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Turning “Smoking Man” Images Around: Portrayals of Smoking in Men’s Magazines as a Blueprint for Smoking Cessation Campaigns

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Published scholarship documents the prevalence and health risks of smoking among men. There is also a rich tradition of studying the normative influences of the media in constructing and propagating images of healthy/unhealthy behaviors such as smoking. To understand the construction of these media-propagated smoking images toward male audiences, this article studies all advertising and editorial content of 3 major men’s magazines for 2001 using rhetorical and content analyses. The emergent themes construct the smoking man as sensual, in another place, independent, and mysterious. The authors recommend turning around these themes of the masculine “smoking man” for the purpose of strategic media planning and developing message-targeting guidelines for smoking cessation and prevention messages directed at men.

Illnesses related to tobacco use account for more than 440,000 deaths annually in the United States, costing approximately \$157 billion in health-related economic costs, making tobacco use one of the most lethal and expensive modifiable behaviors in the country (U.S. Surgeon General, 2004). Consumption of tobacco is linked with cancers, cardiovascular diseases, respiratory diseases, adverse reproductive effects, and so forth. Although the rate of smoking among U.S. adults has declined through the last 2 decades, smoking continues to plague the landscape of health in the United States and elsewhere in the world (U.S. Surgeon General). In fact, smoking prevention and cessation interventions account for a significant portion of the budget of federal funding agencies such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Institutes of Health, and National Cancer Institute.

Published scholarship also documents that men have higher risks of cardiovascular disease than women and report higher rates of morbidity (Nguyen, Béland, Otis, & Potvin, 1996). Approximately three men for every one

woman die from cardiovascular disease (Nguyen et al., 1996). Scholars have linked the higher cardiovascular risk among men with a plethora of lifestyle factors (including smoking) that are often reinforced by the social norms of masculinity. In spite of the decreasing gap between the genders, smoking as a behavior continues to be more prevalent among men than among women (Nguyen et al., 1996). Recent studies have reported that 28% to 36% of men are current smokers (Farrelly, Vilsaint, Lindsey, Thomas, & Messeri, 2001). Therefore, it is particularly relevant to interrogate the norms surrounding smoking among men and the ways in which such norms are connected with images of masculinity.

Media scholars argue that these norms of masculinity are often circulated in and cultivated by the media (Kline, 2003). Extant research systematically documents the powerful role of media as socializing agents (Croteau & Hoynes, 1997). Men’s magazines, along with a variety of other media types, provide the symbolic environment for normative behaviors among men. Media acceptance of cigarette advertising has dwindled since the release of the Surgeon General’s Report in 1964. Radio and TV ads were eliminated in 1971, and despite its costly advocacy advertising campaign opposing smoking regulation,

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R.J. Reynolds withdrew the infamous Joe Camel advertising icon in 1997 (Boyd, 2004; "Winds of Change," 2004). The Master Settlement Agreement banned cigarette product placement and most outdoor cigarette advertising, including billboards and transit ads ("Tobacco Master Settlement," 2001). Yet despite campaigns to ban all tobacco advertising (Crowley & Pokrywczynski, 1991), cigarette advertising, along with editorial content related to smoking, persists in many men's magazines. Therefore, it is important to ask the question: How is smoking portrayed in men's magazines?

Magazines present special opportunities, due to their targeting of particular demographics, for messages to create social realities (Reichert, Mueller, & Nitz, 2003), and for tobacco messages in particular to be directed at specific groups (Basil et al., 1991). Understanding the media environment in men's magazines with respect to smoking will help health promoters in strategically planning media types and in successfully crafting strategic prevention messages on smoking. In this article, we illuminate the themes around smoking that appear in men's magazines. For the purposes of our analysis, we combine rhetorical analysis with quantitative content analysis. Whereas the rhetorical analysis provides us with rich descriptions of the different themes, the content analysis gives us a quantitative picture of the frequency of occurrence of the themes, and allows us to compare these themes across the magazines. Based on our findings, we suggest applications for strategic message development in antimarketing campaigns.

MEDIA AND SMOKING

That the media play a critical role in the realm of health communication has been systematically articulated in the literature (Kline, 2003; Parrott, 1996). Parrott posited that it is important to examine health messages in the media because individuals "bring into a health interaction all of the personal knowledge and experiences that define them, including exposure to any number of news, entertainment, and commercial messages coming from sources that vary from television to print to Internet bulletins" (p. 275). An examination of the media discourse provides us a window into the broader discursive space around health issues, which often supplies the scripts for appropriate and desirable behaviors (Lupton, 1992). Content analyses of the media coverage of health behaviors demonstrate that the media are significantly more likely to contain and positively portray unhealthy behaviors as opposed to discussing the risks associated with unhealthy behaviors (Heeter, Perlstadt, & Greenberg, 1984; Signorielli, 1990).

Specifically in the realm of smoking, content analyses of print media have revealed that relatively few articles discuss the negative effects of smoking (Whelan, Sheridan, Meister, & Mosher, 1981). The ban on cigarette advertising in the broadcast media in 1971 led to the dramatic rise in

cigarette advertising in print media; this rise has been accompanied by the editorial policy of many magazines to downplay the hazards of smoking by not publishing articles that discuss the dangers of smoking (Signorielli, 1990; Warner, 1985). Further evidence for what Bagdikian (2004) might call "sacred cow" treatment of smoking by the media is a study of 10 prominent women's magazines; between 1967 and 1989, the magazines carried only 8 feature articles that discussed the dangers of smoking (Whelan et al., 1981). Examination of *Time* and *Newsweek* demonstrated that the magazines deleted all texts adverse to smoking from special supplements about health care (Warner, 1985; Weis & Burke, 1986). In the realm of television portrayals of smoking, Signorielli (1998) observed that the few characters on television who smoked exhibited positive traits, making them fairly attractive role models. According to McIntosh, Bazzini, Smith, and Wayne (1998), smokers in popular films were more romantically and sexually active than nonsmokers. Furthermore, the portrayals ignored the negative consequences of smoking, such as ill health and addiction. Of particular relevance are the frames through which the media construct healthy or unhealthy behaviors such as smoking, supplying the scripts for meaning making with reference to the behaviors (Andsager & Powers, 1999; Malone, Wenger, & Bero, 2002). Framing theory provides the overarching framework for exploring the portrayal of smoking in men's magazines.

Framing Theory

Framing theory states that the media create frames around issues, leading the public to think in particular ways about these issues (Andsager & Powers, 1999; Entman, 1993). Frames are lenses through which the discursive space constructs an issue, and therefore, they provide meaningful ways of looking at a topic or issue. Frames provide the normative scripts for looking at unhealthy behaviors and for attaching meanings to them. For instance, smoking may be framed as risky, unacceptable, fun, and so forth. Each of these different frames has different implications for the consumption of cigarettes and audience perceptions of smoking. For instance, when smoking is framed as "fun" as opposed to "risky," the audience is more likely to attend to the fun-filled aspects of smoking as opposed to the health risks of smoking. How smoking is framed is intrinsically tied to the appeal it holds for the audience.

Media frames legitimate certain viewpoints and push others out of the discursive space. Whereas some aspects of an issue get talked about and debated, other aspects of the issue stay out of public consciousness. Discursive frames are shaped through the presence or absence of certain arguments and viewpoints related to the issue. Media scholars argue that a plethora of factors, including the political and economic resources of the sponsors of a media frame and the relationship of the frame to the tendencies of contemporary American discourse, shape the nature of media portrayal of the issue (Entman, 1991).

Through the process of providing the public with a framework for interpreting an event, frames foster social stability. They provide sole explanations for the events surrounding the receiver of the message (Entman, 1993). In the realm of unhealthy behaviors, these frames in the media provide the markers of meaning-making for readers, listeners, and viewers. The frames define the limits of meanings and interpretations that may be imposed on a healthy/unhealthy behavior. Mediated discourse legitimates certain issue interpretations in public discourse, providing the recipe for certain interpretations of healthy or unhealthy behaviors and the enactment of these behaviors. Media framing of smoking has a long history in the United States. As early as World War I, when cigarette smoking was boosted by the ease of rationing tobacco in cigarette form for soldiers, editorial content about smoking men has framed smoking for reading publics. In fact, photos released by the Creel Committee for Public Information (and published by American media) often showed people (even nurses!) helping injured soldiers smoke; citizens were urged by almost every significant daily newspaper in the country to support the war effort by contributing cigarettes or money to buy cigarettes for the soldiers (Tate, 2000).

Framing discourse is specifically organized through the steps of selection, omission, foregrounding, and backgrounding (Schudson, 1993). Selection involves the decision to cover an issue and to present information on certain aspects of the issue that the media consider to be most relevant. Omission refers to the choice of not covering an issue or an aspect related to the issue. Foregrounding focuses on highlighting certain aspects of the issue, and backgrounding refers to the placement of certain viewpoints in the backdrop of the story such that they hardly get noticed. Through these steps, media organizations engage in the process of legitimation. Certain stakeholders, issues, and viewpoints are conferred legitimate status by media reports whereas others are denied such status. These frames provide lenses for looking at the issue or behavior (Malone et al., 2002). Understanding the frames around health issues is important both theoretically and pragmatically to guide the message construction strategies of countermarketing and prevention campaigns. What then are the mediated frames around smoking as it relates to men? This leads us to our research questions:

- RQ1: What are the themes that appear in cigarette-smoking-related messages in men's magazines?
- RQ2: How do smoking-related messages in men's magazines construct the identity of the "smoking man?"

METHOD

Data

This essay contributes to an understanding of smoking-related persuasion in part by looking at a genre of magazines

holistically, that is, by including any content that appears in magazines with respect to smoking (including both editorial and advertising content). When men leaf through a magazine that ostensibly represents masculine ideals, what do they see? How is tobacco an explicit or implicit part of arguments about what "counts" as "manly?" In an earlier study of magazine ads from 1960 to 1985, Altman, Slater, Albright, and Maccoby (1987) noted a decline in ads featuring cigarettes held or smoked, or the visible presence of smoke itself. In contrast, ads became increasingly associated with health (e.g., low tar or nicotine as cigarette features) and vitality (e.g., recreation, eroticism, risk, and adventure).

Holistic approach. Rather than studying only advertisements or only editorial content, this study looks at all smoking and cigarette references in leading men's magazines. One reason this holistic approach is important is that Weis and Burke (1986) found that tobacco ads in print media affect editorial content related to smoking. So, particularly in magazines that accept tobacco advertising, editorial content regarding tobacco might also contribute to image-making surrounding smoking. When someone looks through a magazine, that person is unlikely to read only advertisements or only editorial content—on the contrary, a casual magazine reader is likely to absorb both advertising and editorial content. By examining both, our holistic approach aims to examine the overall experience of the "smoking man" that might be gained from flipping through a popular men's magazine.

Sample. For this study, we chose to examine every page of an entire year (2001) of three leading men's magazines: *Maxim*, *Men's Health*, and *GQ*. The choice of 1 year for the content analysis was determined by past content analyses of media coverage, standard content analytic guidelines (Nuendorf, 2002), and our desire for the opportunity to analyze a wide range of themes that might appear in the period of a year. Excluding *Playboy*, the three magazines in this sample have the three largest circulations for the category in the world (International Federation, 2002).¹ Prior academic analyses of men's magazines have studied or mentioned all three of these titles as significant (Law & Labre, 2002; Reichert et al., 2003), although *Maxim* and *Men's Health* were sometimes excluded due to their relative youth as publications (Law & Labre, 2002; Reichert, Lambiase, Morgan, Carstarphen, & Zavoina, 1999). And although *Playboy* was used in a study of sexual explicitness in advertising (Reichert et al., 1999), it has generally been excluded from studies involving men's magazines (e.g., Basil et al., 1991; Kervin, 1990; Law & Labre, 2002; Reichert et al., 2003). We chose to exclude it as well, in part because it is not as readily available to males of all ages.

Several past studies examined *Esquire*, in part because its long history makes it available for longitudinal studies,

but its popularity has been surpassed by newer magazines such as *Maxim* and other so-called “lad mags” (Carr, 2004, p. C1), leading to our inclusion of *Maxim* rather than *Esquire*. In addition, each of the three magazines we selected has a slightly different focus: *Men’s Health* focuses on men’s health and fitness, *GQ* has closer ties to men’s fashion, and *Maxim* is a more general men’s lifestyle title. Although some *Men’s Health* articles might urge readers to quit, in contrast to advertisements in *GQ* or *Maxim* encouraging men to smoke, all three magazines seem to acknowledge masculine qualities that are associated with smoking. Not all *Men’s Health* references encourage quitting, and as part of a men’s magazine, all of its cigarette depictions still contribute to an overall picture of masculinity. One *Men’s Health* article titled “How to Survive the Slammer” (2001), for instance, suggests hoarding cigarettes because “cigarettes are still the preferred prison currency” (p. 116). Although somewhat tongue-in-cheek, this reference is not inconsistent with smoking images in nonhealth-focused magazines.

Unit of analysis. Our unit of analysis was the occurrence of smoking cigarettes. An occurrence was one complete advertisement (ranging from 1 to 4 pages) or one reference in an article. We coded each occurrence of smoking/cigarette in the three magazines from January 2001 through December 2001. Our data analysis was conducted in two steps. First, we conducted a rhetorical analysis of the themes that emerged in the occurrences. The rhetorical analysis was followed up by a content analysis of the themes/subthemes to measure their occurrence in the messages.

Rhetorical Analysis

The rhetorical analysis of the themes regarding tobacco synthesizes these themes into identifiable characteristics, supported by representative examples of both individual characteristics and synthesized themes. Rabin and Sugarman (1993) provided perspectives on the problem of smoking from a perspective of prevention; the themes synthesized in this rhetorical analysis also provide perspectives on smoking, but they are focused on what a “smoking man” looks like rather than a particular perspective toward smoking. Following Moore’s work on cigarettes as representational ideographs (1996), this rhetorical analysis will argue about what cigarettes and smoking appear to *mean* according to men’s magazines.

Content Analysis

As suggested by Kline (2003), the combination of multiple methodologies is often critical to develop an understanding of the complexities of health portrayals in mediated discourse. Whereas the rhetorical analysis provided a thick

description of the data, the content analysis documented the frequency of occurrence of the different themes identified in the rhetorical analysis. Based on our initial rhetorical analysis of the articles (described in the previous paragraph) and drawing on past research, theories, and models, we came up with 32 different categories (some emerged and were added during the initial qualitative analysis). In other words, the definition of categories was driven by the combination of extant research and the preliminary rhetorical analysis.

In arriving at the categories, we went through an iterative technique, conversing about the theoretical relevance of each category, identifying and defining the categories, and operationalizing them (Krippendorff, 1980). We defined the different types of occurrences that would be coded within a category, thus describing the boundaries of the category and establishing what would be counted as belonging within the category and what would not be counted. The categories were broken down into easily identifiable units. For instance, the messages could easily be coded for “man serving” and/or “woman serving.” The themes and subthemes were coded for presence and/or absence by two authors who also served as the coders (0 = Absent and 1 = Present). Each of the authors first coded approximately 10.4% of the messages (30 occurrences) to establish inter-coder reliability. The kappa values for each of the categories fell within the acceptable range (from .60–1.00). Cohen’s kappa accounts for chance agreement, and takes into consideration the number of categories as well as the distribution of values in these categories (Lombard, Snyder-Duch, & Bracken, 2002). It is considered the measure of choice in content analyses and is a more conservative measure of reliability. Table 1 gives the kappa values for each of the categories/subcategories. After the initial reliability analysis, the entire sample of occurrences was coded. Furthermore, *t* tests were conducted to compare the occurrences in the different magazines to see if the three men’s magazines differed from each other in the ways in which they portrayed smoking.

RESULTS

One year’s worth of three men’s magazines yielded 288 occurrences of smoking/cigarettes (see Table 2). Each issue of *GQ* contained approximately 7 instances, *Maxim* contained 8 instances per issue, and *Men’s Health* contained 3 instances of smoking per issue (unlike the other two, it contained no cigarette advertising). RQ1 interrogated the themes that appeared in the men’s magazines. Table 2 reflects a quantitative representation of the occurrence of the different themes/subthemes.

We synthesized these themes into four characterizations of masculinity connected to smoking in men’s magazines: sensual, in an “other” place, independent, and mysterious. Each characteristic describes the man who smokes; although some descriptions originally had a positive valence and

TABLE 1
Intercoder Reliabilities for the Coding Categories

Category	k
Cowboy	1.00
Loner	.82
Independence	.88
Outdoors and nature	.78
Animals in the ad	1.00
Cigarette package	.90
Darkness and/or shadow	.80
Hidden faces	1.00
Hidden objects	—
Crowd of people	.62
Outlaw	1.00
Rebellion	.76
Bad boy	.78
Bad girl	.60
Smoke	.88
Fire	1.00
Sensory appeal	.60
Taste	.60
Smell	—
Touch	.72
Hearing	1.00
Exotic locale	.70
Other place	.74
Cigarette as object of desire	.80
Cigarette in the spotlight	.76
Person in spotlight	.61
Man holding/smoking	1.00
Woman holding/smoking	.64
Man serving	—
Woman serving	1.00
Alcohol	1.00
Bar	1.00
Perceived severity	.70
Perceived susceptibility	1.00
Response efficacy	.64
Self-efficacy	1.00

TABLE 2
Frequencies and Percentages of Themes

Category	Frequency	%
Cowboy	31	10.8
Loner	61	21.2
Independence	87	30.2
Outdoors and nature	142	49.3
Animals in the ad	39	13.5
Cigarette package	103	35.8
Darkness and/or shadow	105	36.5
Hidden faces	32	11.1
Hidden objects	11	3.8
Crowd of people	37	12.8
Outlaw	36	12.5
Rebellion	56	19.4
Bad boy	75	26
Bad girl	21	7.3
Smoke	143	49.7
Fire	79	27.4
Sensory appeal	152	52.8
Taste	91	31.6
Smell	11	3.8
Touch	30	10.4
Hearing	19	6.6
Exotic locale	122	42.4
Other place	171	59.4
Cigarette as object of desire	126	43.8
Cigarette in the spotlight	56	19.4
Person in the spotlight	62	21.5
Man holding/smoking	74	25.7
Woman holding/smoking	21	7.3
Man serving	0	0
Woman serving	7	2.4
Alcohol	30	26.4
Bar	76	10.4
Severity of smoking	53	33.5
Susceptibility	19	12
Effectiveness of option	8	5.1
Personal effectiveness	25	15.8

Note. N = 288.

some a negative, and although some characteristics were extrapolated from advertisements and some from editorial content, together they present vivid images of what a "smoking man" looks like. More specifically, these images work together to describe the *man's* smoking man—that is, an image constructed not by others, but *by* men's magazines *for* men. The Results section then presents this "smoking man's" composite description. The themes presented following depict the frames within which smoking is constructed in men's magazines.

Themes

Sensual. Most references (53.1%) to tobacco appeal to the senses. Others go beyond simple sensory appeal to phallic symbolism and the sensuous implication of desire; for this reason, coding categories such as "cigarette as object of desire," and "cigarette in the spotlight" together contribute to the "sensual" nature of the smoking man.

One advertising slogan for Camel cigarettes synthesizes this sensory/sensuous duality: "pleasure to burn."

Sight is one sense often engaged in discussions of tobacco, from the colors of advertisements to photos of people smoking (especially musicians) to descriptions of interview subjects holding cigarettes. A Newport advertisement of a sweepstakes featured the tag line "Newport Rhythm and Sound," connecting cigarettes with hearing. Touch emerged in fictional descriptions of characters touching cigarettes or feeling the cigarettes on their lips, and one piece of advice from a *Men's Health* column warned that light cigarettes "may feel gentler to the throat," but they lead to deeper inhalations that result in just as much tar and nicotine as regular cigarettes. Allusions to taste are common as well, especially in Marlboro ads ("flavor") and Kool ads ("menthol"). One Parliament advertisement in particular emphasizes the connection of smoking to the senses. A two-page spread shows a group of people standing at the end of a pier, and although almost in darkness, they appear

to be talking and drinking (and maybe smoking) together. It is dusk, and the clouds in the sky resemble hanging smoke. Low lights on the pier pinpoint the darkness at intervals, and lights are visible on the shore across the lake. The sensory appeal of the photograph is complemented by the words: “full flavor,” “distinctly smooth,” and “out of the clear blue.” Sight, touch, taste, even hints of sounds and smells, create an ad with an outdoor, sophisticated, sensory appeal. Nonadvertising content engaged senses as well; one nonfiction writer describes the day he interviewed actor Paul Hogan: “so perfect and so still that I can hear Hogan’s lips unstick from the cigarette filter each time he finishes a puff.” This intimate description shows how *sensory* fades to *sensual*.

The most direct example of a connection between cigarettes and sexuality is perhaps a Swisher Sweets ad in which two people are sitting at a honky-tonk bar. The man, in cowboy hat and large belt buckle, leans suggestively against the woman, who is holding a cigarette and cutting her eyes in his direction. The room is smoky, there is a drink on the bar, and the scene is one big innuendo. The finishing touch on the sensuality of smoking, however, is the placement of the Swisher Sweets package, superimposed over the picture: It is slightly angled with three cigarettes protruding from the top—all pointed directly below the man’s belt buckle.

Even derogatory remarks about cigarettes make connections with sensuality; a *Maxim* short column about smoking cessation mentions impotence as one possible consequence of cigarette smoking. One of the most common ways in which the smoking man is connected to sensuality is in the way cigarettes are presented in advertisements: in the spotlight, standing upright, clearly phallic symbols and objects of desire. In other places (sometimes humorous references), “lighting up a cigarette” alludes to a recent sexual encounter.

The content analysis revealed that 53.1% of the cigarette/smoking occurrences were likely to contain some appeal communicating to the senses. These messages were hedonistically oriented and referred to the pleasures of smoking. With respect to specific senses other than sight, 32% of the occurrences referred to taste, 11.5% referred to touch, 6.6% referred to sound, and 3.3% referred to smell. Of the 288 occurrences, 43.8% referred to cigarettes as an object of desire and 19.4% of the messages presented cigarettes in the spotlight. Smoke or smoking appeared in 252 instances (87.5%), further adding to the sensory nature of the messages.

In an “other” place. Men likely read their magazines in everyday places—on couches, in waiting rooms, and in airplanes and airports. Yet cigarette smoking in men’s magazines does not occur in these pedestrian locations; rather, it takes place in another/an “other” place. Perhaps the place is exotic—Camel’s Egyptian and Middle Eastern advertising settings. Perhaps it is a vacation setting—men

and women in bathing suits laughing together in a swimming pool. Or maybe it is in the territory of a star—an interview with *Crocodile Dundee*’s Paul Hogan at his estate, or the tour bus of country music legend Willie Nelson. Photos of smoking world leaders—John F. Kennedy, Castro—are set in appropriate environments for such weighty matters: buildings of state, the Kennedy compound, a revolutionary stage. Although not all of these locations can be rightly termed “exotic,” they are all far removed from the locations where readers are likely to be. The “otherness” of the places themselves contributes to the “otherness” of smoking—a minority pursuit, perhaps exotic or perhaps simply different than the majority. The smoker, as minority, has become the “other,” and the locations associated with smoking reflect this appealing sort of outlaw status.

Many of these “other” places are outside (49.3%). In one *Maxim* fashion section, men smoke around a fire while camping in Arctic tundra. Camel advertisements and packaging feature a camel in the desert, and Parliament ads are almost always set outside, at twilight, by water, with dusky clouds hanging like smoke in the sky. A Newport ad shows newlyweds rollerblading down a cobbled walkway, and a *GQ* fashion shoot shows a photographer on outdoor steps, adjusting a camera, cigarette dangling from his lip. There is irony to these “outside” associations with smoking because “outside” is often the only place smokers are permitted to smoke. The more subtle significance of outside associations with smoking is somewhat connected to the independence/rebellion theme following: as the percentage of smokers in American culture has declined, smoking as a pursuit has come to be “outside” the mainstream. The location of smoking in “other” places that are outside reflects and celebrates this reality. Yet in some ways these images allow smokers to do with restrictions the same thing journalists did in embracing the term *muckraker*—smokers take the space left to them and wear it as a badge of honor.

When smoking is not associated with an “outside” other place, it is often set in a place where alcohol is present. *Maxim*’s article about playing poker features many photos of men sitting at a table strewn with beer bottles and cigarette butts. Works of fiction often describe “smoky bars” as the sites for smoking (10.4%), and a *Men’s Health* feature associates staying away from bars with a higher chance of kicking the smoking habit. Indoor “other” places, then, are often alcohol-related (26.4% of all occurrences). References to or settings involving another place occurred 171 times (59.4%); 42.4% of the occurrences were set in the backdrop of an exotic locale. The adventure and novelty of these “other places” also contribute to the next critical theme of tobacco placement in men’s magazines: independence.

Independent. One of the most famous “smoking men” of all falls squarely into this “character”: the Marlboro man. Marlboro ads feature lone cowboys (10.8%) or sometimes even desert scenes with no one at all—just some lonely

cacti and maybe a pickup truck. This independence draws on ideas of toughness and rugged individualism. On the editorial side, a *GQ* excerpt from a book about JFK connects the presence of ashtrays and smoking "forty Pall Malls each day" to Jackie Kennedy's loneliness and independence. Another *GQ* article describes writers for whom "literature is a contact sport," governed by the credo, "Drain that bottle, swing that girl, torch another Camel, grab that pen" (Kirn, 2001, p. 114). An article about actor Heath Ledger ends as he "lets his Camel burn low." Smoking acts as a symbol of a brooding, tough independence. An article about Beach Boy Brian Wilson links smoking to an extreme independence combined with loneliness, to the point of reclusiveness. The theme of independence was observed in 87 instances (30.2%). Loneliness appeared in 61 instances (21.2%).

Another kind of independence, however, emphasizes rebellion (19.4%), drawing on the appeal of the bad boy image (26%). In a piece of fiction from *GQ*, independent characters of the outlaw sort (12.5%) are described as smoking "black-market Kools." More than one article refers to cigarettes as prison currency, buying an outlaw-style independence full of machismo. *Maxim* even makes smoking a symbol of independence through rebellion in a joke involving smoking, drinking, a 10-year-old boy, and absent parents.

Mysterious. Darkness (36.5%) is one of the primary communicators of smoking's connection with mystery. Advertisements and photos often show dark places with the hint of smoke. Zippo's advertisements show battered but operable lighters such as one engraved, "MICHAEL—My Heart Is Aflame For You, Michelle," with the caption, "TRUE LOVE IS NOT DISPOSABLE." Certainly tied to the sensual nature of the smoking man, this message is also one of mystery and incomplete disclosure. The content analysis revealed that 11.1% of the occurrences contained hidden faces, and 3.8% contained hidden objects. The sense of mystery is further heightened by the presence of crowds (12.8%). Camel's emphasis on other places and scantily clad, exotic cigarette girls also creates a sense of mystery surrounding smoking. Actor Sean Bean, in a *Maxim* fashion shoot, answers a question about vices with, "Smoking. That's all I'll admit to." The smoking man never tells all.

The Smoking Man

A study of billboards involving tobacco and alcohol found that such ads do not rely on famous people, but rather on similarity as a persuasive factor; further, these ads targeted consumers with social cues such as attractive people and ethnic matching (Schooler, Basil, & Altman, 1991). As the preceding themes have illustrated, despite some celebrity diversions, the "character" of choice to portray the smoking man remains the attractive and successful everyman.

The smoking man is perhaps most striking as a rhetorical construction when contrasted with the "smoking victim"

portrayed by thetruth.com, state antismoking campaigns, and antismoking organizations. The smoking victim is usually dying, pale, and miserable. The smoking victim spends a lot of time indoors receiving treatment, and the smoking victim depends on health care providers and family support. Often the smoking victim is portrayed putting affairs in order and preparing for death. The tone of smoking victim portrayals is somber.

The "smoking man" prototype, however, presents none of these traits. In keeping with Schooler et al.'s (1991) images of vitality, the smoking man spends much time outside working and playing, often near mountains or the water. The smoking man does not frequent conventional places, but instead can be found in "other" places that are exotic or exciting—foreign, luxurious, even dangerous. The smoking man makes his own choices, which are sometimes bold and reckless, but no one tells him what to do (irony: no one but tobacco advertisers, that is). His independence is always tough and at times even rebellious. By his own choice, he may become something of an outlaw, and his cigarette is one illustration of that outsider status.

The smoking man's independence extends to his exploration of his senses. Sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and tactile experiences surround him and give his life excitement. His smoking makes him more sexually attractive as well, as his heightened sensory awareness gives him a sensual appeal that he exploits. He is not an open book, however, as his experiences are kept close in a strong, silent sort of way. And as in *The X-Files*, the smoking man is shrouded in mystery, perhaps even danger and adventure—and a cloud of smoke.

Comparison of Magazines

Table 3 presents the occurrences (frequencies and percentages) of the different categories of smoking portrayals in the three magazines, *GQ*, *Maxim*, and *Men's Health*. The results presented in the table demonstrate that *GQ* and *Maxim* were most likely to present smoking in an "other place," connecting the consumption of cigarettes with an exotic locale. Smoking was also presented in the backdrop of independence and rebellion, and enacted in a dark and shadowy setting. Sensory appeals were widely used in the presentation of smoking. Although advertising in these magazines did document to some degree the health consequences of smoking (severity) documented in the compulsory surgeon general's warnings in cigarette ads, there was minimal reference to the susceptibility of individuals and the options available to prevent and/or quit smoking.

In *Men's Health*, articles on health effects of smoking discussed the negative health consequences of smoking, the susceptibility of individuals to the health consequences, and the effectiveness of options to prevent or quit smoking (such as patches). In contrast to *GQ* and *Maxim*, *Men's Health* primarily presented smoking within the frame of its consequences and ways to quit smoking. The magazine discussed

TABLE 3
Frequencies and Percentages of Themes for Magazines

Category	<i>GQ</i>		<i>Maxim</i>		<i>Men's Health</i>	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Cowboy	8	11.9	2	2.7	0	0
Loner	20	29.9	8	11.0	2	11.1
Independence	32	47.8	14	19.2	2	11.1
Outdoors and nature	36	53.7	23	31.5	0	0
Animals in the ad	9	13.4	13	17.8	0	0
Cigarette package	23	4.3	29	39.7	2	11.1
Darkness and/or shadow	29	43.3	22	30.1	1	5.6
Hidden faces	9	13.4	5	6.8	1	5.6
Hidden objects	4	6.0	6	8.2	0	0
Crowd of people	8	11.9	8	11.0	0	0
Outlaw	8	11.9	11	15.1	2	11.1
Rebellion	23	34.3	18	24.7	0	0
Bad boy	24	35.8	30	41.1	3	16.7
Bad girl	7	10.4	8	11.0	0	0
Smoke	12	17.9	11	15.1	3	16.7
Fire	13	19.4	14	19.2	1	5.6
Sensory appeal	31	46.3	29	39.7	1	5.6
Taste	19	28.4	22	30.1	2	11.1
Smell	2	3.0	2	2.7	0	0
Touch	5	7.5	5	6.8	0	0
Hearing	195	7.5	3	4.1	0	0
Exotic locale	29	43.3	21	28.8	0	0
Other place	52	77.6	31	42.5	2	11.1
Cigarette as object of desire	24	35.8	26	35.6	3	16.7
Cigarette in the spotlight	11	16.4	13	17.8	1	5.6
Person in spotlight	10	14.9	4	5.5	0	0
Man holding/smoking	27	40.3	12	16.4	1	5.6
Woman holding/smoking	5	7.5	4	5.5	0	0
Man serving	0	0	0	0	0	0
Woman serving	2	3.0	3	4.1	0	0
Alcohol	11	16.4	20	27.4	8	44.4
Bar	5	7.5	4	5.5	4	22.2
Severity of smoking	18	26.9	23	31.5	12	66.7
Susceptibility	4	6.0	5	6.8	10	55.6
Effectiveness of option	1	1.5	2	2.7	5	27.8
Personal effectiveness	10	14.9	9	12.3	6	33.3

the severity of smoking, the susceptibility of individual smokers to the consequences of smoking, the effectiveness of options to prevent and/or quit smoking, and the effectiveness of individuals in doing so.

Furthermore, paired sample *t* tests were conducted to compare the mean number of occurrences of the different portrayals in the magazines with respect to smoking. When *GQ* and *Maxim* were compared, *GQ* was significantly more likely to carry the depictions of cowboy, $t(138)=2.13$, $p<.05$, mean difference = .09; loner, $t(138)=2.85$, $p<.01$, mean difference = .19; independence, $t(138)=3.75$, $p<.001$, mean difference = .29; outdoors and nature, $t(138)=2.71$, $p<.01$, mean difference = .22; other place, $t(138)=4.50$, $p<.001$, mean difference = .35; and man holding/smoking, $t(138)=3.24$, $p<.01$, mean difference = .24; as compared to *Maxim*.

In the comparisons of *GQ* and *Men's Health*, it was observed that *GQ* was significantly more likely to carry the portrayals of independence, $t(83)=2.92$, $p<.01$, mean difference = .37; outdoors and nature, $t(83)=4.52$, $p<.001$, mean difference = .54; darkness and/or shadow, $t(83)=3.10$, $p<.01$, mean difference = .37; rebellion, $t(83)=3.03$, $p<.01$, mean difference = .34; sensory appeal, $t(83)=3.33$, $p<.001$, mean difference = .41; exotic locale, $t(83)=3.66$, $p<.001$, mean difference = .43; and other place, $t(83)=6.23$, $p<.001$, mean difference = .67; and man holding/smoking, $t(83)=2.89$, $p<.01$, mean difference = .35; as compared to *Men's Health*. However, *Men's Health* was significantly more likely to portray the severity of smoking, $t(83)=3.30$, $p<.01$, mean difference = .40; susceptibility to the outcomes of smoking, $t(83)=5.94$, $p<.001$, mean difference = .50; and the

effectiveness of options to prevent and/or quit smoking, $t(83)=4.21$, $p < .001$, mean difference = .26; as compared to *GQ*.

Finally in the comparison of *Maxim* and *Men's Health*, the paired t tests suggested that *Maxim* was significantly more likely to carry portrayals of outdoors and nature, $t(89)=2.85$, $p < .01$, mean difference = .32; cigarette package, $t(89)=2.34$, $p < .05$, mean difference = .29; darkness and/or shadow, $t(89)=2.18$, $p < .05$, mean difference = .25; rebellion, $t(89)=2.40$, $p < .05$, mean difference = .25; sensory appeal, $t(89)=2.85$, $p < .01$, mean difference = .34; exotic locale, $t(89)=2.66$, $p < .01$, mean difference = .29; other place, $t(89)=2.54$, $p < .05$, mean difference = .31; in its presentation of smoking as compared to *Men's Health*. However, *Men's Health* was significantly more likely to present the severity of smoking, $t(89)=2.84$, $p < .01$, mean difference = .35; susceptibility to the outcomes of smoking, $t(89)=5.79$, $p < .001$, mean difference = .49; the effectiveness of options to prevent or quit smoking, $t(89)=3.81$, $p < .001$, mean difference = .25; and the effectiveness of individuals in their ability to quit smoking, $t(89)=2.18$, $p < .05$, mean difference = .21; as compared to *Maxim*.

DISCUSSION

Supporting the findings of previous research suggesting that media are more likely to portray unhealthy behaviors positively and minimize the negative consequences of such behaviors (Heeter et al., 1984; Signorielli, 1990), this article demonstrates that men's magazines typically construct smoking in the realm of masculinity, and typically underplay the unhealthy consequences of smoking. Furthermore, this project provides a descriptive profile of the "smoking man" as constructed in men's magazines. The framing of an unhealthy behavior such as smoking as a pillar of masculinity holds important implications for the consumption of cigarettes and the broader societal norms that circulate around men's smoking and men's health (see, for instance, Nguyen et al., 1996). Our rhetorical and content analyses revealed that media messages on smoking construct the smoking man as a desirable icon of American individualism, embodying the toughness and the mystery of the Marlboro man, and providing continuity to the traditional images of masculinity that have been culturally constructed around smoking (Romer & Jamieson, 2001). Masculinity may be consumed and enacted through the consumption of cigarettes. The smoking man is sensuous, mysterious, independent, and in some other place that is different from the mundane locales of everyday life. Smoking serves as the conduit that transfers him to these mysterious other places. Masculinity is enacted in a variety of contexts, and smoking provides the continuous thread that flows through these very different contexts.

In addition to portraying cigarettes and smoking in the context of individualism, the messages emphasized the sensory/sensual nature of smoking. The pleasurable experience associated with smoking was a key feature that was consistently repeated. Cigarettes were constructed as objects of desire, drawing associations with the male libido. The sensuous characteristic of smoking was also extrapolated into the realm of exotic places that were presented in the messages. The act of smoking somehow transferred the smoker into the land of camels and scantily clad Middle-Eastern women who served cigarettes on golden platters. In summary, the desirability of the cigarette was juxtaposed against other desirable objects.

The sensuous appeal of cigarettes/smoking was further exacerbated by the sense of mystery embedded in the messages. The forbidden pleasure of smoking a cigarette was played out by crowds, hidden faces, and hidden objects. The sense of mystery was also played out by the presence of smoke. Overall, the images of smoking in the men's magazines offered the reader the possibility of achieving masculinity through the consumption of cigarettes. This manhood was sensuous and mysterious, independent, and located in another place. It promised the pleasures of a thrill ride to another locale. Smoking becomes, then, a way of access to "other" experiences and locales, suggesting that smoking offers the pleasures that come along with the consumption of the exotic.

When the portrayals of smoking in the magazines were compared, significant differences emerged between the fashion and lifestyle magazines (*GQ* and *Maxim*) and the health magazine (*Men's Health*). Whereas the presentation of smoking in the realm of the typically masculine tropes of sensuality, the exotic other, independence, and mystery predominated in *GQ* and *Maxim*, *Men's Health* was significantly more likely to discuss the consequences of smoking, the susceptibility of smokers to these consequences, and the effectiveness of alternative options to prevent or quit smoking. Also, in *Men's Health*, the association of smoking with the masculine frames of sensuality, the exotic other, independence, and mystery was largely absent. Whereas each issue of *GQ* contained approximately 7 instances and *Maxim* contained 8 instances per issue, *Men's Health* contained 3 instances of smoking per issue and, unlike the other two, contained no cigarette advertising.

Methodologically, the synthesis of rhetorical and traditional content analyses equips researchers with the ability to contextualize quantitative frequency counts with in-depth narratives that emerge from the "field of interest." The study demonstrates that not only could rhetorical and quantitative approaches be studied together within a particular problem scenario, but they also complement each other in constructing the description of a mediated environment around a specific issue. Such "thick descriptions" may then be used by health promoters and interventionists for media planning and message targeting strategies.

Application

In locating the role of formative research in strategic intervention development, Dutta-Bergman (2004) argues that the success of health communication campaigns depends on a thoughtful analysis of the media environment, and the appropriate choice of media planning and message targeting strategies based on the coverage of the health issue in critical media outlets. Therefore, the analysis of media discourse around smoking in men's magazines provides valuable guidelines for media planning and message development in countermarketing campaigns.

Men's magazines provide a fertile environment for smoking-related messages. Therefore, media planning guidelines drawn from the tobacco messages in the men's magazines point us toward the strategic use of such men's magazines (*GQ* and *Maxim*) for the placement of smoking prevention and cessation messages (both in the forms of advertisements and antismoking articles). The prevalence of smoking-related messages in these magazines suggests that men's magazines might reach the at-risk segment of smokers among men, an idea that can inform media planning strategy (see, for instance, Romer & Jamieson, 2001). In other words, the presence of quit-smoking messages with appeals to sensuality, "other" places, independence, and mystery would perhaps create greater opportunities for countering the images of smoking depicted in the magazines (largely via advertisements).

Also, the messages of smoking in men's magazines provide critical insights regarding the development of countermarketing messages. Messages placed in such magazines need to be sensory in nature, appealing to the "sensuous affinity" of the smoking man (see, e.g., Palmgreen, Donohew, Lorch, Hoyle, & Stephenson, 2001). In other words, nonsmoking should be pitched as a sensuous lifestyle choice that comes with other sensory pleasures. The choice of not smoking needs to be placed within the realm of the senses such as taste, flavor, sight, and sound instead of the traditional scare tactics. For instance, much like the *Parliament* ads, messages of antismoking might highlight the fun-filled and sensuous nature of not smoking, including better prospects of a good sex life associated with not smoking (Romer & Jamieson, 2001). The use of attractive female celebrities in antismoking messages might provide an alternative association between not smoking and being sexually appealing. Yet other strategies might involve drawing associations between the sensuous appeal of exotic places with the nonsmoking choice. Persuasive cues used in the messages need to focus on affective and heuristic cues rather than seek to achieve behavior change via central processing cues (see Malone et al., 2002). The rebellious and individualistic profile of smoking men portrayed in the messages suggests the importance of staying away from preachy messages that might appeal to the psychological reactance of the group, thereby associating smoking with

rebellion (Green, Murphy, & McKenna, 2002; Malone et al., 2002).

Conclusion, Limitations, and Directions for Future Research

In summary, this article demonstrated that the mediated environment in popular men's magazines constructs smoking men in the traditionally masculine trope of rugged individualism. However, the individualistic construction is accompanied by appeal to the senses, mystery, and the desire to be someplace else. Smoking is cast in the domain of masculinity; the consumption of cigarettes is related with consuming the image of manhood. In other words, masculinity is commodified and presented as a marker of an unhealthy behavior. This suggests the need for anti-marketing strategies that promote masculinity in healthy domains such as nonsmoking.

One of the limitations of this article is its focus on men's lifestyle magazines. Future research might examine other common media directed at men, or perhaps the smoking environment in women's magazines and general-interest magazines. Also, we focused on one year: 2001. The findings of this study might be used with future studies and extant studies such as Altman et al.'s (1987) to track the changes in the image of the smoking man over the decades. Yet another limitation is the participation of both authors in the coding process, which might have introduced certain biases into the coding. Also, in this study, the depiction of smoking was not compared to other consumer products such as alcohol (more similar), clothing (hedonistic), or toasters (utilitarian). Such comparison in future research might shed additional light on the framing of different product categories.

It is important to point out here that this particular project focused on examining the mediated discourse around smoking. We did not examine the effects of such discourse or the relationship between media frames and audience perceptions of smoking. Future research needs to examine the relationship between media frames of smoking and audience perceptions of smoking. For instance, an experiment might be conducted to compare the effects on smoking perception of the masculine frame and a fear-based frame. Whatever the media and featured demographics of future research, however, that research needs to continue to find out what makes prosmoking messages so effective so that those "smoking man" images can be turned around and used as a communicative force against the costly and life-threatening habit.

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