Sifting the Ashes: Understanding Cigarette Marketing Through Historical and Archival Research

Richard W. Pollay, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada

This keynote address presents advertising examples to illustrate highlights of the history of cigarette advertising as understood learning from fourteen years of research, testifying in litigation, and consulting with governments and public health organizations. This experience includes all of the major U.S. and transnational firms and many of the high profile legal cases, both private actions and filings by states, insurers, and classes. Also reflected will be work with organizations such as the Office on Smoking or Health on several U.S. Surgeon General reports, the Attorney Generals of several states and Canada, and the National Cancer Institute.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER / AUTHOR

Richard W. Pollay has taught advertising and marketing management in the Faculty of Commerce at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada for more than 30 years. Most recently he has had the responsibility of leading the teaching team that delivers the term long “Core Experience,” the introduction to graduate studies in management required of all incoming MBA students. This teaching requires him to deal with corporate decisions on marketing and consumer research, advertising strategy and their implementation.


He produced the reference book of the field, Information Sources for the History of Advertising (Greenwood Press, 1976) and many scholarly articles on historical topics. This led to occasional consulting with institutions like the American Advertising Museum (Portland, OR), the Smithsonian Institution, the Library of Congress, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Center for the Study of Commercialism (all Washington, DC).

His research of the last fourteen years on cigarette advertising has covered many varied topics in cigarette marketing: the targeting of children, the use of public relations, ethnic targeting, self-regulation, motivation research, media choices, packaging, stadium signage, campaign consistencies, retail signage, sports and events sponsorship, low-tar advertising to create impressions of healthfulness, etc. In general, he has described the managerial strategies and tactics. This has been accomplished by accessing varied sources: many, many boxes of corporate documents produced in the course of litigation; chronological notes from sources like the advertising and tobacco trade journals (see below); archival sources like the Hill papers of the founder of Hill & Knowlton; government reports; and original research and analysis into media plans and preferences and consumer reactions to advertising activity (see Pollay et al, 1996).

The History of Advertising Archives, which he curates, holds the largest known collection of American cigarette ads, with about 10,000 examples of print ads in a variety of sizes, including original poster boards and other retail signage, and about 500 TV ads. These are housed in the Tobacco Industry Promotion Series (TIPS), a compilation of resources which also includes many corporate documents, government reports, working papers, scholarly work by others, and sundry tobacco marketing artifacts (e.g. candy cigarettes, toys, T-shirts, caps). TIPS and the Archives are used frequently by both scholars and media, especially documentary film and television producers. Thanks to funding for cataloguing from the National Cancer Institute, most of the print ads can now be previewed at: http://www.tobaccodocuments.org/POLLAY/

The international interest in his research is reflected in invitations to speak at many conferences and at Universities both in North America and overseas.

LITIGATION: TESTIMONY, DEPOSITIONS AND AFFIDAVITS

CHARM 2001


Sackman v Liggett, Case No. 93 Civ. 4166 (ADS), Missouri.

Roth v. ACandS, Case #94C216 (Geary County, Kansas)

Burton v. R. J. Reynolds, American Tobacco (Kansas 94-2202-JWL)


Carter v. American Tobacco Co. et al. (Circuit Court, Duval Co., FL, Case #95-00934 CA).

Clark v. R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. et al. (Circuit Court, Duval Co., FL, Case #95-03333 CA)

Connors v. RJ Reynolds et al. (Florida)

Scott and Jackson v. American Tobacco et al. (Parish of Orleans, Louisiana, 96-8461)


Widdick (Maddox) v. Brown and Williamson et al. (FL)

F.A.I.R. v. City of Chicago (97C7619)

Maryland v. Philip Morris et al.

State of Missouri v. American Tobacco et al. (Cause No. 972-1465, Div. 5)

Insolia et al and USDEHS et al. Philip Morris Inc, et al. (Wisconsin 97-C-0347-C)

Complex Asbestos Litigation (California)

Patricia Henley vs. Philip Morris et al., CA Superior Court (No. 995172)

Williams-Branch v. Philip Morris, Multnomah County (OR), Case #9705-03857


Whiteley v. Raybestos-Manhattan et al (SFSC 303184)

Blue Cross and Blue Shield, New Jersey et al. v. Philip Morris, et al. (New York No. CV98-3287)


Imperial Tobacco Ltd, Rothmans, Benson & Hedges Inc and RJR MacDonald Inc v. Attorney General of Canada.

LEGISLATIVE HEARINGS

British Columbia Parliament, Victoria, Select Standing Committee on Health and Social Services re: Retail Warnings and sales to Minors. (Feb. 16, 1993)

House of Commons (Canada), Standing Committee on Health, Hearings on Plain Packaging of Tobacco Products, "As Anyone Can Plainly See: Brand Imagery in Cigarette Packaging and Promotion." (May 3, 1994)

Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation re: Benson & Hedges "Symphony of Fire" Fireworks Sponsorship. (Jan 9 & April 3, 1995)


King County Board of Health, Seattle, WA. Re: "Publicly Visible Cigarette Advertising: Outdoor, Mobile or Point of Sales Media." (April 17, 1998)

Commonwealth of Massachusetts, "Protecting Children as Consumers: Comments on Proposed Regulations re: packaging, marketing, distribution and sales of cigarettes" 940 CMR 19 and 940 CMR 20. See WP 98.3. (June 1, 1998)

CHRONOLOGICAL NOTES


Chronological notes from trade journals:

Advertising Age


MILESTONES IN MARKETING HISTORY


N. B. Scholars seeking access or copies of the above and related work, or who wish to utilize the archival holdings in TIPS, should contact Prof. Pollay at the Faculty of Commerce, UBC, 2053 Main Mall, Vancouver, BC, V6T 1Z2.

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