

KERDZC  
FYE

20/20 TELECAST  
GROWING UP IN SMOKE  
October 20, 1983

Opening Remarks:

Narrator:

On the ABC news magazine, 20/20, tonight, kids under 21, America's youngsters, are they the new target for cigarette manufacturers?

John Banzaff:

You want to get them as young as 10 and 12 and 14, get them interested in your product, get them hooked before they understand the dangers.

Narrator:

Spokesmen for the industry say no, but cigarette advertising is everywhere--sporting events, rock and jazz concerts, billboards, magazines and giveaways. Consumer reporter, John Stassel, challenges the industry, their money and their methods, in "Growing Up in Smoke."

Hugh Downs:

Up front tonight, turning your child into a smoker. Is there a campaign to addict a new generation of smokers? For almost 30 years, the research and the warnings on the many harmful effects of cigarette smoking have multiplied. But, where in 1954 the number of cigarettes sold was 387 billion, this year's estimate is 617 billion.

Now one fact that may help clarify this odd progression of events is that more money is spent for promoting cigarettes than for any other product and some of this promotion seems aimed at children.

A viewer sent us a complaint on the impact of that promotion and consumer correspondent, John Stassel, has been investigating.

John.

✓  
GEMER  
DAMEK  
CEEP  
LITTLEHEAD

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John Stassel

It is sort of strange, the biggest killer is America's most advertised product. And the letter we received raised two complaints. First, are magazines and newspapers censoring negative information about cigarettes to protect the big money they make on cigarette ads. Second, are tobacco companies finding new ways to make cigarettes appeal to children? Of course, the companies had to find new ways of advertising when their commercials were kicked off television.

(Commercial) Smoke anywhere and you'll enjoy the cigarette of fine tobacco, Lucky Strike.

Stassel:

It was twelve years ago that cigarettes were banned from radio and TV.

(Commercial) Us Tareyton smokers would rather fight than switch.

Stassel:

I'd forgotten what these ads were like. It's amazing to watch them now.

(Commercial) Winston tastes good like a cigarette should.

(Commercial) Showing Marlboro commercial while Stassel continues.

Stassel:

The growing evidence that these products were killing people eventually led to their ban from broadcasting. The tobacco companies, however, still claim that health hazards haven't been proven. We asked Philip Morris, R. J. Reynolds, Brown & Williamson and Lorillard to appear on this program. None would. They told us to talk to the Tobacco Institute. The Institute said Anne Browder would speak for them.

Browder:

The case is still open. The jury has not come in.

Stassel:

It may not be harmful. You're not convinced.

Browder:

It may be or it may not be. We don't know.

Stassel:

How can you say it might not be harmful, yet most of the people who die of lung cancer smoke? I mean, how can there not be a connection?

Browder:

We certainly are aware of the fact that people die on a daily basis. Some of them are smokers and some of them are not smokers.

(Commercial) Call for Philip Morris.

Stassel:

Even though they say they're not convinced that cigarettes kill, tobacco companies say they voluntarily cancelled their radio and TV ads before Congress banned them. Why? Because the broadcast media had grown to a position of unique appeal for young people.

It is kids, of course, who are the most vulnerable, but tobacco companies claim they've never wanted kids to smoke.

Browder:

We feel very strongly that cigarette smoking is an adult custom that one should not even consider until they've reached the age of maturity.

Stassel:

What's maturity?

Browder:

Anyone over the age of 21.

Stassel:

But studies show that 80% of all smokers started before they were 21.

(Interviews with young people)

"I started smoking when I was 14 years old."

"Everybody was smoking. And I thought it made me feel terribly grown up."

Stassel:

That's where the market is. There's no point attracting somebody at 60.

Anti-smoking advocate John Banzaff (?):

You want to get kids, you want to get them as young as 10 and 12 and 14, get them interested in your product, get them hooked before they understand the dangers and then hope that they'll stay with your brand.

Stassel:

The tobacco industry denies it.

Browder:

Cigarette manufacturers are not interested in obtaining new business from teenagers in our society.

Stassel:

But how can you stay in business if you can't hook the kids?

Browder:

We've been in business very well, thank you, for some time now without attempting to hook kids. We do everything possible to discourage teenage smoking.

Stassel:

Do they?

Recently tobacco companies have found new ways to display their products where kids can be impressed. Can't advertise on television, sponsor a tennis tournament that's covered on television.

In many baseball stadiums, when someone hits a homerun, some brand of cigarette gets on TV. Games like this one have about 40,000 viewers under 21.

Stassel:

When we went to a team America soccer game, what impressed us was how thorough cigarette sponsorship can be. You can't go anywhere without seeing Winston. The ticket takers wear Winston hats. And once you're inside, you're greeted by young women who give Winston's away.

Person getting samples:

Cigarettes, cigarettes.

Sampler:

Would you like regular or ...

Person getting samples:

Give me regular.

Stassel:

Even the lady selling programs wears Winstons.

Reynolds Tobacco says the audience here is predominantly adult, but there are lots of kids at soccer games. The North American Soccer League says soccer's the fastest growing sport among teenagers. Some of the kids here wear their free Winston hats, helps keep the sun out of your eyes as you watch the cheerleaders.

And even at halftime, you get Winstons. You win money if you kick the ball through the Winston sign.

Soccer is very popular with kids. You cannot go to that game without seeing Winston everywhere. Why?

Browder:

Why not?

Stassel:

You just said you don't want to expose kids to smoking...

Browder:

That's not the same. That is not encouraging anyone to smoke, John.

Stassel:

If the purpose of it isn't to sell cigarettes, why do they sponsor it, out of the goodness of their heart?

Browder:

I would imagine that's part of the reason why they sponsor it, because they've been approached by various people for sponsorship and ...

Stassel:

Be good guys...

Browder:

Sure.

Stassel:

Federal Trade Commissioner, Michael Purchak.

Purchak:

They're promoting those sporting events and other events because they create an aura of legitimacy, of wholesomeness. They're gaining innocence by association.

Stassel:

They're also doing a lot of associating with music. There's the KOOL JAZZ Festival. Barbara Mandrell's got money from Marlboro. Juice Newton and Alabama's current tour is sponsored by Salem.

But sometimes musicians won't take the money. James Taylor, Peter, Paul and Mary said they wouldn't perform here at the Boston Common last summer unless Camel bowed out as sponsor. Camel did. Hall and Oates have turned down tobacco money because of their concern about young people in the audience. So have the Oak Ridge Boys.

Cigarette companies have come to you and said we'll pay you if we can run our ads around your concert and you said no.

Oak Ridge Boys:

We said no. Because we didn't want to influence young people in such a way that would make them think that the Oak Ridge Boys say smoking cigarettes is okay, because we don't believe that it is.

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Stassel:

Of course, the cigarette company doesn't need the musician's permission if it wants to promote its brands outside the concert. Here they're passing out free Camels.

Tobacco companies have been doing a lot of this lately. Their code says, we shall not give cigarettes away in any public place within two blocks of any center of youth activity. Yet here they're passing them out in front of a David Bowie concert. Lots of kids here! Cigarettes were also passed out at concerts given by the Talking Heads and the Animals.

You pass out free cigarettes at these concerts? I don't see you passing out free cigarettes at Frank Sinatra concerts.

Browder:

There are many, many adults at those concerts.

Stassel:

Promoters of the concerts say 40-60% of the audience is under 21. The tobacco code also says, don't give cigarettes to anyone under 21. We asked a 16 year old to try to get some.

Sampler:

Regular or Light?

16 year old:

Regular.

I just went up and asked for cigarettes, and they didn't ask me for any ID or anything so I just got it and walked away.

Stassel:

Reynolds Tobacco says they fire people who violate the sampling code. We tried to ask the samplers about all this, but they said they've been told not to talk to the media.

This videotape made last winter by the Chicago Lung Association shows young people being given Bright cigarettes. Sixteen year old Joe was given a pack. So was Paulette, she's 18. And Chris, he's 19. Seven of nine young people who asked for cigarettes got them.

Stassel:

So when the Chicago Lung Association sent people out, kids got them.

Browder:

I cannot address that. I can tell you what the sampling code is for cigarette manufacturers and the sampling companies are sworn to adhere by that code.

Stassel:

But they don't obey it.

Browder:

They are supposed to obey it.

Stassel:

Maybe they're breaking their code in movie theaters, too. This is a commercial for KOOL cigarettes. This summer Brown & Williamson began running ads for KOOL and BARCLAY at some 3,000 movie theaters. They wouldn't give us copies, so we filmed them off the movie screen. The KOOL ad was shown at this theater in Newton, Massachusetts, right before a performance of Snow White. Brown & Williamson says that was a mistake. It should only run before R and PG films. Of course, PG means the cigarette ad could run with kids' pictures like Star Wars and Superman.

A group called Action for Children's Television has petitioned the government to ban the ads, calling it peddling cigarettes to kids. Brown & Williamson denies the charge.

Even if movie advertising were banned, there'd still be cigarettes in movies popular with kids. These pictures are from Superman II. Marlboro, made by Philip Morris, is shown at least 13 times.

They're able to equate their product in the minds of people with a super hero. Somebody who is squeaky clean. And that association occurring over and over and over again in the movie is bound to have an impact, particularly on young, impressionable minds.

Corporations acknowledge that they like to get their products in movies. It's another form of advertising. I asked the Tobacco Institute why Marlboro's were shown so often in Superman II.



Browder:

Do you think cigarette manufacturers had something to do with that?

Stassel:

Yeah, I think that ...

Browder:

Cigarette manufacturers don't make movies.

Stassel:

But what do you think, that the moviemaker just showed Marlboro on his own?

Browder:

Perhaps the moviemaker was a Marlboro smoker.

Stassel:

We tried to ask the moviemaker, but he wouldn't talk to us. Philip Morris wouldn't comment on the financial arrangement except to say they didn't pay the producers cash.

Maybe, of course, it doesn't matter. Kids see the billboards all the time. Tobacco companies spend so much money on advertising that nearly every other billboard in America promotes cigarettes.

Browder:

I think the cigarette manufacturers have the right to advertise their product. I think they have the right to sponsor a variety of events as they do. I don't think it's illegal, so why not?

Stassel:

The problem with cigarettes is that they're all around us and the advertising promotion is all around us and we become used to the idea that they're just familiar artifacts of daily life. And it's terribly hard to keep in mind that they really are a terrible killer.

And what happens when a killer is also America's most advertised product? Can that affect the information we get about cigarettes? You bet it can.

(Commercial) You've come a long way baby to get where you got to today.

Stassel:

When cigarettes were taken off television, there was suddenly millions of advertising dollars looking for a place to go. Most of it went to newspapers and magazines.

Let's look at the effect on one small publication, The Twin Cities Reader, Minneapolis. Last year, the Twin Cities Reader assigned a reporter to do a story on the KOOL JAZZ Festival. It was the first time the Festival was being held here in Minneapolis. A reporter wrote about the music, about who was coming and at the end of the article, he questioned whether a cigarette company should be sponsoring the Festival. He said the diseases cigarettes cause are un-Kool.

The reporter was Paul MacCabee. The day after the article appeared, he was fired.

MacCabee:

The publisher, Mr. Hopp, called me into his office and he said, "If we have to fly to Louisville, Kentucky, and crawl on our bended knees and beg the cigarette company not to take their ads out of our newspaper, we'll do that." And then he told me, you're fired.

Stassel:

This is the many who fired him, publisher Mark Hopp.

You said you would go down to Louisville and get down on your knees and apologize?

Hopp:

True.

Stassel:

Doesn't this mean that the cigarette companies have a lot of power over what is written about them?

Hopp:

I don't believe so. There's...

Stassel:

Hopp says the tobacco companies never pressured him and that the main reason he fired MacCabee is because he didn't want his local paper covering national issues.

You don't cover national issues.

Hopp:

No.

Stassel:

Yet after he fired MacCabee, he ran articles on Seymour Hirsch and Henry Kissinger, Love Canal and the Mideast.

Hopp:

I don't believe those articles ran after April of '82.

Stassel:

June of '82, July of '82.

Hopp:

Well, at least we don't have as many of them anymore.

Stassel:

But isn't that a smokescreen? Isn't cigarette money the real issue?

Hopp:

No.

Stassel:

Yet, week after week, his paper is filled with full-page cigarette ads.

This is big bucks for you.

Hopp:

Yes.

Stassel:

How much money?

Hopp:

That is competitive and proprietary information.

Stassel:

But if you lost it, it would hurt.

Hopp:

Yes, it would jeopardize our local responsibility to cover the local community.

MacCabee:

I think when journalists read about my firing because of an article critical of cigarettes, it's going to have a chilling effect on what they write. I think other writers will ask themselves, wait a minute, should I really cover this story, am I going to get fired just like that guy MacCabee in Minneapolis, because I tread on an advertisers' toes.

Stassel:

Now in some publications, the question never comes up because they don't accept cigarette ads. Here are some examples (show Good Housekeeping, Seventeen, Reader's Digest). These publications say they don't want dangerous products advertised to their readers.

The American Council on Science and Health surveyed magazines and concluded that those that do not accept cigarette advertising give much more thorough coverage to the smoking and health issue than those that do take the ads.

The Council cites these magazines as the worst. The magazines say their coverage of the issue has been adequate. And they deny trying to protect the advertisers. But I know it happens sometimes.

Family Circle magazine, for example. The publisher denies that cigarette articles are censored. Yet a few years ago the magazine asked me to write an article and said, don't write about cigarettes. It might offend advertisers. Family Circle carries about \$16 million in cigarette ads.

Sometimes magazines even turn down money to avoid offending tobacco companies.

Daymen Reingold is a hypnotist who runs anti-smoking clinics in several cities. He wanted more people to know about his clinics, so he asked his ex-wife, who's in the promotion business, to place some advertising for him. They ran into obstacles.

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Reingold's ex-wife:

My first magazine that I had zeroed in on, that I wanted to work with was Psychology Today.

Stassel:

But when she tried to place the ad, Psychology Today told her...

Reingold's ex-wife:

No, this is not acceptable. So I thought well then it's the ad concept, and I had at least 15 different ad concepts drawn up.

Stassel:

Finally, the person in charge of advertising told her...

Reingold's ex-wife:

Actually, I don't think any of these are going to be acceptable. We have a lot of money that comes in from tobacco companies, and frankly, we don't want to offend our tobacco advertisers. And I thought, how can you say that to me. I mean, you're Psychology Today, don't you really care about the health of your readers. She looked at me and she said, well you know Grace, you're going to run into this problem wherever you go.

Stassel:

She went to Cosmopolitan. When Daymon Reingold called to place the ad, Cosmopolitan's advertising director told him, no way. Reingold taped the conversation.

(tape)

Cosmopolitan ad director:

"I can't accept it. We get 200 pages of cigarette advertising."

Reingold:

"You're telling me there's going to be a problem or an obstacle here."

Ad director:

"Well, am I going to jeopardize \$5 or 10 million worth of business? What would you do if you were the advertising director of a magazine that had preponderance of that type of business and somebody wanted to run one ad telling everybody, don't smoke."

Stassel:

I hoped the publishers of Cosmopolitan or Psychology Today would appear on television to talk about their policies, but they would not. On the phone, both said they have no general policy on anti-smoking ads. Psychology Today's publisher said the reasons they reject ads are confidential. And Cosmopolitan's publisher said he can reject any ad for any reason, and that's true, but is it fair?

Reingold:

We ought to be able to get our message out across to the public also.

Reingold (?):

I think money is what's to blame really, big super dollars, \$1.24 billion a year in advertising tobacco money every year. That's \$4 for every man, woman and child in America today. That's an awesome, staggering kind of thing. And I think that's where the power really is.

Hugh Downs:

John, do you think tobacco companies coerce magazines and newspapers not to run the articles or the anti-smoking ads?

Stassel:

I don't think so, Hugh. I have no evidence that any tobacco company tells a magazine, don't run that. They don't have to. As Daymon Reingold puts it, it's the money. Because the tobacco companies buy so many ads, the publication sometimes censor themselves for fear of losing that money.

And incidentally, Cosmopolitan magazine now says it may run that anti-smoking ad after all. They said they didn't run it before because the magazine, they say, never received it. Of course, Cosmopolitan said all this only after we called and told them we were going to talk about this on television.

BROWN & WILLIAMSON

1994-96 COLLECTION

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