 are shown in Table 2. Of the 10 models in ads for the 5 youth brands, 8 were perceived by the majority of the adolescents (participants under age 18) to be less than 25 years old, and 7 were perceived by the majority of adults (participants age 18 and over) to be less than 25 years old. Virginia Slims is a brand that is difficult to classify as either a youth brand or an adult brand. It has less overall market share among smokers under age 18 than any of the 5 youth brands, but among females alone—the sex to which the brand is clearly targeted—it has greater market share among smokers under age 18 than

Table 2. Perceived ages of models, study 2

Ad/model	% perceiving model as less than 25 years old		
	Total	Under 18	Over 18
Newport A/male	70	72	69
Newport A/female ¹	78	78	79
Newport A/female ²	80	81	80
Newport B/female	27	28	26
Newport B/male	25	24	25
Camel A/female	49	59	41
Camel B/cartoon camels	69	63	73
Kool/female	66	68	64
Winston/female	74	76	73
Winston/male	75	71	76
Virginia Slims/female	54	55	54
Carlton/male	5	5	5
Parliament/female	50	57	46
Parliament/male	39	45	36
Merit/female	19	22	17
Eve/female	6	8	4
Eve/male	5	8	4
Kent/female	35	43	31
Lucky Strike/female	62	64	62
Lucky Strike/male	30	37	26

either Winston or Kool (King et al., 1998). For this brand, a majority of both adolescents and adults judged the model to be less than 25 years old. With regard to the 9 models for the 6 adult brands, adolescents perceived 2 of the 9 models to be less than 25 years old, and adults perceived 1 of the 9 models to be less than 25 years old.

Logistic regression analyses were conducted to assess whether perceptions of models being under age 25 were related to participants' age category (under 18 compared with 18 or over), SES (mother's educational attainment for adolescents, participant's educational attainment for adults), gender, ethnic group, and smoking status (smoker [at least one cigarette in past 30 days] or nonsmoker). Ethnic group was not significant for any of the analyses. For SES, persons of lower SES were more likely to perceive the models as less than 25 years old for Eye/female (odds ratio = 1.31, $p < .01$), Eye/male (odds ratio = 1.22, $p < .05$), and Newport B/male (odds ratio = 1.10, $p < .05$). For gender, there was no consistent pattern. Females were more likely than males to perceive the models as less than 25 years old for Camel B (odds ratio = .72, $p < .01$), Newport B/female2 (odds ratio = .74, $p < .05$), and Virginia Slims (odds ratio = .78, $p < .05$), but males were more likely than females to perceive the models as less than 25 years old for Carlton (odds ratio = 1.94, $p < .01$), Eye/female (odds ratio = 1.90, $p < .01$), Eye/male (odds ratio = 2.59, $p < .001$), and Merit (odds ratio = 1.72, $p < .001$).

The pattern was more consistent for participants' age. Adolescents were more likely than adults to perceive the models as less than 25 years old for Camel A (odds ratio = 2.08, $p < .001$), Eye/female (odds ratio = 2.09, $p < .01$), Eye/male (odds ratio = 2.82, $p < .001$), Kent (odds ratio = 1.92, $p < .001$), Lucky Strike/male (odds ratio = 1.64, $p < .001$), Merit (odds ratio = 1.41, $p < .05$), Parliament/female (odds ratio = 1.66, $p < .001$), and Parliament/male (odds ratio = 1.54, $p < .001$). Only for Camel B (the Joe Camel ad) were adults more likely than adolescents to perceive the models as less than 25 years old (odds ratio = .58, $p < .001$). Results were also consistent for smoking status. Smoking status was significant for three of the analyses, including Camel A (odds ratio = .69, $p < .01$), Kent (odds ratio = .71, $p < .01$), and Parliament/male (odds ratio = .77, $p < .05$). For all three, smokers were more likely than nonsmokers to perceive the models as less than 25 years old.

Perceptions of whether the ads were perceived as portraying smoking as essential to sexual attraction are shown in Table 3. For 8 of the 9 ads for which this question was asked, a majority of participants believed the ads portrayed smoking as essential to sexual attraction. Responses were similar for adolescents and adults. Table 4 shows the percentage of participants who perceived the ads as portraying smoking as essential to success. For the 5 ads for which this question was asked, from 41% to 54% of participants believed the ads portrayed smoking as essential to success. Again, responses were similar for adolescents and adults. For the question concerning whether the Newport A ad depicted 'a person participating in a physical activity requiring athletic conditioning beyond that of normal recreation,' 79% responded 'yes, very much' or 'yes, somewhat' (70% adolescents, 84% adults).

Linear regression analyses were conducted to examine the 'essential sexual attraction,' 'essential to success,' and 'physical activity' variables in relation to age category, gender, ethnic group, SES, and smoking status (Table 5). For several of the ads, adults were more likely than adolescents and females were more likely than males to view the ads as depicting smoking as essential to sexual attraction, essential to success, or requiring physical activity beyond normal recreation.

Table 3. Perceptions of whether ads portray smoking as essential to sexual attraction

Ad	Total	Under 18	Over 18
Newport A	40	37	42
Newport B	53	50	54
Camel A	84	83	85
Kool	73	75	73
Winston	62	63	62
Parliament	73	74	71
Eve	61	59	62
Kent	72	69	73
Lucky Strike	76	74	78

Note. The numbers indicate the percentages of participants who responded either "Yes, very much" or "Yes, somewhat."

Table 4. Perceptions of whether ads portray smoking as essential to success

Ad	Total	Under 18	Over 18
Camel A	45	46	45
Camel B	51	52	51
Merit	41	42	39
Parliament	54	47	58
Eve	49	48	49

Note. The numbers indicate the percentages of participants who responded either "Yes, very much" or "Yes, somewhat."

Discussion

The tobacco industry has long touted the Cigarette Advertising and Promotion Code as evidence that they have pledged to restrict their advertising in various ways that would demonstrate that they do not target youth in their advertising. The studies presented here show that pledge to be an empty one. In their ads for the brands most likely to be smoked by youth (under 18 years old), the tobacco companies repeatedly have violated the standards they set for themselves. Despite immense public criticism and a decade of litigation that has cost the companies hundreds of billions of dollars in settlements, litigation in which youth targeting has often been a central issue (Cumming, 2002), they have shown that the urge to promote their products to youth has proven irresistible.

Violations of the Code were evident in perceptions of the ages of the models in the ads. Despite the Code's promise that "No one depicted in cigarette advertising shall be *or appear to be* under 25 years of age" (emphasis added), the studies here show that many of the models in cigarette ads for the most popular "youth brands" are perceived by most people to be under 25 years old. In Study 1, of the 14 models in ads for youth brands, 6 were perceived by a majority of adolescents as being less than 25 years old, and 4 others were perceived by at least 40% as being less than 25 years old. In Study 2, of the 10 models in the ads for youth brands, 8 were perceived by most adolescents and 7 by most adults as under 25 years old.

Table 5. Regression analyses for "essential to sexual attraction," "essential to success," and "physical activity"

Ad	Age	Gender	Ethnic	SES	Smoking	R ²
Essential to sexual attraction						
Camel A	-.06*	-.10***	.01	.01	.06*	.01***
Eye	-.02	-.03	.01	-.05	.04	.03***
Kent	-.03	-.09***	.01	-.03	.01	.01**
Kool	-.02	-.09***	.01	-.01	.06*	.01***
Lucky Strike	-.05*	-.08**	.03	-.04	.01	.01**
Newport A	-.08**	-.03	-.02	-.03	.03	.01*
Newport B	-.05	-.05*	-.02	.07**	.01	.01*
Parliament	-.07**	-.12***	-.01	-.02	.07**	.02***
Winston	.01	-.05	-.02	.03	.07*	.01*
Essential to success						
Camel A	-.01	.02	.01	.01	.06*	.01
Camel B	.01	.04	.01	-.04	-.01	.01
Eve	-.02	-.03	.01	-.05	.04	.01
Merit	-.03	.04	.02	-.04	.05	.01
Parliament	-.10***	-.01	-.01	-.06*	.02	.02***
Requiring physical activity						
Newport A	-.18***	-.07**	-.03	-.11***	-.01	.05***

Note. The numbers in the first five columns are the beta weights; the last column shows the R-squared for the total equation. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

These findings are consistent with previous studies (Barbeau et al., 1998; Mazis et al., 1992) indicating that many cigarette ads feature models who appear to be less than 25 years old, especially ads for youth brands. Advertisers often depict representatives of their target market in their ads; that is, they tend to depict people in the group they hope will buy their product. By repeatedly depicting models who appear to be under 25 years old, despite the pledge made in the Code, the tobacco companies demonstrate that their target is youth (Cummings, 2002; Pollay et al., 1996).

The results also show that the depiction of young models in ads for youth brands is not simply a consequence of the fact that people generally find younger models more attractive than older models. In the ads for the adult brands, such as Merit, Eye, and Carlton, few people perceived the models as less than 25 years old. Those brands are clearly targeted toward adults, usually promising lower tar and nicotine than other brands in an effort to encourage brand switching by addicted smokers, and consequently the models they depict are also clearly adults. Some brands in this study usually regarded as adult brands, notably Lucky Strike and Parliament, did feature models who appeared to a sizable proportion of participants to be under 25, perhaps indicating an effort to reposition these brands as youth brands.

Violations of the Code were also evident in responses to questions about whether the ads depicted smoking as essential to sexual attraction or essential to success. For 8 of 9 ads, a majority of participants believed the ads depicted smoking as essential to sexual attraction, and about half of participants believed that 5 ads depicted smoking as essential to success. A majority also believed that the Newport A ad depicted "a person participating in a physical activity requiring athletic conditioning beyond

that of normal recreation," in another violation of the Code. One might reasonably wonder, if these characteristics of the ads are evident to the majority of persons who view them, why were they not evident to the tobacco company executives who made the decisions to run the ads even though their companies were pledged to the Cigarette Advertising and Promotion Code?

For the most part, the results of the studies were consistent across gender, age, SES, ethnic groups, state of residence, and smoking status (smoker or nonsmoker). Adults were more likely than adolescents, however to view some of the ads as depicting smoking as essential to sexual attraction or essential to success. This suggests that adults have more advanced cognitive capacities than adolescents for discerning the manipulative potential of the ads.

Public Policy Implications

The results of these studies show that, despite their public vows, the tobacco companies continue to present advertisements that appear to be targeted toward youth. The Cigarette Advertising and Promotion Code, in its statement of various restrictions, implicitly acknowledges that ads violating those restrictions could be construed as evidence of youth targeting. By violating the Code repeatedly in their advertising, the tobacco companies have shown that industry self-regulation does not work (Pollay, 1994; Richards et al., 1996). Their internal documents show that they recognize that virtually all persons who smoke start at a young age, usually around age 14, and quickly establish brand loyalty that often lasts for many years (Cummings, 2002). The tobacco companies have proven unable to resist the temptation to target youth in their advertising, because it is clear that is where the money is (Cohen, 2000). A company that succeeds in appealing to young people and persuading them to smoke its brand succeeds not only when the young person is 14, but when they are 24 and 34 and perhaps beyond. From a public policy perspective, the only solution to the tobacco industry's perennial targeting of youth in their advertising is to ban all tobacco advertising or restrict it to adults-only venues.

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