Tobacco Industry Denormalization Campaigns:
A Review and Evaluation

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INTRODUCTION

It is estimated that over 45,000 deaths per year in Canada can be attributed to tobacco use, making smoking the leading cause of death and illness.[1] Since the negative health effects of smoking were first documented in the mid-1950s and confirmed in the 1960s, there have been numerous Canadian campaigns to reduce tobacco consumption. These have contributed, in varying degrees, to a significant reduction in smoking rates in Canada between the 1960s and the 1990s.

However, there is still an alarming proportion of the Canadian population that smokes. The National Population Health Survey reports that 25% of Canadian women and 30% of men age 12 and over were daily or occasional smokers.[2] Of major concern is that smokers are disproportionately found in lower socioeconomic brackets, as smoking rates are inversely related to education and income. Smoking rates among women and men in the highest income quintile were 13% and 16% respectively, in contrast to rates of 36% and 40% for the lowest income quintile. Therefore, individuals who smoke are often those who can least financially afford this expensive habit. As a result, negative health effects of smoking are disproportionately experienced by individuals in lower socioeconomic groups.

Given the addictive nature of tobacco, many young people who begin to smoke find themselves unable to quit. This means there is a significant benefit to be gained by discouraging young people from beginning to smoke. Smoking prevention campaigns can effectively reduce the rate of youth smoking. Since few smokers begin after the age of 18, teen smoking prevention campaigns effectively reduce adult smoking rates over time as the youth cohort ages.

While many teens and adult smokers express a desire to quit smoking, they find that they must try to quit a number of times before they can do so successfully, due to the addictive nature of tobacco. Effective anti-tobacco campaigns can support and encourage smokers in their efforts to quit.

The Government of Canada will invest over $480 million in Health Canada's Tobacco Control Strategy over the next five years. The funding will include $210 million to be allocated to mass-media campaigns which have a special emphasis on youth and other high-risk populations.[3]

Part of this mass media campaign will include a tobacco denormalization component. This report will discuss tobacco denormalization campaigns, with a particular focus on tobacco industry denormalization campaigns.

DEFINING DENORMALIZATION

In a 1999 report, I defined tobacco denormalization very generally as follows:

> *"Denormalization of tobacco can be described as all the programs and actions undertaken to reinforce the fact that tobacco use is not (and should not be) a mainstream or normal activity in our society. . . . The primary job of a successful denormalization strategy, however, should be to further reduce the percentage of people who smoke. This can be achieved by urging current smokers to quit, and thereby conform with the smoke free majority. As well, adolescents and young adults can be targeted with smoking prevention messages, urging them not to take up the smoking habit."* [4]

This broad definition of denormalization suggests that many campaigns undertaken in Canada in the past could be characterized as denormalization campaigns. For example, the Break Free campaign of the 1980s tried to depict non-smoking as being normal behaviour for teens, thereby subtly denormalizing tobacco use.[5] These types of efforts could be termed *social denormalization* of tobacco.

In general, tobacco denormalization activities are important for several reasons:
- They can help to develop a set of values and behaviours that bring community members together to reinforce desirable behaviour and attitudes.
- They can help make tobacco an issue of general community concern, rather than just an issue for those using tobacco products.
- They can help ensure that people behave in appropriate ways – including making efforts to quit – without the need for policing or enforcement.
- They can help generate public support for broader public health policy in the face of tobacco industry challenges.[6]

Comprehensive tobacco control strategies that incorporate denormalization focus on changing smoking behaviour at the population level through strategies that alter the social environment.[7]

Lately there has been significant interest in denormalization campaigns that specifically target the tobacco industry. Within this report, these will be termed *tobacco industry denormalization campaigns*, to distinguish them from campaigns that more generally denormalize smoking behaviour. The objective of these tobacco industry denormalization campaigns is to point out negative traits of the tobacco industry, including the opportunistic, manipulative, mendacious, and unethical activities in which the tobacco industry engages. This educates both smokers and non-smokers about the motives and tactics of the tobacco industry.

A June 16, 1999 news release from Health Canada succinctly describes the usefulness of tobacco industry denormalization ads:

> *"Traditionally, anti-smoking social marketing activities have been directed at informing Canadians of health effects and making smoking a less socially accepted behaviour. However, there is strong evidence from the United States that 'industry denormalization' campaigns, which draw attention to the marketing strategies and tactics of the tobacco industry, are also highly effective tobacco control tools. Evaluations of 'denormalization'*

campaigns in California have found that such advertisements are particularly effective in redirecting the guilt that smokers often feel, channelling it instead into anger at being manipulated. To be effective, these campaigns must be hard hitting: they need to make people stop and think." [8]

In the report entitled *New Directions for Tobacco Control in Canada*, Health Canada has described this tobacco industry denormalization as follows:

"Denormalization refers to the activities undertaken specifically to reposition tobacco products and the tobacco industry consistent with the addictive and hazardous nature of tobacco products, the health, social and economic burden resulting from the use of tobacco, and practices undertaken by the industry to promote its products and create social goodwill towards the industry." [9]

The afore-mentioned report further suggests that there is:

"emerging interest in taking actions directed specifically at the tobacco industry. Recent access to thousands of tobacco industry documents has created public awareness about the strategies and tactics of the tobacco industry. In the United States, for example, specifically questions arise as to how young smokers are recruited. Accordingly, it is appropriate to examine how the tobacco industry has dealt with Canadians and whether they have exhibited fair play or responsible corporate conduct." [10]

The *New Directions* report outlines the four goals of the Renewed Tobacco Control Strategy, which are Prevention, Cessation, Protection, and Denormalization. In this context, denormalization is described as being:

"Educating Canadians about the marketing strategies and tactics of the tobacco industry and the effects the industry's products have on the health of Canadians in order that social attitudes are consistent with the hazardous, addictive nature of tobacco and industry products." [11]

This fairly narrow view of denormalization might more correctly be termed *tobacco industry denormalization*.

As described in Appendix C of the report entitled *New Directions for Tobacco Control in Canada*, this tobacco industry denormalization activity can be used to draw attention to the way the tobacco industry operates. In a speech given on January 18, 1999, the Federal Minister for Health stated that we need to look at:

"ideas that might help us in our work in the Canadian context to counterbalance the steady flow of images that make smoking seem natural and desirable when it is anything but. It's also going to be about informing Canadians of the marketing tactics used by the tobacco industry to recruit new smokers." [12]

The *New Directions* report describes how tobacco industry denormalization could help build public support for tobacco control measures and public concern about the tobacco industry, through activities including:

- Deglamorizing the use of tobacco products;
- Combating myths about tobacco products (for example, that light and mild products are

safer or can help you quit);
- Drawing attention to the size and impact of tobacco industry advertising budgets, and the nature of their promotional activities;
- Drawing attention to the role of other industries and organizations in supporting the promotion and sale of tobacco.[13]

Tobacco industry denormalization campaigns can reduce the social acceptability of smoking by highlighting the tobacco industry's overt attempts to *increase* social acceptability of smoking. Parodying well-known cigarette advertising figures, such as Joe Camel and the Marlboro Man, results in educating consumers about how tobacco companies use advertising to increase the social acceptability of smoking.

A tobacco industry denormalization approach may be effective in discouraging teens from starting to smoke, since teens would become aware of being overtly manipulated by the tobacco industry. The idea is that in order to avoid being manipulated, teens would avoid smoking or quit smoking. It may also give adult smokers an added incentive to quit, since they, too, would wish to avoid the appearance of being manipulated by the tobacco industry.

For many years, health advocates have been promoting the power of tobacco counteradvertising, *"a strategy that relies on the techniques and imagery of conventional product advertising to sell a health message." Such advertising may be "parodying cigarette ad themes, ... such as DOC's 'Emphysema Slims.'"*[14]

According to Dorfman and Wallack (1993), the most effective counter-advertisements are those that:

> *"challenge the legitimacy and credibility of the industry marketing the product. These are counter-ads, because they represent a clear transfer from the personal to the policy environment and focus on the corporate entity or public policy as a major player in that environment."*[15]

It is also important to note that much of *"the power of counter-ads may be in the controversy they generate."*[16] Controversial ads garner the attention of the news media. Newspaper articles and television news reports get the public talking about the issues. This media coverage can magnify the exposure of the original commercial messages, helping to reach a larger number of people in an effective manner. This aspect of media attention provides even greater support for the idea of using tobacco industry denormalization ads.

Many campaigns of the past lacked sufficient budgets to promote counteradvertising or industry denormalization themes. However, a number of States have come to understand the benefit of spending money on media campaigns to denormalize tobacco use, as the following sections on State campaigns outline.

ARIZONA CAMPAIGN

Arizona passed Proposition 200 in November 1994, which increased the cigarette excise tax by 40 cents in order to provide revenues to fund a statewide tobacco education and prevention program.[17] The campaign was limited to focusing on youth and pregnant women, and included a marketing campaign, community-based projects, an information clearinghouse, and a tobacco cessation helpline.[18] In 1998, the campaign expanded to include adult cessation messages.[19]

The tag line for the Arizona campaign was the "Tumor-Causing, Teeth-Staining, Smelly, Puking Habit," a catchy, in-your-face phrase which drew extensive attention from the news media during the campaign launch. This phrase was placed on promotional items such as T-shirts, hats, CD cases, posters, etc., and over 400,000 of these logo items have been sold. Overall, recognition of the campaign was very high and the slogan was recalled by 66% of adults and 61% of youth without any prompting.[20]

While the tobacco industry is not being directly attacked with this slogan, the smoking habit certainly comes under attack, and the approach is an effective means of social denormalization.

Because of the political climate in Arizona, no tobacco industry denormalization ads were allowed to run in this campaign.[21]

During concept development for the Arizona campaign, a tobacco industry denormalization theme was tested. This concept research found that adolescents did not seem to feel their smoking behaviour or smoking uptake would be influenced or affected by the statement, *"The tobacco industry is manipulating you to get your business."*[22] However, it seems possible that this lack of perceived effectiveness may be due to the wording of the phrase *"manipulating you"* – most youth feel invulnerable and would likely not believe that they themselves are being manipulated, although they may believe that the tobacco industry is capable of manipulating other people they know.[23]

CALIFORNIA CAMPAIGN

In 1988, California voters passed Proposition 99, a ballot initiative that called for adding a 25-cent tax on each pack of cigarettes sold, to be used to fund tobacco control activities, including the Tobacco Education Media Campaign (TEMC).[24][25][26] The TEMC utilizes hard-hitting paid advertising and public service announcements on television, radio, billboards, transit, and print. Thought-provoking messages communicate with teens and adults about the dangers of tobacco use, secondhand smoke, and the tobacco industry's manipulative marketing ploys. To reach California's diverse communities and cultures, the campaign supplements the general market advertising with in-language and culturally relevant advertising directed toward Hispanic/ Latinos, Asians and Pacific Islanders, and African Americans. New initiatives directed at Native Americans are in the planning stage.

Tobacco companies have been active in trying to defeat or water down Proposition 99, by lobbying the support of key California legislators.[27][28] For example, a January 1991 memo from RJ Reynolds demonstrates the company had a strategy that targeted key legislators for the purpose of shifting money away from the TEMC. Components of the strategy included the launching of a campaign to portray the industry as capable of acting *"in a socially responsible manner, thereby reducing the need for stringent State financed Prop 99 programs."*[29] The memo went on to state that:

> *"The California campaign, and those like it, represents a very real threat to the industry in the intermediate term."* (emphasis in the original)[30]

From 1989 through 1999, California invested approximately $161 million of Proposition 99 funds in the TEMC. The level of funding has varied over the course of the program.[31] In recent years, the annual funding level has been about $25 million, which is less than 5% of what the tobacco industry spends on advertising and promotion in California.[32]

The results of this campaign have been excellent, with significant declines in smoking prevalence. Smoking rates in California are currently among the lowest in the United States.[33][34][35][36][37]

California labels its approach as being *"social norm change,"* which is analogous to denormalization.[38] The social norm change model is based on trying to:

> *"change the broad social norms around using tobacco – to push tobacco use out of the charmed circle of normal, desirable practice to being an abnormal practice; in short, to denormalize smoking and other tobacco use. Such an effort must engage everyone, non-smokers as well as smokers. Evaluation results indicate that this approach is working in California . . . . The durability, depth, and breadth of the change are major strengths of denormalization. Although social norm change requires time as well as an unflagging and comprehensive effort, it endures and affects every member of society, including youth. Although the strategy is effective with youth as well as adults, it is adults that control and have the power to influence the community's social norms. Kids are indoctrinated into, and inherit, their community. ... In keeping with the social norm change model, the 'next generation' cannot be saved without changing the generations who have already reached*

adulthood. Youth smoking will decline when more adults stop smoking".[39]

With regard to the use of a media campaign, California makes the following points:

- *California's statewide media campaign is a key component of the program. It is a multi-million dollar paid television, radio, billboard and print advertising campaign that frames and supports the program's priority areas. It is focused on environmental rather than individual change, in keeping with the overall strategy of denormalizing tobacco use.*
- *Although the campaign is a key piece, media alone will not change norms or behavior. Alternatively, a program without media has no way to grab the public's attention and influence public opinion. Media is a necessary but not sufficient element of a comprehensive program. This fact cannot be over-emphasized.*
- *Media gives visibility to the larger campaign; in California, it is the primary way that tobacco issues are kept at the forefront of most people's awareness.*
- *Media frames the issues for the program and starts people talking about them. In this way, it supports the local tobacco control initiatives.*[40]

The strategy of countering pro-tobacco influence plays a major role in the media campaign in California, accounting for 34% of media spending in 1997-98.[41] By way of comparison, ETS messages accounted for 44%, while cessation/prevention messages accounted for 20% of the media spending.

Right from the outset, tobacco industry denormalization played a role in the California campaign, described as:

"a direct and uncompromising effort to expose the tobacco industry as a very powerful, deceptive, and dangerous enemy of the public's health. The Program made the tobacco industry's predatory marketing to youth and its deceitful denials of the addictive and destructive nature of its products a public issue that needed to be addressed. This was the first recorded instance of a major government agency taking a strong anti-industry stance against this behemoth, and shedding much-needed light on the industry's overt, covert, and ubiquitous influence throughout the public and private sectors of American society.[42]

The purpose of the industry denormalization campaign is:

"to raise people's awareness of the tobacco industry for tobacco-related disease, and to expose the industry's manipulative tactics (as with the 'Invasion of the Tobacco People' radio ad, which exposed the presence of tobacco industry 'hired guns' brought in to oppose local efforts to address the secondhand smoke issue). . . . New ads must be in constant development, and should use the latest legitimate facts and figures -- for example, quotes from tobacco industry documents"[43]

There is an extensive rationale among California's documents that explains the need for countering pro-tobacco influences:

"The tobacco industry maintains a pervasive influence in the communities of every state in the nation. As the sole promoter of tobacco sales and addiction to tobacco, the tobacco industry is responsible for the disease and death its products wreak. No products kill

more people, and no products are more profitable. To maximize and continue to reap these profits, the tobacco industry persists in promoting its products even though it is fully aware that tobacco, used as intended, kills half a million people each year in this country. For profit, the industry has stooped to many unconscionable business practices disclosed in industry documents made public as a result of recent litigation.

For profit, the industry invests billions of dollars in public relations and product advertising and promotion to maintain the social acceptability of its products and their use. For profit, it makes generous campaign contributions, lobbies lawmakers to prevent meaningful regulation of tobacco, sponsors community events and cultural and entertainment activities, and donates to philanthropic causes. For profit, it aggressively markets its products to youth, secures child-view-level placement of its products in retail stores close to schools, distributes Trojan horse tobacco educational materials to schools and parents, and pays for the main characters in movies to smoke.

The tobacco industry is not just fighting for the legal right to go on selling addictive and lethal consumer products – without additional regulation or taxation. It is also fighting to maintain the public's indifference to the fact that this is what it is doing. A tobacco control program should strenuously counter these efforts; it must point a finger, cite wrongs, and name names."[44]

According to Colleen Stevens,

"Exposing tobacco industry manipulation and countering pro-tobacco influences at the community level have been essential to the success of California's program. ... Our strategy to expose the tobacco industry tactics reframed the issue from 'smokers versus nonsmokers' to both 'smokers and nonsmokers need protection from tobacco industry manipulation.'"[45]

With regard to the youth market, the California campaign explains the following:

"California's Program is built around changing social norms so that tobacco use is viewed negatively by everyone in a community. Therefore, the Program does not concentrate on youth as a primary target group. The goal is to build a social environment where families don't use tobacco, and the adults are positive role models for youth. The Program's media campaign uses some ads aimed at a youth audience, but by emphasizing the tobacco industry's manipulation and exploitation of youth, they complement the anti-industry messages in the general market ads."[46]

Revealing and countering tobacco industry influence has played only one part in California's campaign. The multi-pronged California campaign has also focused on protecting people from exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke, reducing youth access to tobacco products, and providing cessation services. It supports the media campaign with an array of services and projects, including a clearinghouse of tobacco control materials, technical assistance and training for local tobacco control programs, a tobacco-use cessation help-line, school-based programs, local smoking restriction by-laws, etc.[47]

This California campaign has been highly successful in reducing tobacco consumption, reducing smoking uptake, and increasing quitting and quit attempts. A report on the 1990-91 campaign in

California showed that 6.7% of smokers were influenced to quit by an advertisement they had seen or heard on radio, television, or billboards, and 34.3% indicated that the media campaign had played a part in their decision to quit.[48] Additionally, the 1990-1991 campaign appeared to have a positive impact in terms of reducing youth smoking prevalence.[49] Results from a 1996-98 independent Gallup study found that the campaign had very high levels of recall (over 90% among all target groups), and in some cases specific commercials were recalled even a year after last being aired.[50] Of particular interest from these independent studies are the following points:

♦ Adults who remembered more ads emphasizing the manipulative practices of the tobacco industry were more likely to believe that tobacco advertising and promotion influence youth to smoke.

♦ Youth who remembered more ads emphasizing the manipulative practices of the tobacco industry were more likely to believe that:
  - Tobacco companies try to get young people to start smoking by using advertisements that are attractive to young people.
  - Tobacco companies try to get people addicted to smoking.
  - Tobacco companies would not stop selling cigarettes if they knew for sure that smoking hurt people.

Furthermore, over a period of several years (1996-1998), views of the tobacco industry grew more negative among adults and youth.[51]

A tobacco industry document stated that advertisements which portrayed the tobacco industry unfavorably were *"among favorite ads for most respondents"* and were *"generally seen as believable, even among many smokers"*.[52]

Some of the lessons learned from the California tobacco control efforts are the following:[53]
- Engage the public from the beginning
- Increase the cost of tobacco through tax increases
- Involve the entire public, including the non-smoking majority
- Confront the tobacco industry in the media campaign.
- Respond quickly to changing industry strategies with new media messages.
- Ensure the budget is large enough to compete effectively with the tobacco industry, even though matching on a dollar for dollar basis is not possible.

Messages for the upcoming campaign in California will focus on the following three key areas:[54]
- The tobacco industry lies.
- Nicotine is addictive.
- Secondhand smoke kills.

FLORIDA CAMPAIGN

Florida began a comprehensive statewide tobacco control program in 1997, which was funded by a percentage of money from Florida's settlement with the tobacco industry.[55][56] The youth-focused anti-industry portion of the campaign was initially funded with $200 million dollars for a marketing and education campaign. This budget was slashed to $32 million for FY 2000.[57]

From the inception of the campaign, youth have driven the campaign. Florida's agency, Crispin Porter & Bogusky, convened a 500-person youth summit early in the campaign planning phase, in order to gain insight into where youth felt the effort should go. This was followed up with annual summits and the creation of a youth review board, which provided feedback to help guide the creative process.[58]

The program's "Truth" ads irreverently poke fun at the tobacco industry. *"The ads included one in which tobacco executives beat out murder and Adolf Hitler at an Academy Awards-style event for the award of 'biggest killer,' a Brady Bunch parody on secondhand smoke, and a newspaper ad depicting a flabby, middle-aged man smoking a cigarette in a bikini stretched out near a pool with the caption 'No wonder tobacco executives have to hide behind sexy models.'"[59]*

A key concept in the Truth campaign is that youth's reason for using tobacco is rebellion, and the fact that tobacco kills makes it even more appealing to rebellious youth. The campaign needed to make youth rebel against something else – and the ideal target for this rebellion was the duplicity and manipulation of the tobacco industry.[60] Therefore, the Truth campaign uses edgy humour to highlight the manipulative tactics and techniques of the tobacco industry. There are also numerous supporting components to the campaign, including the Truth train and truck, and a Truth tabloid magazine.

By the end of its first year, the industry manipulation strategy used in the Florida campaign had resulted in high rates of ad recall, significant changes in attitudes and beliefs, and reduced rates of smoking among youth.[61] This suggests that a tobacco industry denormalization campaign can be highly effective with a youth market.

MASSACHUSETTS CAMPAIGN

In 1992, Ballot Question 1 was passed in Massachusetts, which added a 25-cent excise tax on each pack of cigarettes sold in the state.[62] The resulting Health Protection Fund resulted in dramatically increased spending and activity in tobacco control.[63] The Massachusetts Tobacco Control Program (MTCP) budget has averaged just under $40 million annually, declining slightly from about $43 million in FY 1995 to less than $37 million in FY 1997 and FY 1998.[64]

This has had an extremely positive effect on reducing overall smoking prevalence.[65] [66] From 1992 to 1998, per capita cigarette consumption declined 35%, and adult smoking prevalence declined from 22.6% to 18.7%. As well, the number of high school-aged youth who smoke declined from 35.7% to 30.3%.[67] There has also been a reduction in smoking among younger teens, especially 12-13 year olds.[68] [69]

Part of this successful campaign included running a highly visible advertising campaign that played a role in shaping public attitudes and perceptions concerning tobacco issues. According to Anne Miller from Arnold Communications, an advertising agency involved with the campaign, *"It directly counters the methods used by the tobacco industry to deliver prosmoking messages."* [70] Miller goes on to explain,

> *"When we can expose the tobacco industry as different from other industries because they manipulate the public, this crosses a line for youngsters, putting the tobacco industry in a category apart from all other big business. Specifically, the tobacco industry is positioned as dishonest, manipulative, and trading lives for profits. Young people will reject any implication that they personally have been manipulated by advertising or imagery. This outright rejection of being manipulated breaks down the credibility of any positioning that supports this personal manipulation. By generalizing this manipulation, youngsters can accept the argument. They are more apt to agree that younger children or their friends are manipulated than they are to agree that ... they are personally manipulated."* [71]

A content analysis of the Massachusetts campaign by DeJong and Hoffman (2000) reviewed 49 advertisements that were used from 1993 through 1996, and found that the most common focus was tobacco industry practices, followed by health consequences for smokers and smoking prevention.[72] According to their analysis, only one smoking prevention advertisement was targeted to children younger than the age of 13, and only two advertisements listed the telephone number for the MTCP's smoking cessation program. DeJong and Hoffman felt that this was reason for criticizing the campaign. A rejoinder from Biener[73] pointed out that the campaign results had been impressive in terms of an overall reduction in smoking prevalence. In particular, the campaign seemed to be successful at reducing smoking uptake among younger adolescents.[74] However, in some of Biener's research, she seems to suggest that it is not necessarily anti-industry advertising that is most effective, but rather, ads that elicit strong negative emotions (sadness and fear) were rated most effective.[75] Some (but not all) of the ads that elicit strong negative emotions coincide with those that are anti-industry, but the success of these negative ads does not appear to be attributed to an anti-industry focus.

In 1994 and 1995, Massachusetts ran a number of tobacco industry denormalization ads, some of which featured Janet Sackman, Patrick Reynolds, and Victor Crawford (Appendix I lists some of the tobacco industry denormalization TV commercials that were being aired in Massachusetts during this time period, along with transcripts for these TV commercials). However, the Massachusetts campaign of 1998 appears to have focused on social denormalization of smoking, rather than tobacco industry denormalization.[76]

Since 1998, there has been a return to focusing on tobacco industry denormalization. In 1999, Massachusetts released a series of anti-industry spots entitled "Where's the Outrage," which are featured on their website (*http://www.getoutraged.com*).[77]

OREGON CAMPAIGN

In November 1996, ballot measure 44 was passed in Oregon, which consisted of an increased tax on tobacco products to provide approximately $8.5 million per year to fund the Oregon Tobacco Prevention and Education Program (TPEP).[78] Approximately 16% ($1.36 million) of the annual budget is used for a public awareness and media campaign that reaches over 96% of Oregonians. Since ballot measure 44 was passed, the number of 8th grade smokers has declined from 22% in 1996 to 13% in 2000. The number of 11th grade smokers has similarly declined from 28% in 1996 to 22% in 2000. Adult smokers declined from 23% of the population in 1996 to 20% in 2000.[79][80]

Media concepts used in the Oregon campaign focus on the messages that nicotine is addictive, that tobacco and secondhand smoke kills both the user and those around them, that there is help to quit, and how to get help. A key focus of the campaign is "Oregonians for Tobacco-Free Kids."[81] One source notes that *"lobbyists for the tobacco industry and others actively denounced any plans that the Health Division might have had to conduct a counteradvertising campaign that would bash the tobacco industry.' Our response was to focus on a media campaign that would be fair, honest, and effective."* [82] Tobacco industry denormalization does not appear to be a part of this campaign.

AMERICAN LEGACY FOUNDATION

The American Legacy Foundation is the force behind an aggressive anti-smoking campaign being financed with proceeds from the tobacco industry's 1998 master settlement agreement with States over health care claims. U.S. tobacco manufacturers agreed to give the foundation $250 million on March 1999 and each subsequent year until 2003, for a total endowment of $1.5 billion.[83] Like Florida's campaign, the American Legacy Foundation's campaign is called the "Truth Campaign."

The American Legacy Foundation was forced to pull two of its ads off the air, one of which *"showed young people stacking 'body bags' on the sidewalk outside a tobacco company building. The other showed teens equipped with a lie detector trying to get into a tobacco company's offices to quiz sales executives about how addictive smoking is. The building was not specifically identified in either ad but the commercials were filmed inside and outside the Philip Morris Cos. headquarters in Manhattan."*[84] According to Mitch Zeller, executive vice president of the American Legacy Foundation, *"The bags symbolize the 1,200 people who die daily from tobacco-related illnesses."*[85] CBS refused to run these two ads because they felt that *"they crossed the line."*[86] The master settlement agreement had specified that the funds would not be used for personal attacks on an individual or tobacco company. However, the American Legacy Foundation's approach to date appears to be one of tobacco industry denormalization.

All campaign ads in the initial series were tagged with the line, *"Only one product actually kills a third of the people who use it. Tobacco."*

SUMMARY OF STATE CAMPAIGNS

"Evaluating statewide anti-tobacco media campaigns is a difficult task at best. . . By design, these campaigns occur within the context of other tobacco control interventions, so one is hard-pressed to isolate the impact of the media campaign from that of other program components "[87]

It is extremely difficult to isolate the impact of the media portion of a campaign from the impact of all the other components, such as school-based programs, grass roots programs, clean air legislation, tobacco tax increases, etc. To examine the specific impact of a tobacco industry denormalization campaign and separate it from other ongoing media campaign components is even more difficult.

However, we do know that when a full range of regulatory and educational measures are deployed, tobacco use declines. This pattern was seen in Canada in the 1980s,[88] and more recently in California[89] and Massachusetts.

The states of California and Massachusetts have been pioneers in launching long-term comprehensive public health programs to prevent and reduce tobacco use. These programs are funded with increases in their states' excise tax on tobacco products and have served as models for other jurisdictions. Per capita consumption of tobacco in both states has declined more rapidly than in the rest of the United States. Computer simulations based on various U.S. campaigns have determined that sustained large scale media interventions have the ability to substantially reduce the number of smokers and smoking-related deaths.[90]

In other countries around the world, comprehensive tobacco control programs have also been found effective in increasing the rate of quitting.[91] A quit-smoking campaign in Britain featuring "morbid humour and bizarre or macabre scenarios relating to smoking"[92] was found to reduce smoking prevalence by 1.2%.[93] New Zealand's tobacco control programmes over the period 1985 through 1998 were found to directly contribute to reduced smoking rates.[94] A mass-media anti-smoking campaign in Scotland, which included a telephone help line and brochures, was found to substantially increase the quitting rate.[95]

Comprehensive campaigns including substantial media components focused on specific ethnic groups within the United States have also been found effective (e.g., California campaign focusing on Vietnamese men in San Francisco[96]).

The CDC has put together *Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs "*to assist States in determining appropriate practices and spending levels.[97] With regard to counter-marketing, this documents says,

> *"Counter-marketing attempts to counter pro-tobacco influences and increase pro-health messages and influences throughout a State, region, or local community. Counter-marketing consists of a wide range of efforts, including paid television, radio, billboard, and print counter-advertising at the State and local level; media advocacy and other*

public relations techniques using such tactics as press releases, local events, and health promotion activities; and efforts to reduce or replace tobacco industry sponsorship and promotions. Counter-marketing activities can promote smoking cessation and decrease the likelihood of initiation. They also can have a powerful influence on public support for tobacco control interventions and set a supportive climate for school and community efforts. Counter-marketing campaigns are a primary activity in all States with comprehensive tobacco control programs. With funding ranging from less than $1.00 per capita up to almost $3.00 per capita, the campaigns in California, Massachusetts, Arizona, and Florida have been trend-setters in content and production quality." [98]

Further advice from this document recommends the following:
- *Combine messages on prevention, cessation, and protection from secondhand smoke; target both young people and adults; and address both individual behaviors and public policies.*
- *Include grassroots promotions, local media advocacy, event sponsorships, and other community tie-ins to support and reinforce the statewide campaign.*
- *Maximize the number, variety, and novelty of messages and production styles rather than communicate a few messages repeatedly.*
- *Use nonauthoritarian appeals that avoid direct exhortations not to smoke and do not highlight a single theme, tagline, identifier or sponsor.* [99]

Other advice on creating successful campaigns suggests that programs should focus on ways to present messages as news about smoking and quitting, presenting new information in a new way.[100]

CANADIAN RESEARCH ON TOBACCO INDUSTRY DENORMALIZATION

The following excerpt from a 1996 Environics report for Health Canada provides an interesting analysis of the usefulness of anti-tobacco advertising in discouraging smoking uptake and encouraging quitting:

> *"Environics' analysis of the socio-cultural values of smokers suggests that anti-tobacco advertising is probably the most powerful tool available to those who wish to encourage smokers to quit, or discourage young people from starting. . . .*
>
> *Form*
> - *Because smokers tend to be more emotional than rational, consider emotional, not rational, advertising.*
> - *Because smokers are stimulated by advertising, aim for the highest production values, in order to break through the advertising 'clutter' that they look at every day.*
> - *Because smokers suffer from anomie and a sense of aimlessness in life, borrow some of the tactics that the tobacco industry uses to make smokers feel good about themselves.*
> - *Because smokers have lower income/lower education levels, use television (the medium that is most popular and accessible for this group), over radio, print, or Internet/World Wide Web.*
>
> *Content . . .*
> - *Because of smokers' scepticism toward business and their cynicism about the motives of the private sector, consider messages related to the marketing strategies of tobacco companies and their levels of profitability.*
> - *Because of smokers' inclination toward ethical consumerism, consider posing some tough questions about the ethics of the tobacco industry."* [101]

This research was a precursor to examining the idea of a Canadian tobacco industry denormalization campaign.

In 1999, an Environics study of 1,524 adult Canadians asked what level of priority should be assigned to *"publicizing the behaviour, profits and practices of the tobacco industry"* as part of an anti-tobacco strategy, and found that 47% gave this a high priority.[102] Relative to other priorities discussed, this issue was not seen to be as high a priority as the others; however, it was deemed to be somewhat more important among former smokers, non-smokers, opinion leaders, people over 45, and those in higher income brackets. When asked about the perceived effectiveness of TV advertisements that would be targeted against the corporate activities of tobacco companies, 38% of adults thought this would be effective and 24% thought this would be very effective (i.e., in total, 62% overall felt this strategy would be effective), putting this just below the mid-range for anti-smoking strategy elements in terms of perceived effectiveness.[103] This suggests that the tobacco industry denormalization approach holds considerable promise in the Canadian context.

In the *Report on Tobacco Control for January-December 1999*, references is made to tobacco industry denormalization ads that have aired in Canada:

"Television advertising that hits harder than ever before is a key component of Health Canada's tobacco control strategy. to make smoking seem less socially acceptable, the use of cigarettes is portrayed in a way that counterbalances the appealing images commonly found in tobacco ads and event promotions. After extensive consultation with other jurisdictions (including Florida, California, Massachusetts and British Columbia), Health Canada embarked on an aggressive ad campaign early in 1999. Using successful ads from other jurisdictions in addition to those developed by Health Canada, three full flights of advertising ran between January and December 1999. These ads were hard-hitting and highlighted the toxic substances in tobacco smoke, the highly addictive qualities of tobacco products and the marketing practices of the tobacco industry. . . .

- *71 per cent of English-speaking Canadians recall seeing the recent anti-tobacco advertisement 'Debi'*
- *58 per cent of French-speaking Canadians say they remember seeing the ad 'Olivier'*
- *Almost half (42%) of those who recall seeing the ads report having a more critical attitude toward the behaviour of the tobacco industry*
- *82 per cent said they approve of the Government of Canada sponsoring such ads"[104]*

It appears that these ads were successful, having enjoyed relatively high levels of recall. As well, the public seems to be generally accepting of having the Canadian Government sponsor such tobacco industry denormalization ads.

The above-noted research results were excerpted from the December 1999 Environics report entitled *Canadian Public and Opinion Leaders Attitudes Toward Anti-Tobacco Advertising*, which was based on a survey sample of 1,704 Canadians.[105] This included a 300-member over-sample of adults aged 18-65 with some university education or a university degree. This survey identified Canadian opinion leaders in five different ways, in order to identify the views of opinion leaders regarding anti-tobacco advertising. Findings from this research indicated that 81% of Canadians generally have a negative impression of the tobacco industry,[106] and 34% say their opinion of the tobacco industry has deteriorated over the past year. Among the small percentage who has a positive image of the tobacco industry, 30% say it is because they are a smoker. Likely contributing to the generally negative attitudes toward the tobacco industry are Canadians' beliefs, as outlined in the following excerpt:

"Majorities of Canadians think the tobacco industry avoids talking about the addictive nature of tobacco (79%), that tobacco companies sponsor sports and cultural events so that they can promote their brand names to the public and to young people (79%), that the tobacco industry tries to conceal facts about the impact of tobacco (75%), that it refuses to admit that tobacco is addictive (64%), that it actively promotes smoking among young people (61%) and that it is working behind the scenes to encourage young people to smoke (54%)."[107]

Of particular interest from this research is the finding that 39% of smokers believe that more knowledge of the practices of the tobacco industry would make them more likely to think about quitting (while only 5% say this would make them less likely to think about quitting). As well, 26% of smokers say that seeing more ads or information about the effects of tobacco or the

practices of the tobacco industry would have helped them to quit smoking, while 70% say this information would not necessarily have helped them to quit.[108]

YOUTH AND TOBACCO INDUSTRY DENORMALIZATION

A 1999 qualitative study conducted by Teenage Research Unlimited examined 10 TV commercials (two each that were produced by the states of Massachusetts, California, Florida, and Arizona, as well as by Philip Morris).[109] It attempted to measure the "stop and think" value of each ad, relative to those created by Philip Morris. The study included twenty (20) mini focus groups comprised of 7th through 10th graders in three different states who were at risk for tobacco use. Many focus group members were able to identify which two commercials were created by the tobacco company, Philip Morris. The most notable ads in this study were *"Voicebox," "Pam Laffin," "Cowboy,"* and *"Cinema."* Teens were moved by scenes of the dire health effects caused by tobacco that were portrayed in these ads. However, only the California teens understood that there was an industry-manipulation theme in *"Cowboy."*

Other ads with industry manipulation themes, such as *"Cinema: Deaths Planned, "Industry Spokesman,"* and *"Publishing,"* were rated higher by respondents in California, where there has been a long history of industry-manipulation advertising and education. However, these ads were sometimes misunderstood or rated lower by teens in the other two states, who hadn't previously been exposed to these types of messages, and did not make a link between *"a deceitful, uncaring, and greedy industry (as portrayed in the ads and generally taken away by respondents) with a strong reason not to smoke."*[110] The report went on to discuss some of the implications of the research as follows:

> *"Findings related to the 'industry 'manipulation' theme warrant further exploration. the disparity in response to ads which were intended to communicate this theme between California respondents versus respondents in the other two states in which this research was conducted may suggest that the ads' resonance in California is explained by that state's long-term commitment to industry manipulation as a theme (albeit targeted to an adult audience). In essence, the efficacy of this theme may be dependent upon having established a media climate and – ultimately – a social climate in which the tobacco industry is perceived as employing manipulative practices."*[111]

This research suggests that teens can understand industry denormalization ads, but that an education period may be required, where the youthful audience must first become accustomed to this type of advertising. The industry denormalization advertising in California is aimed primarily at an adult audience, but it can become equally meaningful to teens over time.

Pechmann and Goldberg (1998) conducted an analysis of anti-smoking advertising campaigns targeting youth from the USA and Canada, and out of seven mutually exclusive categories found two that related to tobacco industry denormalization. These were ads that focused on: (1) Marketing practices (ads that describe relatively innocuous tobacco marketing practices such as the use of glamorous models and the distribution of free promotional items); and (2) Deceptive portrayal of a lethal product (advertisements that highlight the deceptive tactics used to sell what is essentially a lethal and addictive product, such as illegally targeting minors and falsely claiming that cigarettes are nonaddictive).[112] Pechmann and Reibling (2000) used these categories in a study with several hundred adolescents who were randomly assigned to view anti-tobacco advertisements, and found that youths responded well to advertisements disclosing the

deception used to sell what is essentially a lethal and addictive product.[113] [114] However, ads that focused on relatively innocuous tobacco marketing practices were considered to be ineffective with adolescents in this study.

Focus group research in the U.S. among adolescents aged 10-17 examined a creative concept as follows: *"Companies that make, sell, and advertise cigarettes are exploiting you."*[115] This concept was apparently rated highly by teens because *"it is true and makes you think."*[116] However, some respondents in these focus groups indicated that the weakness of this concept was that all companies are out to make a profit, and that consumers are not being forced into buying anything. Based on these focus group findings, the Office on Smoking and Health (OSH) developed a counteradvertising strategy aimed at exposing the predatory marketing tactics of the tobacco industry. The campaign was intended to demonstrate to teens that they are being manipulated by the tobacco industry, that tobacco advertising is an attempt to recruit cigarette addicts, and that tobacco advertising promotes deceptively glamorous images of smoking. OSH developed three print ads and a television ad using this theme, but in subsequent research with 10-12 year olds and 13-15 year olds found that the ads did not communicate effectively, and did not score well in terms of understanding the message or motivating behaviour change. As well, the campaign generated high levels of confusion, since only 10% of young people who viewed the TV spot understood that "they" in the ads referred to the tobacco industry. The campaign apparently failed because its creative execution was too subtle and sophisticated for the target audience, especially for the younger age group.[117] Therefore, in spite of initially testing well as a concept, the final execution of this concept was difficult for adolescents to understand.

A 1996 Environics report also suggested that for young people aged 15-19, anti-tobacco industry ads may not be suitable:

> *"Young people especially will be unmoved by messages relating to the motives or ethics of tobacco companies. This group has confidence in business and may even be 'put off' by (and therefore, are likely to tune out) advertising which suggests that the tobacco industry is not trustworthy."*[118]

Pechmann has also suggested that tobacco industry denormalization ads do not necessarily work well with youth, and recommends that campaigns should avoid attacking the tobacco industry directly.[119] She felt that it was unclear whether ads that attack the tobacco industry can actually dissuade young people from smoking.[120] In examining the California campaign from 1990-1995, she notes that the percent of youth smoking dropped significantly at the beginning of the campaign, but remained relatively stable throughout the rest of the campaign. Since California used primarily industry denormalization ads in its campaign, which were aimed at adult smokers, this might account for the relatively small impact on youth smoking.[121] For a youth target, she suggests instead using ads that focus on grooming, social issues, expense, and smoking as an addiction, as well as focusing on the negatives of smoking and smokers.

Concept research done for the Arizona campaign also suggested that adolescents were not influenced or moved by the idea that the tobacco industry was trying to manipulate them (see earlier Arizona section).[122]

However, other focus group research has suggested that commercials that expose the tobacco industry's manipulation of young persons are among the **most** effective strategies for reducing tobacco use.[123] For example, a 1996 summary report from Asher/Gould, California's advertising agency, discussed focus group research on five different advertising strategies tested on young people aged 12-18 in Sacramento and Los Angeles, and found that the theme of *"manipulation of kids by the tobacco industry"*[124] tested very strongly. According to Christine Steele, an Asher/Gould senior vice president, *"The body language of kids clearly revealed that this strategy [the anti-industry strategy] provided kids with an emotional wake up call. They sat up straight, they grimaced, they shook their heads, they became riled up and vocal -- they at least became concerned about this formerly 'low interest' topic."*[125]

Part of the reason for the success of anti-industry ads in California among teens could be that these commercials are also among the most effective for tobacco reduction among adults. When teens are targeted for anti-smoking campaigns but adults are not, it sends the message that smoking is okay for adults, and smoking is then positioned as a rite of adulthood.[126] Therefore, it is important to target the entire population with anti-tobacco messages, and not limit the focus to a youth target group.[127] This ensures that smoking becomes socially unacceptable for everyone, not just for youth. Furthermore, teens are able to cognitively process and understand most ads designed for an adult target group, so tobacco industry denormalization ads designed for an adult market are often equally suitable for influencing the youth market.

It is important to remember that it may be necessary to first build a climate for tobacco industry denormalization ads. California began these ads in the early 1990s, so by the time the above-mentioned focus group took place in 1996, adolescents had already seen several years worth of anti-industry ads, and were familiar with these themes. This may lead to a greater embracing of the concept by youth, and lead to greater dialogue about these issues, which would further enhance the success of an anti-industry campaign.

Florida has had significant success with reducing youth smoking rates through its Truth campaign, which focuses on tobacco industry denormalization. Based on the success of the Florida campaign, Health Canada has recently announced a pilot program called *VRAI*, which will target francophone youth with anti-tobacco messages, in order to develop an increased awareness and attitude change among youth regarding the practices of the tobacco industry.[128]

The evidence above regarding the effectiveness of denormalization campaigns with a youthful target audience is somewhat mixed. On balance, however, this appears to be a useful strategy, since it can simultaneously target adult and teen audiences in a fairly effective manner, as demonstrated in the California campaign.

Wakefield and Chaloupka (2000) conducted an examination of the effectiveness of comprehensive state tobacco control programs in reducing teenage smoking, and found that the single most critical factor in program success is the extent of funding. Also important is the use of price increases to reduce consumption, and the inclusion of a multi-pronged approach.[129] With any media campaign, it is important to include elements in addition to the media campaign, in order to create synergy and reinforcement. School based programs work particularly well with

mass media campaigns directed at youth.[130] [131] [132] [133]   Other research has indicated that a mass media programme can be very cost effective in preventing smoking among adolescents.[134]

RECOMMENDATIONS

The California campaign is a model for a successful tobacco industry campaign. Like the California campaign, a Canadian campaign should focus its efforts on three primary concepts. These are:

- lies of the tobacco industry
- nicotine is addictive
- second-hand smoke is harmful

The following sections discuss each type of ad in turn, featuring a strategy of using ads containing hard-hitting facts. (Of course, the facts would need to be presented in an interesting, attention-getting, hard-hitting, and novel format in order to garner audience attention.)

Lies of the Tobacco Industry

In the United States some of the most effective recent messages have dealt with exposing the lies of the tobacco industry. In Canada we have a significant number of tobacco company documents (exposed during the 1989 trial where Imperial Tobacco and RJR-Macdonald challenged the Tobacco Products Control Act) that illustrate how tobacco companies have manipulated consumers and targeted teenagers. Some interesting examples of excerpts from these documents are as follows:

> *"...the advent of ultra low tar cigarettes has actually retained some potential quitters in the cigarette market by offering them a viable alternative"* (Response of the Market and of Imperial Tobacco to the Smoking and Health Environment, AG-41, p.2).

> *"We have already seen the impediments to starting smoking tracing to a physical intolerance at early experiences.... And among the Experimentor/Rejector group, physical intolerance is by far the major reason for never starting smoking.... The implication is that a low irritation cigarette has a role"* (Project Viking, Volume III: Product Issues, AG-21C, p.5, emphasis in the original).

> *"Young smokers represent the major opportunity group for the cigarette industry. We should therefore determine their attitudes to smoking and health and how this might change over time"* (1971 Matinee Marketing Plan, p.11, as quoted in Pollay, 1990).

> *"Since we cannot direct our media or our creative to starter smokers, the optimal target group is young adult smokers between the ages of 18-24"* (Export Family Strategy Document, AG-222, dated March 22, 1982, p.8).

> *"Models in Player's advertising must be 25 years or older, but should appear to be between 18 and 25 years of age"* (F'81 Advertising: Objectives and Strategies, Creative Guidelines, AG-35, p.52).

"If the last ten years have taught us anything, it is that the industry is dominated by the companies who respond most effectively to the needs of younger smokers. Our efforts on these brands will remain on maintaining their relevance to smokers in these younger groups in spite of the (poor) share performance they may develop among older smokers" (F'88 Imperial Tobacco Limited Marketing Plan, p.6, as quoted in Pollay, 1990).

"To position Player's Filter as the brand with the greatest relevant appeal to younger, modern smokers.... By younger modern smokers, we mean those people ranging from starters of the smoking habit up to and through the seeking and setting of their independent adult lifestyle" (The Player's Family - A Working Paper, AG-33, dated March 25, 1977, pp.13-14).

"We have frequently discussed the problems that our media-restricted, C.T.M.C.-controlled environment cause in terms of effectively communicating with smokers, especially young smokers. The situation will likely get worse in the future. In F'85, we will be devoting people and dollars to addressing this.... Plans are not finalized but one area we will be looking at is the use of malls.... What we are talking about is having our imagery reach those difficult to reach, non-reading young people that frequent malls in an impactful, involving first-class way" (Strictly Confidential, F'85 ITL Marketing Plan-Highlights, AG-36, dated November 10, 1983, p.10, emphasis in the original).

The above tobacco document excerpts illustrate that the tobacco industry has targeted underage youth, and that hooking young people, the *"major opportunity group for the cigarette industry,"* is essential to the success of the industry. Using these and other quotations as the basis of messages about tobacco industry deceit would be likely to generate significant media attention and public discussion on the issue, and portray tobacco companies as manipulative and scheming.

Nicotine is Addictive

Messages about the addictiveness of nicotine are also likely to strike a chord with smokers and non-smokers alike, because this is further evidence that tobacco companies have been manipulative and deceitful in the past. The tobacco company documents that have become public in Canada tend to deal primarily with advertising and promotion, rather than with scientific nicotine studies conducted by tobacco companies. For this reason, information about the addictiveness of nicotine may have to come from U.S. documents released in the Minnesota trial, the Brown and Williamson documents, the Guildford Document Depository, and documents released in other trials. Although much of this information about nicotine addiction may be non-Canadian, it should still be fairly compelling because it is scientific evidence from the labs of the tobacco companies, and particularly because this information about addictiveness comes straight from the parent companies of Canadian tobacco manufacturers (e.g., see quotes found in Slade, Bero, et al., 1995).[135]

This addictiveness message could focus on facts such as:

- the industry's ability to adjust nicotine levels (given the declining tar/nicotine levels in cigarettes over the years)
- the industry's development of enhanced nicotine tobacco plants.
- the description of a cigarette as being a "nicotine delivery device."

Environmental Tobacco Smoke (ETS)

Tobacco industry documents in the U.S., as well as some of the Guildford documents gathered by Health Canada and other organizations, provide evidence of attempts to cloud scientific research into ETS. This includes tobacco industry efforts to organize scientific symposia featuring tobacco-industry sponsored studies showing no ill effects from ETS, or attributing these ill health effects to other behavior or consumption habits.[136] This is further evidence of tobacco industry deceit.

MANAGING A TOBACCO INDUSTRY DENORMALIZATION CAMPAIGN

It will not be an easy task to cope with a tobacco industry denormalization campaign consisting of hard-hitting commercial messages that criticize the tobacco industry and show smoking as a deadly addiction that causes death and disease. The campaign should expect, and invite, controversy. Such messages will definitely create some excitement in the media, and some of this controversy will almost certainly be carefully orchestrated behind the scenes by the public relations staff of the tobacco industry. Television stations and other media outlets are reluctant to upset their viewers, so it will be necessary to work with TV stations and other media to gain their support for the campaign.

One method for deflecting criticism is to run the campaign under the auspices of another agency. For example, this strategy was used in the mid-1980s when the Canadian Public Health Association ran a controversial television campaign that consisted of the first Canadian AIDS prevention TV commercials. The funding for this campaign came from Health & Welfare Canada, but the commercial sponsorship was identified as the Canadian Public Health Association, in order to deflect potentially negative criticism away from the government agency.

While Health Canada would lose the "glory" associated with a smoking denormalization campaign by giving it to another agency to run, Health Canada would also remove itself from the controversy and glare of publicity associated with hard-hitting messages. This is something worth considering in order to ensure that the message content and format will be truly effective, and not driven by political expediency.

The California campaign has suffered at times because ad messages were softened. For example, all of the story boards submitted by Asher/Gould, California's advertising agency, in June 1996 were modified to remove the words *"the tobacco industry"* and *"addiction."*[137] A commercial entitled "Cattle," for example, was modified to begin *"This is how the guys who make cigarettes..."* and to end with *"If you knew what they thought of you, you'd think twice."*[138] The words *"tobacco industry"* had been completely removed from the ad, making the message somewhat ambiguous. Another anti-industry ad, "Rain," showed cigarettes falling down on a playground like rain. It began with the line, *"We have to sell cigarettes to your kids"* and ended with *"How low will they go to make a profit?"* but did not directly mention the words *"tobacco industry."*[139] The introduction of this type of ambiguity into anti-industry ads may soften their impact, and make them less easy to understand, and therefore less hard-hitting and impactful.

When a tobacco industry denormalization campaign is produced, it is important to avoid ambiguity in the wording of commercials in order to increase understanding and reduce confusion. Focus group research at OSH found that while an anti-industry concept had tested well among adolescents, the final execution was difficult to understand because the tobacco industry was referred to in the ads as "they." The creative execution for this campaign was too subtle for the youthful target audience.[140] Therefore, it is important to refer to the tobacco industry very specifically in industry denormalization ads.

It is useful to recall that California had significant difficulty with censorship of anti-tobacco industry advertisements from senior levels of government.[141] The Wilson administration censored the campaign's commercials in 1995 and 1996, when it pulled three anti-tobacco industry advertisements from use and weakened several others.[142] In 1996, Assembly Speaker introduced a bill that would have restricted the campaign to messages dealing with health, disallowing spots attacking the tobacco industry; this bill was defeated through a concerted effort by public health advocates.[143] In Arizona, the Department of Health Services ordered the media campaign to avoid using or creating commercials that attack the tobacco industry.[144] The effectiveness of tobacco industry denormalization campaigns makes them a target for criticism from the tobacco industry, who may put political pressure on bureaucrats and politicians.[145]

CONCLUSION

One of the basic tenets of advertising and marketing (and this applies equally well to social marketing) is that it is necessary to grab the consumer's attention. To attract the consumer's attention, marketers (and social marketers) must undertake promotional activities and ads that are striking, different, unusual, out-of-the-ordinary and even extraordinary. It is this type of out-of-the-box thinking that has characterized some of the most successful tobacco control campaigns around the world. According to Goldman and Glantz,

> "To compete with tobacco industry advertising, antitobacco advertisements need to be ambitious, hard-hitting, explicit, and in-your-face. Unless the advertisements grab and hold people's attention, their messages will be lost amid other advertising. Advertisements must clearly refer to the tobacco industry, rather than to 'they' or 'them.'"[146]

It is also important that the tobacco industry denormalization component be part of a multi-pronged comprehensive approach, that includes quit-lines,[147] school based programs,[148] community-level programs, and other mass media focusing on second-hand smoke, addiction, prevention, and cessation. The 2000 U.S. Surgeon General's Report on "Reducing Tobacco Use" recommended the use of comprehensive programs consisting of (1) community interventions, (2) countermarketing (including media advocacy, paid media, prohealth promotions, and other media strategies to change social norms regarding tobacco use, (3) program policy and regulation, and (4) surveillance and evaluation.[149] It is clear that paid media programs form only one part of a comprehensive multi-faceted approach to tobacco control. In fact, it has been suggested that only when one places media into the larger context of society can one expect to see an effect; in other words, media campaigns alone are not necessarily effective.[150]