

# Journal of the Canadian Historical Association Revue de la Société historique du Canada



## Cigarette Marketing and Smoking Culture in 1930s Canada

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Volume 25, Number 1, 2014

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1032799ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7202/1032799ar>

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### Publisher(s)

The Canadian Historical Association / La Société historique du Canada

### ISSN

0847-4478 (print)

1712-6274 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

### Cite this article

Robinson, D. J. (2014). Cigarette Marketing and Smoking Culture in 1930s Canada. *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association / Revue de la Société historique du Canada*, 25(1), 63–105. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1032799ar>

### Article abstract

This paper examines political-economic, cultural, and marketing changes during the 1930s that solidified the domestic tobacco industry and cigarette smoking as a socially normative practice. During this decade, farm production of cigarette tobacco grew exponentially in southern Ontario, as did cigarette manufacturing operations, mostly in Montréal. Cigarette marketing and advertising were prolific, as evidenced by the bevy of premium promotions, gift rebates, sports sponsorships, and athlete and celebrity testimonial advertising. Women, for the first time, were routinely targeted by cigarette advertising, and their entry into the ranks of “legitimate” smokers proved a watershed for tobacco manufacturers. Two specific developments further boosted the long-term viability of the cigarette industry. First, Canada’s dominant tobacco firm, Imperial Tobacco, spent heavily on public relations advertising to overcome public criticism of its cut-throat merchandising practices. Second, menthol and filtered cigarettes first appeared in the 1930s, ads for which reassured smokers worried about sore throats and persistent coughs. Long before the tobacco industry’s massive public relations response in the 1950s to the “cancer scare” (which included the heavy promotion of filtered brands as “safer” cigarettes), Imperial Tobacco, among others, was versed in issue-management public relations and forms of cigarette “health marketing.”

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## *Abstract*

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## *Résumé*

*Le présent article examine les changements politico-économiques, culturels et commerciaux des années 1930 qui ont consolidé l’industrie du tabac au pays et fait du tabagisme une pratique sociale normalisée. Au cours de cette décennie, la culture de tabac à cigarettes s’est accrue de façon exponentielle dans le sud de l’Ontario, au même titre que la fabrication de cigarettes, surtout à Montréal. Le marketing et la publicité de la cigarette battaient leur plein, comme en font foi la multitude de primes,*

*de rabais, de commandites sportives et de publicités présentant des témoignages d'athlètes et de célébrités. Pour la première fois, les femmes étaient régulièrement ciblées par les publicités de cigarettes, et leur entrée dans le cercle des fumeurs « légitimes » a marqué un tournant pour les fabricants de tabac. Deux nouveautés ont donné du tonus à la viabilité à long terme de l'industrie de la cigarette. Premièrement, la compagnie de tabac dominante au Canada, Imperial Tobacco, a beaucoup investi dans des opérations de relations publiques pour réfuter les critiques du public au sujet de ses pratiques commerciales sauvages. Deuxièmement, les cigarettes au menthol et les cigarettes avec filtre ont fait leur apparition dans les années 1930 et leurs publicités cherchaient à rassurer les fumeurs préoccupés par le mal de gorge et la toux persistante. Bien avant que l'industrie du tabac ne mène de grandes campagnes de relations publiques dans les années 1950 en réaction à la « peur du cancer » (campagnes qui ont notamment beaucoup fait la publicité de marques de cigarettes avec filtre « moins dommageables »), Imperial Tobacco, entre autres, était passée maître dans les opérations de relations publiques stratégiques et le « marketing santé » de la cigarette.*

## Introduction

In October 1936, mining magnate William Henry Wright bought *The Globe*, an influential Toronto daily. Soon after, he announced that the paper would repeal its twin publishing bans on horse-race betting odds and cigarette advertisements. “I smoke cigarettes myself,” he stated, and saw no compelling reason to continue the ad ban.<sup>1</sup> A month later Wright purchased *The Mail*, which he soon merged with his prior acquisition to create *The Globe and Mail*. Not long after, the newspaper ran ads for British tobacco maker Peter Jackson’s Canadian launch of “du Maurier Filter” cigarettes. These ads promoted the technological advances and health benefits of filtered cigarettes, a novelty in the 1930s. The du Maurier filter trapped “all irritants before they reach your lips,” ensuring a “purer” cigarette, steeped in “mildness” and “pleasing flavour.”<sup>2</sup> The repeal of a cigarette ad ban and health-themed cigarette promotion highlight two of the many cultural changes and marketing practices during the 1930s

that saw cigarette smoking become a popular, socially normative practice for both men and women.

This was a far cry from the early days of the modern cigarette. Introduced in the 1880s, machine-made cigarettes (and their smokers) were soon after excoriated by social reformers, politicians, and clerics. Fifteen American states passed laws banning the manufacture, sale, or possession of cigarettes before 1922.<sup>3</sup> Canada's House of Commons passed a motion in 1903 calling for a ban on the sale, production, and importation of cigarettes. Five years later, Parliament voted to prohibit tobacco use by those under sixteen.<sup>4</sup> For decades, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union campaigned against cigarettes, bemoaning their use as immoral and uncouth, a gateway vice leading to truancy, gambling, drinking, and venereal disease.<sup>5</sup> Before the 1910s, cigarette smokers were characterized as social outcasts: bohemian poets, licentious women, Southern European immigrants. Popular attitudes changed during the Great War, when Ottawa furnished soldiers' ration kits with cigarettes and countless volunteer drives sent millions more to the troops overseas. Whether as stress relief, appetite suppressant, mental stimulant, or talisman of fellowship, cigarettes helped soldiers cope with the deprivations of trench life and the horrors experienced when "over the top." Returning soldiers continued to smoke them, transferring their vaunted status as vanquishers of the Kaiser to the former "little white slavers."<sup>6</sup> By the late 1920s, cigarettes had shed their sordid, demimonde reputation, at least when smoked by men. Increasingly, cigarettes carried favourable associations of male sociability, up-tempo modernity, and middle-class respectability. The "modern man" smoked cigarettes, less so cigars, and seldom a pipe.<sup>7</sup>

While the Great War first "legitimized the cigarette,"<sup>8</sup> a process that continued into the 1920s, I argue here that crucial developments occurred during the 1930s that elevated and solidified the domestic tobacco industry while establishing cigarette smoking as a cultural norm. Per-capita cigarette sales rose every year from 1932 until the late 1940s, with sales between 1932 and 1938 jumping an astounding 78 percent.<sup>9</sup> (In con-

trast, per-capita cigarette sales declined by 20 percent from 1920 to 1922 and again by 30 percent from 1929 to 1932.)<sup>10</sup> Farm production of bright-leaf, flue-cured tobacco, the type used for cigarettes, increased exponentially in Canada, rising from 7,570 acres in 1927 to 69,840 in 1939.<sup>11</sup> By the late 1930s, Canadian farmers produced nearly all the tobacco needed for cigarette manufacturing in Canada, in contrast to a decade earlier when foreign imports prevailed. Cigarette marketing and advertising were ubiquitous in the 1930s, as evidenced by the many premium and gift rebate campaigns, sports contests, point-of-sale promotions, and athlete and celebrity testimonial advertising. Women, beginning in the late 1920s, became targets of cigarette advertising, whose entry into the ranks of socially legitimate smokers proved a milestone for cigarette makers. Alongside the burgeoning images of women in cigarette ads were the many female stars in Hollywood films lighting up, both on and off the screen. By the late 1930s, cigarette smoking permeated, at times transfigured, forms of social engagement, mass media entertainment, and vernacular expression.

While some of the above-cited factors flowed from changes first set in motion during the Great War, two new developments in the 1930s proved seminal to the longstanding viability of the cigarette industry in mid-century Canada. The country's largest tobacco firm, Imperial Tobacco Company of Canada (ITC), was pilloried by politicians, citizens, and journalists for restraint-of-trade and price-fixing practices. The landmark report of the Price Spreads and Mass Buying Royal Commission, released in 1935, excoriated ITC for its predatory business practices; if fully implemented, the report's recommendations would have eclipsed ITC's dominant share of the cigarette market. The company faced a serious political challenge: how should a large, quasi-monopolistic corporation overcome negative public opinion and convince voters and policy makers that it was in fact socially legitimate, economically productive, and publicly accountable? The firm turned to public relations in the form of a long-running institutional advertising campaign highlighting the firm's beneficence to its workers, Canadian consumers, and the broader public. This

ad campaign began in 1935 and continued until the early 1940s, long after the crisis precipitating it had subsided. When, two decades later, Imperial Tobacco again embraced public relations professionals and strategies in order to discredit scientific studies aligning cigarettes with lung cancer, it did so with extensive prior experience in this domain.

The second key development during the 1930s concerned the arrival of menthol and filtered cigarette brands. Ads for these appealed to the health anxieties of regular smokers; menthol and filter cigarettes promised to prevent or alleviate coughing, throat irritation, and “tongue bite.” They carried physician endorsements and other forms of medical reassurance. Filters, the ads proclaimed, removed “harmful” irritants and impurities in cigarettes, rendering them “purer” and safer for smokers. While sales of menthol and filtered brands waned during the 1940s, their historical significance in the 1930s concerns the type of marketing discourse they initiated and made familiar to Canadians: “health marketing” calmed the fears of symptom-worried smokers, promising technological solutions for bodily ailments and discomforts associated with regular cigarette smoking. During the 1930s, this involved mostly coughing and soreness in throats and mouths. After 1952, when health marketing resurfaced in response to medical reports linking cigarettes to lung cancer, the health stakes proved much higher, as too would be the sales of filtered brands as smokers again pursued the promise of a “healthier” cigarette.<sup>12</sup>

### Challenging Monopoly Power

The alarmist front-page headline in the *Toronto Star* (“Canada in Danger of a Dictatorship”) in April 1934 did not reference political events in Europe. It concerned a House of Commons report critical of the Imperial Tobacco Company of Canada (ITC) for its buying practices among Ontario tobacco growers. The company had engaged in “under cover buying” by serving as proxy for its parent company, the Imperial Tobacco Company of Great Britain and Ireland. This dampened prices for tobacco farm-

ers, who were placed at a great “disadvantage in dealing with a company of such bargaining strength.”<sup>13</sup> The story caught the eye of H.H. Stevens, the Minister of Trade and Commerce, who chaired the Committee on Price Spreads and Mass Buying, then investigating restraint-of-trade practices among Canada’s largest firms. Stevens vowed to bring tobacco executives before the committee.<sup>14</sup> In early May, Imperial Tobacco President Gray Miller found himself answering questions before the committee for five hours. Committee counsel Norman Sommerville made little pretence of impartiality: “The evidence showed that while the Canadian tobacco growers were toiling in the fields from dawn until dark to eke out a miserable existence, the Imperial Tobacco Company in the last five years piled up profits of \$30,000,000.” ITC’s buying tactics had created “panic among the Ontario growers,” while “their wives wept in the fields;” the end result for farmers was a “trail of debts and unpaid loans.” Committee members criticized ITC for its monopolistic structure, highlighting its many subsidiary manufacturing firms (B. Houde, Tuckett, National Snuff Company, Punch Cigar, and General Cigar) and retailing operations (United Cigar Stores).<sup>15</sup> Taken aback by and seemingly ill-prepared for this questioning, Miller returned to the committee four days later to better present his case, this time with “bulging brief cases, piles of papers and two trunks filled with records.” This effort, however, did little to alter the views of committee members that ITC had acted underhandedly to lower prices paid to tobacco growers.<sup>16</sup>

Soon after, Imperial Tobacco confronted more bad publicity. Newspaper reports revealed the “lavish” salaries of ITC executives. Gray earned \$86,000, while his predecessor in 1930 had pocketed \$142,000 in salary and bonuses, this at a time when “Ontario’s panic-stricken tobacco growers were sending out Macedonian cries” of help.<sup>17</sup> Tobacco growers received less than two cents of the 25-cent cost of a cigarette pack. By its own admission, ITC controlled 75 percent of the Canadian cigarette market.<sup>18</sup> Walter M. Stewart, head of Macdonald Tobacco, soon after testified before the price-spreads committee, claiming that ITC executives had received “advance information”



about cigarette excise taxes in the recent federal budget. He provided no supporting evidence, though.<sup>19</sup> H.C. Fortier, a tobacco wholesaler affiliated with Macdonald Tobacco, recounted ITC's "reign-of-terror" sales practices. The ITC sales force regularly monitored the advertising and promotional displays of tobacco retailers. If a competitor's brands were prominent, ITC salesmen threatened to revoke buy-direct privileges for the retailer, which offered higher margins than when buying from wholesalers.<sup>20</sup> The testimony of these witnesses, the committee underscored, was substantiated by the "sheaf of letters from tobacconists all over Canada complaining about threats made to them by the Imperial Company." A Winnipeg retailer described how ITC required him to devote 80 per cent of his display space to Imperial brands or lose buy-direct privileges, adding that "80 per cent means 100 percent."<sup>21</sup> While testifying before the committee, Earl Spafford, ITC vice-president in charge of sales, did little to refute these charges, claiming that Imperial's sales force sought to "get 90 per cent of the [windowed] advertising, an amount comparable with our sales." H.H. Stevens publicly lambasted ITC for its "dictatorial attitude" and cut-throat actions in the marketplace.<sup>22</sup>

Charges involving restraint-of-trade practices and monopoly power date back to the origins of ITC. In 1895, the American Tobacco Company, which dominated the American market, sought to establish a manufacturing facility in Canada in order to circumvent the high tariffs placed on tobacco products entering British markets. It purchased D. Ritchie and Company and the American Cigarette Company, merging them to become the American Tobacco Company of Canada (ATCC).<sup>23</sup> Soon after, ATCC acquired additional tobacco firms such as B. Houde and Empire Tobacco. In 1902, American Tobacco struck a partnership agreement with the Imperial Tobacco Company of Great Britain, with the goal of reducing competition in international markets. This new entity, the British-American Tobacco Company Limited (BAT), was jointly owned by its American and British parent firms. In 1908, BAT purchased ATCC and changed its name to the Imperial Tobacco Company of Canada.<sup>24</sup> With an initial cap-



itized value of \$11 million, this large enterprise “dominated the Canadian tobacco industry” during the 1910s.<sup>25</sup> It did so in part by its consignment system for distributing cigarettes, which effectively penalized retailers for selling or promoting competitors’ brands. It also worked to minimize price cutting of ITC brands by retailers. ITC spent generously on advertising, driving customers to stores in search of its brands, which in turn predominated in point-of-sale promotions and shelf space.<sup>26</sup> While dealing with nominally independent retailers, ITC achieved a *de facto* form of vertical integration in the areas of distribution and merchandising, which weakened competitors and strengthened price maintenance.<sup>27</sup> It tightened its hold on distribution channels in the early 1920s after it acquired United Cigar Stores and its 175 retail outlets across Canada. One historian described its overall marketing strategy as “both skilful and ruthless.”<sup>28</sup> When ITC bought Tuckett Tobacco in 1930, *Marketing Magazine* characterized the firm as having a “practical monopoly” of the Canadian tobacco market.<sup>29</sup>

Weak anti-trust laws and lax enforcement facilitated ITC’s dominance of the tobacco marketplace. Between 1900 and 1911 the total capitalization of federally chartered corporations rose from \$13 million to \$490 million. In 1902, a royal commission was struck to investigate complaints that the tobacco industry had “become the victim of monopolistic control.” In the end, the federal government took no punitive actions against any firms.<sup>30</sup> From 1909 to 1913, some 220 firms with assets exceeding \$200 million consolidated.<sup>31</sup> Ottawa responded with limited anti-trust actions. Indeed, from 1900 to 1910, only five cases were tried under existing anti-combines laws. Responding to adverse publicity surrounding the post-1909 merger wave, the Laurier government brought in new anti-trust legislation, the Combines Investigation Act of 1910. But here again the law proved ineffectual. The complaints process was cumbersome, lengthy, and often costly. Further reducing the law’s authority was the provision that prior violations would not be punished, but only those which persisted *after* an anti-combines judicial ruling was handed down. Hence, it is not surprising that such toothless legislation,

relying more on moral exhortation than legal compulsion, was invoked only once during its nine-year tenure, despite numerous examples of restraint-of-trade practices.<sup>32</sup> As Michael Bliss notes, businessmen proved all too willing to forego the uncertainties of the market for the assurances of guaranteed profits. This “flight from competition,” extending to “every nook and cranny of the Canadian business world,”<sup>33</sup> adopted many forms: formal and informal price-fixing agreements; mergers; supplier boycotts; foreign dumping; performance bonds; and even fines levied against violators. While during an earlier, less complicated age, unfettered competition may have abetted individual entrepreneurship and provided the most efficient allocation of economic resources, businessmen by the 1920s argued that the “invisible hand” threatened to choke them of their economic livelihood.<sup>34</sup>

*The Price-Spreads Royal Commission*

To H.H. Stevens, firms such as Imperial Tobacco — large monopolies able to dictate terms and prices to farmers and retailers — were the antithesis of the proper role of business in a free-enterprise economy. Before elected to the Commons in 1911, Stevens had worked as a grocer and realtor; as a Conservative MP he cast himself as defender of the small businessman and entrepreneur, both threatened by the avarice and predations of Big Business. In 1930, R. B. Bennett’s Tories came to office and Stevens was made Minister of Trade and Commerce. By 1934, he had become a regular, outspoken critic of corporate concentration, which he labelled a “canker” on the Canadian economy.<sup>35</sup> These views earned him many accolades and heaps of fan mail from ordinary Canadians, and Bennett thought it wise to channel his ambitions into a parliamentary special committee to investigate the price spreads between what producers received for their commodities and the final prices paid by consumers. Stevens was named its chairman, and the committee met more than 60 times in 1934, hauling before it executives from firms such as Canada Packers and Eaton’s.<sup>36</sup> In the same manner to what ITC executives experienced, committee members often lashed out at these

officials, which both the press and ordinary voters eagerly lapped up. Stevens became the “people’s hero,” a rising star among the Tory backbench and rank-and-file party members. His attacks, though, were made against the traditional financial bedrock of the Conservative Party, a concern for many of his cabinet colleagues.<sup>37</sup> The work of this committee proved so politically popular, however, that Bennett opted in July 1934 to elevate its status to that of a royal commission, with Stevens again serving as chair. This emboldened Stevens, whose attacks on Big Business accelerated in the summer months, creating more friction with his cabinet colleagues and later with Bennett himself. This came to a head in October when Stevens, now lacking Bennett’s full support, resigned from cabinet. While still a member of the royal commission, he was no longer its chairman.<sup>38</sup>

In March 1935, Stevens leaked the royal commission’s draft report to the press, in a bid to ensure that its draft recommendations were not watered down. When the final report was tabled in the Commons on 12 April, it offered some hard-line assessments and prescriptions. The report noted that large firms had “blocked” competition in many industries; these firms had effective “freedom from legal liability,” while also evading “moral responsibility for inequitable and uneconomic practices.” This situation “need[ed] cleansing,”<sup>39</sup> with only the federal government having the administrative capability and constitutional authority to restore competitive balance to the marketplace. The first economic sector discussed in the report was tobacco. Since ITC controlled at least 70 percent of the tobacco market, this industry was characterized as “obviously monopolistic.” Canadian firms faced little competition from foreign competitors owing to high duties on tobacco imports. ITC had acted to “manipulate raw materials costs and to sell its product in a sheltered market.”<sup>40</sup> While ITC enjoyed high profits, “growers, dealers, a majority of manufacturers, the Wholesaler and the retailer have been faced with meagre profits or in some cases, absolute losses.”<sup>41</sup> Retailers were forced to comply with ITC’s “unfair competitive practices” or face the business-crippling prospect of seeing three-quarters of their product inventory withdrawn.<sup>42</sup> The company had engaged

in “oppressive tactics and unethical methods to promote the sales of its products in every part of the country.”<sup>43</sup>

Among the report’s many recommendations were calls for greater financial disclosure by corporations, including executive salaries and bonuses. Its boldest recommendation was for the creation of a Federal Trade and Industry Commission to deal with the “growth of concentration,” whose mandate would be the “prevention and regulation of monopoly and monopolistic practices,” while providing greater protection for consumers and primary producers.<sup>44</sup> The commission would pursue “rigorous” enforcement of the Combines Investigations Act, which would also be amended to include a “more comprehensive definition of monopolies and monopolistic practices.”<sup>45</sup> The proposed commission would work to restore healthy competition to the marketplace, with primary focus on the needs of small business, farmers, and labourers.<sup>46</sup> The government bill introduced soon after to deal with the commission’s recommendations, however, proved tepid. There would be no powerful new commission; any new regulatory actions would fall to the already overburdened Dominion Tariff Board. Bennett cited constitutional concerns for this half-measure, but his simmering feud with Stevens was also a key factor.<sup>47</sup> W.W. Kennedy, chair of the commission, described the proposed legislation as “practically useless” and Stevens similarly dismissed it.<sup>48</sup> There would be no powerful, New Deal-type agency to regulate big business in Canada.<sup>49</sup> Any lingering hopes for this ended with the Liberals’ electoral win in October 1935. Incoming Prime Minister Mackenzie King saw no need to revisit the commission’s recommendations.

### *Public Relations Advertising*

For ITC, the events of 1934 and early 1935 were no doubt troubling. For decades, the company’s market dominance and international affiliation had helped to shield it from commercial uncertainty and political challenge. But here was a *Conservative* government, the traditional ally of Corporate Canada, attacking business practices that were at the core of ITC operations and profitability. Other warning signs were on the political hori-

zon. The newly-formed Cooperative Commonwealth Federation sought to implement a democratic socialist agenda and reduce the power of Big Business. The Social Credit Party, which later in 1935 would capture the Alberta legislature, advocated the use of monetary policy to redistribute wealth to ordinary citizens. ITC's conundrum was qualitatively different from business problems such as expanding market share or reducing production costs. At issue here were the social legitimacy and political viability of a large corporation with a monopolistic grasp of its marketplace. In the past, Ottawa had largely turned a blind eye to corporate concentration and restraint-of-trade practices. But that now seemed likely to change.

Large American corporations facing similar situations had responded with institutional advertising to elevate their social standing and cultural authority. In the early 1900s AT&T and U.S. Steel confronted anti-trust forces with advertising designed to articulate a "corporate personality," indeed a "corporate soul," in pursuit of public approval. Firms such as Metropolitan Life, General Electric, and General Motors followed suit with advertising that highlighted company endeavours such as funding for the arts or workplace welfare programs. The broader aim was to have large corporations assume a place alongside "society's basic institutions of family, church, community, and state."<sup>50</sup> These efforts accelerated during the Depression, when public confidence in the business system eroded. Business leaders saw themselves in a struggle to preserve free enterprise, threatened, it was thought, by the New-Deal State and Big Labour. Business needed to "tell its story" to society as a whole, in order to educate the public about its economic and social importance. In 1933, John Hill and Don Knowlton established the public relations firm Hill and Knowlton, which counselled clients such as the American Iron and Steel Institute on how to generate corporate goodwill among the public.<sup>51</sup> For increasing numbers of corporations during the 1930s, Inger L. Stole notes, "selling business itself and its contributions to the entire economic system was just as important as selling its products."<sup>52</sup> Advertising, what James Webb Young called the "torch of business", would be used to

sell the very idea of business to voters.<sup>53</sup> In this vein, public relations functioned as an ongoing, “fundamental system of business hygiene,” rather than as *ad hoc* actions to handle periodic crises.<sup>54</sup>

In January 1935, ITC launched an institutional advertising campaign, a long-running series of bi-weekly ads promoting the social and economic merits of the firm. Notably, the campaign ran well into the 1940s, long after the immediate crisis precipitating it had ended. On 28 January, an ad introduced ITC as a “faithful servant of the people of Canada,” which in the coming months would tell the fascinating story of tobacco’s journey from fields to lungs.<sup>55</sup> The campaign’s significance was discussed early on in the advertising trade press.<sup>56</sup> Given the focus of the Stevens Committee, it should not surprise that tobacco retailing was treated first. The ad, “Always ... Everywhere,” described how ITC brands could be found in 17,500 retail venues across Canada, making them “quickly and easily available to Canadian users of tobacco, at all seasons of the year, at all hours of the day.” Widespread distribution formed part of ITC’s broader mission “to serve the Canadian public.”<sup>57</sup> The doctrine of public service appeared in ads describing the roles of scientific crop selection and advanced manufacturing in maintaining “purity and freshness” in all ITC brands.<sup>58</sup> The company worked tirelessly to “satisfy, precisely and effectively, every known taste of sizable extent.”<sup>59</sup> These ads then turned to working conditions at ITC. Its Montréal factory had a “well-equipped hospital” with resident nurses and doctors providing medical advice and care to employees. Milk rations were freely provided to “underweight cases.”<sup>60</sup> ITC offered long-term illness and disability coverage, group and life insurance, and a joint-contributory pension fund for male employees.<sup>61</sup> There were sanitary washrooms, inviting lunchrooms, and manicured gardens, all of which made the “daily round of the worker unusually pleasant and care-free.”<sup>62</sup>

None of these rosy depictions dealt with wages, however. Workers in ITC’s Montréal factory, who were 70 percent female, earned an average weekly wage of \$12.22 in 1933, 20 percent less than in 1929. This was low even for female-dominated sectors. For example, in the women’s clothing garment trade,

which was 74 percent female, average weekly earnings were \$15.84. These facts, along with others that reflected poorly on ITC, became public in April 1935 with the release of the Royal Commission Report on Price Spreads.<sup>63</sup> ITC, in advertising its employee welfare schemes, mirrored the actions of firms such as U.S. Steel and International Harvester. Facing anti-trust opposition, they had advertised their employee housing programs and on-site child care services in order to generate goodwill among the wider public.<sup>64</sup>

By summer 1935, ITC ads were promoting broader social contributions and scientific accomplishments. Consumers would always find their favourite cigarettes while on vacation since ITC brands were sold nearly everywhere in Canada,<sup>65</sup> and the company's "fair pricing" policy meant that they would not pay more in remote locations.<sup>66</sup> ITC discouraged "price cutting," which meant that wholesalers earned more to support their families.<sup>67</sup> Workers in the cardboard, aluminum foil, and cellophane sectors similarly benefitted from company purchase orders.<sup>68</sup> ITC assisted tobacco growers by providing "cultivation experts" and "necessary plants for experimentation," which in turn produced higher-grade tobacco.<sup>69</sup> The firm's scientists laboured constantly to create "newer, better things," while being "always receptive to new ideas from whatever source they may come."<sup>70</sup> In the factory, advanced machinery rolled cigarettes at the "modern magic" rate of 23 per second.<sup>71</sup> Months of "research and experimentation" had produced the cellophane outer wrapper for cigarette packages.<sup>72</sup> Women employees, "carefully selected for their keen eyesight," provided first-rate quality control.<sup>73</sup> In the August 1936 ad, "Toward One Goal ... Perfection!" (Figure 1), readers learned how Imperial's "continuous research" program ensured the "purity" of its cigarettes, a production standard "maintained with the meticulous care of a royal infant's diet." It added: "This Company spends many thousands of dollars every year upon research work alone, conducted in a spirit of 'critical investigation'. We consider this money well invested, since it enables us to bring to you finer, more nearly perfect Imperial Tobacco products."<sup>74</sup> Claims such as this were not unusual during



the interwar years, when companies greatly expanded research and development operations. In the United States, the number of scientists in industry research labs increased tenfold from 1920 to 1940, rising from 2,775 to 27,777.<sup>75</sup> As Jeffrey Meikle noted for the 1930s, corporations touted scientific breakthrough and technological innovation as markers of “unending material progress” in the Machine Age.<sup>76</sup> While success in the cigarette industry arguably turned more on marketing know-how than on cutting-edge production techniques, ITC frequently appealed to and appropriated the cultural authority of science and industrial technology.

*"A perfect packet of cigarettes is the cumulative result of little perfections. Until it is reached, we have failed to attain our goal!"*

Tobacco Research Starts With the Seedlings . . . .

Scientific Investigation . . . Produces Ultimate Perfection

Engineers Work Constantly Improving Equipment . . . .

**TOWARD ONE GOAL... *Perfection!***

The Oxford Dictionary says research is "careful search or inquiry — endeavour to discover facts by scientific study of a subject — course of critical investigation". These definitions exactly describe the continuous research work carried on by the Imperial Tobacco Company, striving always toward perfection.

Specializing in the culture of tobacco, our agricultural research men begin with the analysis of soil, fertilizers, etc.; they raise tobacco seedlings, and then bring them to maturity under carefully supervised field conditions. Through exact scientific tests and recordings they achieve certain knowledge — not guesses — which is each year passed on to the growers so that they may raise better tobacco. Without reservation, we can say that, over a period of years, no other Canadian manufacturer has bought and used finer tobacco — imported and domestic.

We maintain factory laboratories, elaborately equipped, staffed by graduates of Canadian universities, who, day in and day out, keep watch over all manufacturing processes. These men of science employ instruments so delicately adjusted that some of them must be kept under glass, since even slight atmospheric changes affect their accuracy.

Tobacco in manufacture is "purity maintained" with the meticulous care of a royal infant's diet. Cigarette papers must survive every known quality test. Packaging materials have to be examined in the laboratories before they are approved for use. Additionally, our technical experts are constantly engaged in researches to improve every process we employ, everything we buy.

This Company spends many thousands of dollars every year upon research work alone, conducted in a spirit of "critical investigation". We consider this money well invested, since it enables us to bring to you faster, more nearly perfect Imperial Tobacco products.

**IMPERIAL TOBACCO COMPANY OF CANADA, LIMITED**

Figure 1. *Toronto Star*, 26 August 1936, p. 9.

It also invoked medical authority, as seen in the ad “These are the Facts,” which appeared in March 1937 (Figure 2).<sup>77</sup> The ad’s text is rather banal: people smoked cigarettes for their manifold pleasures, made possible by high-quality tobacco and rigorous production methods. Cigarettes provided “pleasure, satisfaction and comfort,” but were “not in any sense a cure-all.” A curative for what exactly goes unsaid, only that the smoker’s enjoyment came from the “clean, gratifying smoke” of top-grade tobacco and manufacture. The ad’s centrepiece is a white-coated man wearing a head mirror, a common signifier for medical doctor in the early 1900s. The physician-with-head mirror (or stethoscope) was a familiar visual motif in American cigarette advertising from the 1930s until the 1950s, seen especially with R.J. Reynolds’ Camels, which had fictional and actual doctors endorse the “throat-easy” mildness of Camels.<sup>78</sup> Canadians routinely read American magazines during the interwar years, making this visual icon part of the lexicon of familiar cultural symbols.<sup>79</sup> The ad’s text does not mention throat irritation, coughing, or sinus troubles, all complaints made by cigarette smokers in the 1930s. The industry’s response to this feedback was to introduce filtered and menthol brands, promoted for their “cooler”,



**These are the facts –**

You smoke because you enjoy it — because smoking gives you pleasure, gives you that something which nothing else in life quite supplies. How much pleasure it gives you depends upon the tobacco. Ever and always, “it’s the tobacco that counts”.

Speaking particularly of cigarettes, a cigarette cannot give you more than pleasure, satisfaction and comfort — it is not, in any sense a curative. The only extras in a cigarette that can increase your pleasure are extra good tobacco, perfectly matured; extra pure paper and extra skill in manufacture. Together they insure that pleasing aroma and straight tobacco taste that alone give you a clean, gratifying smoke.

To give the greatest pleasure to the smoker is the incentive which guides this company in the selection, aging and conditioning of the tobacco, and in the manufacturing processes that follow in the making of cigarettes.

**IMPERIAL TOBACCO COMPANY OF CANADA, LIMITED**

SWEET GENERAL  
TUBER  
GILBERT GOLD  
MILLER  
FLANN  
WIGGERS  
CHAS. HORTON  
W.D. & H.O. WILLS  
ROCK PLANT

Figure 2. *Toronto Star*, 24 March 1937, p. 5.

milder attributes. The ad's iconography references this health context; the physician, staring intently at the reader while holding up a cigarette, symbolically yokes medical expertise to advance meanings of consumer safety and health reassurance. This is done both for cigarettes in general and ITC brands in particular, since these brand names are listed in the ad, one of the first to do so in this campaign.<sup>80</sup>

Since the late 1800s, moral and social reformers had derided cigarettes as unhealthy; they stunted growth, weakened lungs, and caused other mental and physical "degeneracies."<sup>81</sup> While such critics were largely discredited by the 1930s, unease over the healthiness of cigarettes continued in the vernacular vein of "coffin nail" and "cancer stick" quips. Interwar clinicians used the term "Tobacco Heart" to describe smoking-related angina, arrhythmia, and cardiac arrest.<sup>82</sup> In 1928, the *New England Journal of Medicine* published an article showing a causal link between tobacco smoking and cancer.<sup>83</sup> In 1931, the insurance industry researcher Frederick Hoffman released a study that causally pegged booming cigarette consumption to rising rates of lung cancer.<sup>84</sup> Similar research was done and published in South America and Europe during the 1930s, most notably in Nazi Germany.<sup>85</sup> These findings were generally not taken up by the press, and medical doctors, arguably a majority, remained skeptical that tobacco caused disease.<sup>86</sup> But tobacco companies, in at least one instance, were aware of these nascent findings. In 1939, the research director at American Tobacco, Hiram R. Hanmer, responded to a query about Angel H. Roffo, the Argentine researcher whose work with lab animals and cancer patients had shown causal relationships between tobacco tar exposure and cancer. Though Roffo's work was published mostly in German and Spanish, Hanmer was not caught off guard: "We have been following Roffo's work for some time, and I feel that it is unfortunate that a statement such as his is widely disseminated."<sup>87</sup> By the late 1930s, Alan Brandt argues, tobacco smoking's role in causing cancer had become a subject of "unresolved debate."<sup>88</sup>

Public relations advertising functioned to influence "unresolved debates," aiming to align public interest with corporate

interest. In 1939, Earle Spafford, ITC vice-president, reflected on the firm's institutional advertising campaign, now four years old: "We have tried to imagine ourselves chatting to our customers face to face," presenting the "human side of the industry — what it means to the people who depend upon it for their livelihood or look to it for a form of enjoyment."<sup>89</sup> Well before the tobacco industry's massive public relations response to the "cancer-scare" crisis of the 1950s,<sup>90</sup> Imperial Tobacco had become versed in the art and mechanics of institutional advertising, articulating and promulgating its "corporate soul" to the Canadian public.

### Political Economy of Tobacco

One of ITC's institutional ads spotlighted Canada's tobacco farming sector.<sup>91</sup> "Canada" is perhaps a misnomer, given the crop's geographic specificity. In 1938, Ontario produced 97 percent of the country's raw leaf tobacco,<sup>92</sup> most of which was grown in the "new" tobacco belt of Norfolk, Elgin, and Oxford counties in southwestern Ontario. As late as the mid-1920s, very little tobacco was grown in these counties; only then was the area's sandy soil shown to be suitable for bright leaf, flue-cured tobacco used in cigarettes.<sup>93</sup> Tobacco farming and the flue-curing of bright leaf began soon after and spread quickly. By 1937, the value of Ontario's tobacco crops reached nearly \$15 million, with farmers fetching much higher prices than those in the early 1930s that had caught the attention of H.H. Stevens and others. In 1937, they received 27 cents a pound, up from 16 cents in 1932.<sup>94</sup> By 1939, Ontario's tobacco fields supplied nearly all of the domestic market for cigarette production, while also exporting 27 million pounds of flue-cured tobacco.<sup>95</sup>

The late 1930s were heady times for tobacco growers and their communities, as a *Maclean's* reporter discovered.<sup>96</sup> Tobacco-growing counties had "scorned the depression,"<sup>97</sup> as seen by the building boom in hotels, theatres, and stores. Towns such as Simcoe, Delhi, and Tilsonburg had lowered municipal taxes, paid off debentures, and reduced relief rolls. Simcoe had built a new public pool, tennis courts, and floodlit baseball diamonds. It had

three cinemas, up from one in 1935. The ITC-owned processing plant in Delhi hired up to 1500 workers each fall to sort, grade, and process flue-cured tobacco leaf. Tilsonburg's housing shortage was matched by a sea of parked cars on its main street on Saturday afternoons. Garnet Murphy, who had recently moved to the area to drive a taxi, had no regrets: "Am I glad I came to Simcoe? Mister, glad's not the world for it. I'm singing!"<sup>98</sup>

While most tobacco was grown and cured in southwestern Ontario, the bulk of manufacturing occurred hundreds of miles away. In 1939, 87 percent of the nearly \$70 million tobacco manufacturing industry was located in Québec, mostly in Montréal, where firms such as ITC and Macdonald Tobacco were based.<sup>99</sup> That year, tobacco manufacturing employed nearly 11,000 people, whose \$9.7 million in wages and salaries would have circulated mostly in and around Montréal.<sup>100</sup> As noted earlier, the industry was also highly concentrated, with the handful of firms producing over \$1 million in goods comprising 91% of the total sector.<sup>101</sup> Tobacco farming and manufacturing played relatively small roles in the Canadian economy. In 1939, tobacco farming comprised less than three percent of total crop values,<sup>102</sup> while manufacturing operations formed less than two percent of the country's gross value of production.<sup>103</sup> But the inverse was true for taxation. In 1938, the federal government collected nearly \$36 million in tobacco excise taxes (and, to a much lesser degree, custom duties on tobacco), accounting for eight percent of Ottawa's total tax revenues (\$436.2 million) that year.<sup>104</sup> ITC alone provided roughly seven percent of federal tax revenues, a fact it advertised as "serving the national treasury."<sup>105</sup> Prior to World War II (when personal and corporate income taxes rose precipitously, reducing the relative weight of excise taxes),<sup>106</sup> almost one in ten federal tax dollars came from a handful of Montréal manufacturers and, by extension, tobacco farmers in three Ontario counties. Never again would the Canadian tobacco industry wield as much fiscal clout as it did in the 1930s.

The political implications of this are noteworthy. In 1935, the federal Liberals won office in an electoral landslide, taking 171 of 245 seats. The Liberal Party remained in power until 1957, later



dubbed the “Government Party” for its longstanding political acumen and administrative competence.<sup>107</sup> In 1935, the federal Conservatives elected four members in Montréal, one less than its haul for the entire province. In the 1940 federal election, the Tories were shut out of Montréal, a losing streak that continued until 1953.<sup>108</sup> The federal Liberals reigned supreme in Québec for more than 20 years after 1935, winning more than 80 percent of its seats and nearly all of those in Montréal. In Ontario, seven federal ridings (Brant, Brantford, Elgin, Haldimand, Middlesex-East, Norfolk, Oxford) were located in or abutted tobacco growing areas. Here again the Liberals proved dominant, winning all but one of these ridings in 1935 and 1940.<sup>109</sup> The federal government held jurisdiction over excise taxes, so tobacco-related revenues flowed to Ottawa and not the provinces. Provincial sales taxes at this time were negligible, totaling just \$2 million of the \$245 million in provincial government revenues in 1937.<sup>110</sup> In contrast to recent decades, then the provinces factored little in the regulation and taxation of tobacco. The tobacco industry — a non-competitive, highly concentrated sector — looked out onto a political landscape strikingly similar to itself. Its political dealings were mainly with only one level of government that was controlled by the same party for a generation. The bulk of its factories and workforces were in the Liberal fortress of Montréal, ensuring continual representation by government MPs. A near monopoly industry had for its political bedfellow a quasi one-party state.

### Cigarettes and Culture: Women Smokers

The political-economic might of the tobacco industry was paralleled by the expanding cultural reach of cigarettes in the 1930s. In 1920, pre-rolled cigarettes comprised 42% of the manufactured tobacco product market in Canada, rising to 63% by 1939.<sup>111</sup> Per-capita sales of cigarettes rose 78 percent from 1932 to 1939, while cigar consumption in that time declined by seven percent.<sup>112</sup> Some of this growth came from pipe and cigar smokers, mostly men, switching to cigarettes. But another factor is

significant: women enthusiastically took up cigarette smoking in the 1930s. Cigarette companies did not market directly to women until the late 1920s.<sup>113</sup> The first such campaign occurred in 1927 with advertising for ITC's Player's Navy Cut, whose tagline read: "Men may come and men may go, but Player's Navy Cut are a constant ever."<sup>114</sup> The campaign was deemed risky, not for its sexual innuendo but for concerns that appealing to women would embolden the "puritanical fanatics" who opposed cigarettes outright.<sup>115</sup> Later ads in this campaign featured bobbed, stylish women smoking cigarettes. A year later, a writer in the advertising trade press commented on the many "tea table matronly" women in cigarette ads, a hopeful sign that female smoking was moving beyond the "flapper" set.<sup>116</sup> Jarrett Rudy similarly notes that cigarette advertising in Montréal dailies did not target women directly until the late 1920s.<sup>117</sup> But by the early 1930s much had changed, as seen with the many cigarette ads aligning female smoking with ideals of the modern, middle-class woman who was recreationally active, sexually confident, and upwardly mobile.<sup>118</sup> A reporter surveyed Toronto tobacconists in 1930 and learned that female cigarette buyers were no longer "steal[ing] out furtively ... with their packages in paper bags."<sup>119</sup> Mackenzie King, at the wedding of a friend's daughter in 1933, remarked (disapprovingly) in his diary about the ordinary manner in which the bride smoked cigarettes alongside the groom, even while toasting with champagne.<sup>120</sup> In 1934, Queen's University established a smoking room in its women's residence, ostensibly with a "view to having cigarette smoking by girl students confined in close quarters."<sup>121</sup>

Women featured prominently in cigarette ads in newspapers, magazines, and on billboards, which in turn served to normalize female smoking while communicating symbolically in other ways. Images of women as steeple-chase racers or convocating students broadened the range of recreational pastimes and professional endeavours that were socially permissible for women.<sup>122</sup> These ads offered revised notions of womanhood, in which pleasure seeking behaviour co-existed with social respectability. Ads depicting women smoking in social settings or out in



public reinforced the then radical idea that women receive equal opportunity and treatment in all areas of public life.<sup>123</sup> “This summer especially,” commented one tobacconist in 1937, “I’ve noticed a good many women smoking on the street, exercising their equal rights with men.”<sup>124</sup> Cigarettes functioned as erotic signifiers, providing “otherwise respectable women,” Sharon Anne Cook argues, a “licence to develop and exercise a sexually charged and independent persona in ways that probably would not have been possible for them, given the restrictive societal norms that governed women’s behaviour.”<sup>125</sup> The 1930s “Modern Girl” projected her “independent woman”<sup>126</sup> status via cigarette smoking, a notion playfully rendered in a 1938 ad for Sweet Caporals. In the ad a hopeful man leans toward a young woman standing under some mistletoe and asks: “Have you seen the mistletoe?” Her response: “Yes — but where are my Sweet Caps?”<sup>127</sup>

### *Cinematic Smoking*

Hollywood offered up more female smoking role models. Lacking a domestic feature-film industry, Canadians avidly watched American movies during the 1930s.<sup>128</sup> One study of Hollywood cinema of the 1930s found that 30 percent of heroines smoked, compared to three percent of female villains.<sup>129</sup> In “Morocco” (1930), Marlene Dietrich orders her male companion to “cigarette me, big boy,” a form of sexual bravado matched by Jean Harlow in “Hell’s Angels” (1930) when she asks a soldier “to come up for a cigarette and a drink?”<sup>130</sup> Women smokers in film “telegraphed sexual desire without there needing to be any further demonstration of her interest.”<sup>131</sup> The sex symbol Mae West smoked cigarettes throughout “I’m No Angel” (1933) and “She Done Him Wrong” (1933), and her publicity photos often pictured her with cigarette and extended holder. The Hays Production Code, adopted in 1934, required filmmakers to curtail sexualized behavior and discourse, which in turn resulted in greater use of on-screen smoking to convey sexual messaging. Bette Davis, in “It’s Love I’m After” (1937), blows smoke in a lover’s face as a form of sexual invitation.<sup>132</sup> Male sexual desire took the form of lighting two cigarettes and placing one in a

woman's mouth. Cinematic smoking conveyed more than sexual meanings. A character's shyness or awkwardness was shown by fumbling with matches or cigarettes. Anxiety manifested itself as staccato puffing or chain smoking. Male dexterity and ingenuity were displayed by lighting a cigarette one-handed. Cinematic smoking constituted "an implicit language of gestures and acts" that facilitated character definition and plot development.<sup>133</sup>

Many people, especially youths and young adults, were attracted to the glamorized portrayal of smoking on the big screen. A Mass Observation study in Britain attributed the upswing in smoking's perceived sophistication to its positive portrayal in Hollywood movies of the 1930s.<sup>134</sup> Smoking film stars were sexy and savvy, dynamic and discriminating. For young women, the visual, performative nature of cinematic smoking — its ability to project personality types and character traits — proved especially captivating.<sup>135</sup> Many on-screen smokers also endorsed cigarettes in advertisements. A Gold Flake ad in 1935 promoted the Alfred Hitchcock film "39 Steps" by featuring its two stars, Madeline Carroll and Robert Donat. The ad reminded readers to see the upcoming movie and highlighted Donat's "magnetic charm" and "hint of sophistication" that captured women's hearts. "His cigarette, of course, is a Gold Flake."<sup>136</sup> In 1937, American Tobacco contracted with more than 40 stars and their Hollywood studios to advertise cigarettes in conjunction with film-release dates. In one instance Gary Cooper, in a testimonial ad for Lucky Strikes, plugs his upcoming film, "Souls at Sea."<sup>137</sup> This form of synergistic cross promotion enhanced the studios' bottom line, broadened the star's public exposure, and boosted the cultural standing and popular appeal of cigarettes, both for particular brands and the entire product category.

### *Ordinary Habits*

Cigarettes proved ideally suited to a modern, urbanizing society. (In 1931, for the first time, the census counted more urban than rural Canadians.)<sup>138</sup> Cigarettes could be smoked quickly in an increasingly time-pressed society.<sup>139</sup> They could be smoked while doing other activities: preparing dinner, working a switchboard,

processing insurance claims. Cigarette smoke was more palatable than that of cigars or pipes, an important consideration as people spent more time in enclosed spaces such as office buildings, streetcars, and stores. The anonymity and alienation of city life were eased by conversation breakers such as “Got a light?” or “Mind if I smoke?” Asked by a young woman about a suitable gift for her 19-year-old boyfriend, etiquette columnist Kathrine de Peyster suggested “a carton of the young man’s favorite cigarettes, or a book.”<sup>140</sup> Their ubiquity spawned a sea of accessories: smoker cabinets, ashtrays, car lighters, cigarette cases, and even waterproof belt buckles for holding cigarettes while swimming. Eaton’s sold a “Smo-kee” handbag, with an in-built cigarette case, and a vanity bag equipped with a pop-up cigarette case.<sup>141</sup> Life Savers chewing gum advertised itself as a “cigarette’s best buddy” for freshening the mouth, and Wrigley’s Juicy Fruit promised to make “the next smoke taste better.”<sup>142</sup> Elizabeth Arden toothpaste was a “boon to cigarette smokers who like to keep fastidious always.” The patent medicine “Kellogg’s Asthma Relief” even came in cigarette form.<sup>143</sup>

Cigarette smoking infused visual description and linguistic expression. Wool suits in an Eaton’s ad came in “Swagger Blue” or “Nicotine Brown,”<sup>144</sup> while dresses were sold in “Sky Mauve” or “Cigarette Brown.”<sup>145</sup> A Chrysler roadster came “finished in beautiful cigarette cream shade.”<sup>146</sup> An Eaton’s ad for Orchid Eye Shadow promised to make your eyes as “soft and purplish-blue as the smoke from your favourite cigarette.”<sup>147</sup> Advice on waist-thinning exercises came in this form: “since you are probably counting on a cigarette silhouette by next Tuesday, you will want the best.”<sup>148</sup> To demonstrate the heat-resistant quality of the surface of Frigidaire refrigerators, salesmen placed lit cigarettes on them.<sup>149</sup> How fast could Uptown Tire change your tires? They’d “put them on while you enjoy a cigarette.”<sup>150</sup> How affordable was the food supplement Knox Gelatine? It “cost less than a pack of cigarettes per day.”<sup>151</sup> Aqua Velva was even cheaper, costing “less than one cigarette a day”<sup>152</sup> Cigarettes — as metaphor, point of reference, or adjective — permeated the popular vernacular of Canadians by the late 1930s.

*Premium Habits*

Premium promotions further ingrained cigarettes into the daily lives of Canadians.<sup>153</sup> The most popular of these was ITC's "Poker Hands" promotion, launched in 1925 by its Turret brand. Poker hands were included in cigarette packages, to be collected and later redeemed for prizes such as umbrellas or bridge sets.<sup>154</sup> This promotion grew increasingly popular and by the mid-1930s most of Imperial's cigarette brands (Turret, Sweet Caporals, Winchester, Guinea Gold, Millbank) offered Poker Hand gift rebates. By 1935, more than 200 gift items were available. At the low end, there were items such as playing cards, toilet soap, and toothpaste. At mid-level, consumers chose from gloves, socks, or teapots. Those with many poker hands could select from silver cutlery sets or tea settings. There were gifts for men (shaving cream, suspenders), women (stockings, face powder), and even children (doll, harmonica, toy dog). Brand name goods such as Gillette razors and Eastman film were available. Practical items such as scissors and kettles could be had, as well as refined display goods such as cut-glass tumblers and silver-plated compots. All of these were presented in illustrated catalogues, disseminated widely across the country (Figure 3).<sup>155</sup> Smokers could redeem poker-hand coupons for gifts at any of the more than 20 "Poker Hand Premium Stores" in 17 cities across Canada, including four in Montréal. In 1935, rumours circulated that ITC planned to cancel the promotion, spawning long, bank-run style lines at stores, as one journalist noted: "At the height of the 'run,' long queues formed and scores of people patiently waited for their premiums while the staff worked at high pressure counting coupons with machine-like rapidity." ITC took out newspaper ads denying the rumour.<sup>156</sup>

Other cigarette makers followed suit. Macdonald Tobacco offered 100 or so premium gifts in exchange for cigarette-package panel fronts. Grothe's Grads cigarettes, marketed as a high-end brand, had a "Save the Bridge Hands" premium promotion. My Fortune cigarettes advertised \$1,500 in monthly cash prizes.<sup>157</sup> For ITC and other cigarette makers, premium marketing promoted volume selling and brand loyalty. At a broader

level, it allowed people to acquire goods which might not otherwise have been possible in a Depression-era economy. By making cigarettes the conduit to a cornucopia of material goods, premium marketing reinforced the centrality of cigarettes in the emerging consumer society. Cigarettes provided not only corporeal pleasure and social engagement; they functioned as a *de facto* currency in an exchange system featuring a wide array of consumer goods. Through their alignment with “badge goods” that included cut-glass tumblers, cigarettes also absorbed symbolic meanings whether cultural refinement or social respectability, what semioticians refer to as “associative transfer.”<sup>158</sup>

Contest promotions were also common, many involving sports. In 1932, Turret awarded \$15,000 in cash prizes to those correctly guessing total goals scored in the current NHL season. Winning entries on Turret packages earned double the prize amounts.<sup>159</sup> Some three million entries were received, and Turret held a similar contest for the following NHL season.<sup>160</sup> Draegerman cigarettes offered NHL tickets for those guessing the time of the first goal at an upcoming Toronto Maple Leafs game.<sup>161</sup> British Consuls paid out \$100 in weekly prizes in 1933 for correct estimates of weekly goal tallies in the NHL.<sup>162</sup> Sports-related advertising was similarly widespread. Turret promoted Australian billiards pro Walter Lindrum and his upcoming match in Canada with British counterpart Tom Newman, with the winner



Figure 3. Imperial Tobacco ‘Poker Hand’ Premium Catalogue, September 1935, author’s possession.

receiving the “Turret Cigarette Trophy.”<sup>163</sup> Gold Flake cigarettes sponsored an American bridge team in 1933, which toured Canadian cities, playing matches against local teams. In larger halls, “each play [was] flashed upon a large board” so spectators could follow the action.<sup>164</sup> Philip Morris launched a campaign in 1936 featuring NHL stars, including Lionel Conacher, Syl Apps, and Turk Broda, all touting the “mild, smooth, satisfying” merits of its Navy Cut cigarettes.<sup>165</sup> Buckingham advertising featured many testimonials from sports figures, among them tennis pro Bill Tilden, Toronto Argonauts coach Lew Hayman, and golf pro Jules Huot.<sup>166</sup> After five hours in a steel barrel coursing through the Niagara rapids, daredevil William Hill’s “first thought on coming out” was for a Buckingham cigarette.<sup>167</sup> Goody Rosen, the “Toronto boy who made good” by signing with the Brooklyn Dodgers, talked up Buckinghams for steadying his nerves and concentration during baseball play. Toe Blake, the NHL’s lead-scoring scorer in the 1938–39 season, promoted the “throat easy” mildness of Buckinghams in 1939.<sup>168</sup>

### Health Marketing

This “Throat Easy” theme became a fixture of Buckingham advertising, especially after 1930 when ITC bought the Tuckett Tobacco Co. which marketed the brand. Testimonial ads featured actors, singers, and radio hosts, people whose professional livelihoods depended on vocal performance. Radio announcer Herb May explained that “if a cigarette irritated my throat, I’d have to give them up.” But Buckinghams were “easy on my throat.” Louise King, who “sang every night,” championed the brand’s “throat-easy” attributes. Buckinghams were the “only Cigarette treated by Ultra Violet ray in Canada,” making them milder for mouth and throat.<sup>169</sup> Similar appeals were issued by other brands. Benson & Hedges promoted Oxford cigarettes as “mellow mildness for delicate throats.”<sup>170</sup> Advertising for Grothe’s Roxy brand read: “Give your throat a permanent VACATION” from “harshness, bitterness and bite in your cigarette smoking.” Smoke Roxy and “rule out throat irritation and morning after



effects.” Grothe also took out an ad in the form of an “unsolicited testimonial” letter from a physician who found Roxy “less irritating to the throat than any cigarette I have ever smoked.”<sup>171</sup> This theme was picked up by ancillary products. Allenburys Pastilles promised relief from throat irritation caused by “one cigarette too many.” Smith Brothers Cough Drops were there “when your palette is as dry as dust from smoking.” Ads for Zubes Lozenges hailed “Chain Smokers –with gravel throats.”<sup>172</sup> The Denicotea cigarette holder allowed people to “smoke the healthy way” because the holder’s cartridge “remove[d] the harshness, prevent[ed] throat irritation and g[ave] your favorite cigarette a new mildness.”<sup>173</sup>

The most significant marketing response to smoking-related health concerns in the 1930s came in the form of menthol and filtered cigarettes. Introduced in Canada in the early 1930s, menthol cigarettes provided an anesthetizing, cooling effect in the mouth when smoked, reducing the harshness of the cigarette smoke. Menthol had long been used as a medicinal cough suppressant, and tobacco makers sought to draw on its “therapeutic association with cough and cold remedies” to appeal to health-concerned smokers.<sup>174</sup> In the United States in the late 1920s, Axton-Fisher introduced Spuds, the first “menthol-cooled” brand, encouraging smokers to try them when they had colds or sore throats.<sup>175</sup> Spuds arrived in Canada in the early 1930s, with ads touting its mentholated “cool smoke” for “leav[ing] most of its irritants in the butt of the cigarette.”<sup>176</sup> Later Spuds ads described how “tongue-bite” in cigarettes was caused by the “heat in the smoke”, which could be avoided by using “menthol-cooled Spuds.”<sup>177</sup> Another ad carried the header, “Nagged by Nicotine?” and asked readers: “Do you smoke a lot, and worry about what cigarettes are doing to you? You can ease your mind by making better use of the *filter* effect of the butt of your cigarette. Here’s how: pull lightly when you light up. Smoke slowly, and not too far down. But to get real smoking enjoyment, try Spuds ... whose menthol-process naturally condenses more of the tars and acids ...”<sup>178</sup> The “filter effect” did not involve an actual filter (though Spuds also came in a cork tipped version), but was rather a preventative technique per-



formed by the smoker to minimize the intake of “tar and acids.” Other Spuds ads described how menthol produced a “16% cooler smoke”, prevented “tongue-bite and husky-voice”, and kept the smoker’s “tongue and throat in moist-cool comfort.”<sup>179</sup> Cameos were “air-conditioned by menthol” and when inhaled they were as “cool as a fresh breeze.” A 1938 seasonal ad for Cameos featured Santa Claus saying: “Say CAMEO When you want a Menthol Cigarette.”<sup>180</sup> Advertising for Macdonald’s Menthol (with “cool as a Cucumber” written on the package) featured a woman smoking a cigarette with the caption: “Doctors Recommend Them.” She adds: “When I changed to Macdonald’s Menthol my throat said ‘O.K.’ ... so did my doctor.”<sup>181</sup>

Filtered cigarettes appeared in Canada in the mid-1930s and were widely advertised for their health benefits. The niche brand De Reszke promoted its filtered cigarettes for “not only prevent[ing] particles of tobacco from entering the mouth, but also filter[ing] any harmful nicotine out of the smoke.”<sup>182</sup> In May 1936, Brown & Williamson launched Viceroy, the first major filtered cigarette brand in the United States; it did well in the market, selling some 20 million packages in the first six months.<sup>183</sup> Afterwards major filter-brand launches occurred in Canada. British maker Carreras launched Craven ‘A’ in Canada in 1937. These cork tipped cigarettes, a man proclaims in one ad, were a healthy choice: “I know from medical experience that a cigarette made *specially to prevent sore throats* is the right cigarette to smoke.”<sup>184</sup> In another Craven ‘A’ ad, a caption reads: “as a doctor I cannot recommend any brand but personally I smoke Craven ‘A’.”<sup>185</sup> In 1937 Macdonald Tobacco introduced a filtered version of its flagship Export brand, promising consumers “new smoking enjoyment” since the filter worked to “eliminate nicotine.”<sup>186</sup> (The belief that nicotine, and not tar, was potentially harmful was likely reinforced by ads for insecticides touting nicotine as the active ingredient.<sup>187</sup>)

The most heavily advertised filter brand was Peter Jackson’s du Maurier, launched in fall 1936. Its filters constituted the “first vital improvement ever made in cigarettes,” a technological feat on par with “wireless, air-conditioning, [and] streamlining.” The

filters removed “smoke impurities” and delivered “real cigarette pleasure.” (Figure 4) In countless ads running many years, men and women lauded the merits of filtered smoke,<sup>188</sup> calling on consumers to “discover for yourself why all that could harm is trapped in the tip, all that delights come through.”<sup>189</sup> The du Maurier filters “refine[d] the smoke while the cigarette burn[ed]” and “trap[ped] only irritants.”<sup>190</sup> The ads did not disclose the composition of the filters, but most cigarette filters in the 1930s were made from fibrous materials such as wool, cotton, or paper.<sup>191</sup> Most of these ads carried added medical conviction in the form of an endorsement from *The Lancet*, a leading British medical journal, which read: “We have tested these cigarettes and find them to be cooler and less irritating than ordinary cigarettes of good quality without the Filter Tip.”<sup>192</sup> Later, in 1954, Imperial Tobacco acquired the rights to du Maurier and the brand which would later become its top seller, largely due to its appeal to women. In its official corporate history, ITC attributed du Maurier’s success in the 1930s to marketing efforts that were “aimed

THE GLOBE AND MAIL, TORONTO, MONDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1936

# The first vital improvement . . . . ever made in cigarettes

**W**HILE the world applauded wireless, air-conditioning, streamlining, there seemed to be no improvement in cigarettes. Then England originated the du Maurier Filter Tip with the first vital improvement in cigarette smoking enjoyment . . . the pleasures of *Filtered Smoke*.

*Filtered Smoke* is all pleasure! It gives you the full richness, the flavour and fragrance of good tobacco which until now were subdued by smoke impurities. *Filtered Smoke* is a purer, sweeter, more satisfying smoke, cleared by the Filter Tip of all but the goodness of the leaf.

Form your own conclusions. Light a du Maurier Filter Tip, made from the choicest Virginia tobaccos. Sense the surprising coolness, the pleasing mildness, the lingering satisfaction of *Filtered Smoke* . . . and enjoy real cigarette pleasure.

*Lancet* says: "We have tested these cigarettes and find them to be cooler and less irritating than ordinary cigarettes of good quality without the Filter Tip."  
Lancet (Jan. 26), 1934—Page 200

**du MAURIER**  
FILTER TIP VIRGINIA

A Product of PETER JACKSON (Overseas) Ltd.  
217 Piccadilly, London, England.

20 for 25¢  
Same price as in England

ENJOY THE DIFFERENCE IN FILTERED SMOKE

Figure 4. *Globe and Mail*, 21 December 1936, p. 7.

specifically at women.”<sup>193</sup> But, as shown here, du Maurier advertising in the 1930s was largely unisex, appealing generically to men and women with a core message: du Maurier filters offered a modern, technological solution for people’s health concerns about cigarettes. They made cigarette smoking safer, less worrisome, by removing harmful ingredients in tobacco smoke that could irritate and damage mouths and airways.

## Conclusion

In November 1939, an ITC institutional ad praised the role of cigarettes during wartime: “We in the tobacco industry are glad to recall that our products played no small part in keeping up the spirits of the troops, spirits so high that the men could laugh at themselves and their discomforts even in the most critical and arduous hours.”<sup>194</sup> World War II would prove even more beneficial to the cigarette industry than did the 1914–1918 conflict. Per-capita cigarette consumption nearly doubled between 1939 and 1945,<sup>195</sup> and the industry’s public image was enhanced by its support for community and charitable cigarette drives that sent tens of millions of cigarettes overseas to Canadian troops.<sup>196</sup> Few spoke of ITC in terms of “oppressive tactics and unethical methods,” as had the Price Spreads Royal Commission a decade earlier. ITC continued its institutional advertising campaign until 1942, by which point public concerns over corporate concentration and price fixing in the tobacco trade had been displaced by wartime imperatives. The tobacco industry stood on solid ground in 1940. Geographically concentrated in Montréal, tobacco manufacturers confronted few competitive pressures, since two companies controlled more than 90 percent of the cigarette trade. Bright leaf tobacco farming was similarly concentrated in a belt of sandy soil in south-western Ontario.

The cultural landscape of smoking had changed remarkably by 1940. Women were now *bona fide* cigarette smokers. Whether seen with etiquette columnist advice that cigarettes at dinner parties be “passed after the salad course”<sup>197</sup> or with press accounts of women smoking outdoors and “exercising their equal rights with

men,”<sup>198</sup> cigarette smoke had acquired decidedly feminine hues by decade’s end. Women appeared regularly in cigarette advertising and female leads in Hollywood films frequently lit up, both on and off the screen. This served to align cigarettes with desirable personality types and character traits, a powerful and emulative message for women experiencing new social settings involving workplace, post-secondary institution, dance hall, or street car. Cigarette advertising, coupled with smoking in public, functioned symbolically to strengthen notions of political and personal empowerment for women. Cigarettes meshed well with urban living, integrating seamlessly into modern routines of leisure, work, romance, and family life. The cigarette-as-metaphor shaped vernacular understandings of fashion, body type, time, and personal finance, to name a few. In advertising and smoking behaviour, cigarettes ingratiated themselves with popular pastimes such as bridge, poker, and bingo. In gift rebate catalogues, they shared space with desirable consumer goods such as Gillette razors and ceramic tea pots. Here, as Kenneth Lipartito and others have argued, the work of business and cultural history effectively co-penetrate, as cigarette marketers laboured to discursively conflate particular brands with particular forms of popular culture, seen both with devotees of the NHL and Louise King.<sup>199</sup>

A recurring vein of marketing discourse involved descriptors such as “mild”, “mellow”, and “throat easy,” which appeared often in advertising and on cigarette packages. A regular smoker might consume 50 or more cigarettes per day, producing side effects such as coughing and throat irritation. Some in the trade drew from the alcohol industry’s playbook and counselled “moderation” in cigarette smoking.<sup>200</sup> But the pharmacology of nicotine addiction (even if little understood then) propelled many to smoke more cigarettes than they may have wanted. Nicotine dependence and chain-smoking — what made cigarette smokers such profitable repeat-business customers — produced unwanted side effects that clashed with the urbane, fashionable image of cigarettes framed by advertising and cinema. The tobacco industry’s “remedy” for this came in the form of menthol

and filtered cigarettes, both introduced in the 1930s. Menthol's prior therapeutic association with cold remedies, coupled with the cooler taste sensation of mentholated tobacco, was meant to appeal to those who worried about cold-like symptoms arising from smoking. Similarly, high-tech, modern filters promised to trap harmful particulates in cigarette smoke that diminished flavour and inflamed tissue. As a 1937 du Maurier ad proclaimed: when "you filter the smoke it's bound to be cleaner."<sup>201</sup> While sales of filtered brands declined in the 1940s, this trend, ultimately, proved short-lived. After news stories in the early 1950s linked cigarettes to lung cancer, the industry re-introduced filtered cigarettes to stunning effect: filtered brands in Canada rose from two percent of the market in 1952 to 55 percent in 1962, buttressed again by forms of "health marketing" designed to reassure existing and prospective smokers.<sup>202</sup> As we have seen, the industry's response to the "cancer scare" of the 1950s was not novel, but one that drew upon the cultural lexicon of cigarette promotion dating back to the 1930s.

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## Endnotes:

- 1 "W.H. Wright Becomes Owner of the Globe," *Toronto Star* (15 October 1936), 1, 3. Along with tobacco-related accounts listed in the *Canadian Periodical Index*, this paper draws on cigarette-related content found in digitized historical newspapers such as the *Toronto Star* and the *Globe and Mail*. Researchers also examined every issue of *Marketing Magazine*, Canada's main advertising trade journal, for the 1930s.

- 2 du Maurier Filter ads, *Globe and Mail* (10 December 1936), 17; (21 December 1936), 7.
- 3 Cassandra Tate, *Cigarette Wars: The Triumph of the 'The Little White Slave'* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 4; Lee J. Alston, Ruth Dupré, and Tomas Nonnenmacher, "Social reformers and Regulation: the Prohibition of Cigarettes in the United States and Canada," *Explorations in Economic History* 39, 4 (October 2002): 432.
- 4 Rob Cunningham, *Smoke & Mirrors: The Canadian Tobacco War* (Ottawa: IDRC 1996), 37; Alston et al., "Social Reformers," 430–1.
- 5 Sharon Anne Cook, *Sex Lies and Cigarettes: Canadian Women, Smoking, and Visual Culture, 1880–2000* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2012); Allan M. Brandt, *The Cigarette Century: The Rise, Fall, and Deadly Persistence of the Product that Defined America* (New York: Basic Books, 2007), 110.
- 6 Jarrett Rudy, *The Freedom to Smoke: Tobacco Consumption and Identity* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), 132–4.
- 7 Per capita cigar consumption declined from 31.6 in 1920 to 19 in 1928. DBS, *Statistical Handbook of Canadian Tobacco*, 40.
- 8 Rudy, *Freedom to Smoke*, 132, 141. See too H.E. Stephenson and Carlton McNaught, *The Story of Advertising in Canada* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1940), 196–204.
- 9 Economic downturn does not fully explain these results. Canada's Gross National Product declined by eight percent from 1929 to 1939, while per-capita cigarette consumption increased by 24 percent during these years. Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Handbook of Canadian Tobacco* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1947), 40.
- 10 M.C. Urquhart and K.A.H. Buckley, eds. (Toronto: Macmillan, 1965), 130; DBS, *Statistical Handbook of Canadian Tobacco*, 1947, 40.
- 11 DBS, *Historical Series of Tobacco Statistics*, 1950, 7.
- 12 For cigarette "health marketing" during the 1960s, see Daniel J. Robinson, "Marketing and Regulating Cigarettes in Canada, 1957–1971," in *Les Territoires de l'entreprise*, eds. Claude Bellevance and Pierre Lanthier (Québec: Laval University Press, 2004), 245–63.
- 13 "Canada in Danger of a Dictatorship," *Toronto Star* (10 April 1934), 23.
- 14 "Profits Surpass All Money Paid Tobacco Growers," *Toronto Star* (24 April 1934), 1–2; "Growers Poor, Companies Rich, Say Tobacco Men," *The Globe* (25 April 1934), 2.
- 15 "Profits of Millions by Tobacco Concern Disclosed to Probe," *The Globe* (4 May 1934), 1, 3.
- 16 "Charges Tobacco Firm Depressed Prices by Delay," *Toronto Star* (8 May 1934), 1–2.
- 17 "Huge Bonuses for Imperial Tobacco Officials," *The Globe* (9 May 1934), 1.



- 18 "Tobacco Dividends \$32,000,000, 1929–1933," *Toronto Star* (9 May 1934), 1, 2.
- 19 "Advance Budget Tip-Off Charged by Witness," *The Globe* (11 May 34), 1. Newspaper accounts of this caught the attention of federal Liberal leader Mackenzie King. Library and Archives Canada (hereafter LAC), Mackenzie King Diary, 11 May 1934.
- 20 "Claim Reign of Terror Exists in Tobacco Trade," *Toronto Star* (16 May 1934), 9.
- 21 "Ruthless Methods Against Retailers Alleged at Probe," *The Globe* (16 May 1934), 2.
- 22 "No Light on 'Budget Leak' Given by Cahan, Matthews," *Toronto Star* (17 May 1934), 12.
- 23 Joanne Burgess, "Davis, Sir Mortimer Barnett," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Vol. 15, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003. Available at: [www.biographi.ca/en/bio/davis\\_mortimer\\_barnett\\_15E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/davis_mortimer_barnett_15E.html).
- 24 Howard Cox, *The Global Cigarette: Origins and Evolution of British American Tobacco 1880–1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 101; Burgess, "Davis, Sir Mortimer."
- 25 Cox, *Global Cigarette*, 103.
- 26 Rudy, *The Freedom to Smoke*, 126–7, 129.
- 27 *Ibid.*, 124–5.
- 28 Burgess, "Davis, Sir Mortimer."
- 29 "Tuckett's Tobacco (Hamilton) and ITC (Montreal)," *Marketing Magazine* (24 May 1930), 319.
- 30 Cox, *Global Cigarette*, 106; Rudy, *Freedom to Smoke*, 126.
- 31 Robert Craig Brown and Ramsay Cook, *Canada 1896–1921: A Nation Transformed* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1974), 91–2.
- 32 Lloyd G. Reynolds, *The Control of Competition in Canada* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940), 136–7.
- 33 Michael Bliss, *A Living Profit: Studies in the Social History of Canadian Business, 1883–1911* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1974), 40.
- 34 Bliss, *A Living Profit*, 33–54. On urban utilities and the monopoly question, see Christopher Armstrong and H.V. Nelles, *Monopoly's Moment: The Organization and Regulation of Canadian Utilities, 1830–1930* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986).
- 35 John Herd Thompson and Allen Seager, *Canada 1922–1939: Decades of Discord* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986), 258–9.
- 36 *Report of the Royal Commission on Price Spreads* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1937), 308–15.
- 37 Larry A. Glassford, *Reaction and Reform: The Politics of the Conservative party under R.B. Bennett, 1927–1938* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 149.

- 38 Glassford, *Reaction and Reform*, 157; P.B. Waite, *In Search of R.B. Bennett* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2012), 221.
- 39 *Report of the Royal Commission on Price Spreads*, 13.
- 40 Ibid., 51.
- 41 Ibid.
- 42 "Tobacco Industry is Lacking Balance, Says Mass Report," *The Globe* (13 April 1935), 14.
- 43 *Report of the Royal Commission on Price Spreads*, 54.
- 44 Ibid., 265.
- 45 Ibid., 266.
- 46 Glassford, *Reaction and Reform*, 158.
- 47 Ibid., 165–6; P.B. Waite, *In Search of R.B. Bennett*, 209.
- 48 Glassford, *Reaction and Reform*, 166.
- 49 John Herd Thompson, *Canada 1922–1939*, 266.
- 50 Roland Marchand, *Creating the Corporate Soul: The Rise of Public Relations and Corporate Imagery in American Big Business* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 45.
- 51 Karen S. Miller, *The Voice of Business: Hill & Knowlton and Postwar Public Relations* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 10–2.
- 52 Inger L. Stole, *Advertising on Trial: Consumer Activism and Corporate Public Relations in the 1930s* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 99.
- 53 Robert Jackall and Janice M. Hirota, *Image Makers: Advertising, Public Relations, and the Ethos of Advocacy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 39.
- 54 H.A. Batten, president of N.W. Ayer & Son, quoted in "Calls on Business to Rebuild Faith," *New York Times* (29 April 1937), 30; see also, Marchand, *Creating the Corporate Soul*, 204–5; Scott M. Cutlip, *The Unseen Power: Public Relations. A History* (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1994), 526–7. In 1934, Seagram launched what would become North America's longest-running institutional advertising campaign. See Daniel J. Robinson, "'The Luxury of Moderate Use': Seagram and Moderation Advertising, 1934–1955," in *Communicating in Canada's Past: Essays in Media History*, eds. Daniel J. Robinson and Gene Allen (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 109–139.
- 55 ITC ad, *The Globe* (28 January 1935), 10; notably, these ads ran in the *Globe* when the paper did not accept cigarette advertising, underscoring the perceived difference between brand and institutional advertising.
- 56 For commentary in the advertising trade press on the broader public relations thrust of this campaign see *Marketing Magazine* (untitled) (2 February 1935), 5.
- 57 ITC ad, *Globe* (12 February 1935), 3.
- 58 ITC ads, *Toronto Star* (11 March 1935), 12; *Toronto Star* (25 March 1935), 10.
- 59 ITC ad, *Toronto Star* (8 April 1935), 12.

- 60 *Toronto Star* (29 April 1935), 12.
- 61 *Toronto Star* (14 May 1935), 14.
- 62 *Toronto Star* (20 May 1935), 12 and (3 June 1935), 22.
- 63 *Report of the Royal Commission on Price Spreads*, 378, 364.
- 64 Marchand, *Creating the Corporate Soul*, 15, 21–22.
- 65 *Toronto Star* (8 July 1935), 9.
- 66 *Toronto Star* (7 October 1935), 14.
- 67 *Toronto Star* (21 October 1935), 16. Wholesaler and retailer margins on cigarettes were slim. In 1930, the manufacturer “value at factory” for a 20-pack of cigarettes was 19.5 cents (which included a 12-cent excise duty), which most often retailed for 25 cents. In 1938, owing to a 33 percent reduction of the cigarette excise tax, the “value at factory” cost dropped to 15.4 cents, with advertised retail prices for 20-packs typically at 20 or 25 cents. Ottawa, DBS, *Statistical Handbook of Canadian Tobacco*, 1941, 12; Ottawa, Department of Labour, *An Investigation into an Alleged Combine in the Distribution of Tobacco Products*, 1939, 6.
- 68 *Toronto Star* (4 November 1935), 13.
- 69 *Toronto Star* (11 November 1935), 14.
- 70 *Toronto Star* (18 March 1936), 14 and (22 April 1936), 7.
- 71 *Toronto Star* (20 May 1936), 9.
- 72 *Toronto Star* (22 July 1936), 5.
- 73 *Toronto Star* (24 June 1936), 9.
- 74 *Toronto Star* (26 August 1936), 9.
- 75 Sally H. Clarke, Naomi R. Lamoreaux and Steven W. Usselman, “Introduction” in *The Challenge of Remaining Innovative: Insights from Twentieth-Century American Business*, eds. H. Clarke, N. Lamoreaux and W. Usselman, (Stanford: Business Books, 2009), 7.
- 76 Jeffrey L. Meikle, *American Plastic: A Cultural History* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1995), 63.
- 77 *Toronto Star* (24 March 1937), 5.
- 78 Proctor, *Golden Holocaust*, 66–68.
- 79 Mary Vipond, *The Mass Media in Canada* (Toronto: James Lorimer, 1989), 24.
- 80 The listed brands were Sweet Caporals, Player’s, Turret, Winchester, Cameo Menthol, and Gold Flake.
- 81 For one example, see “Women Smokers To Cause Decline in World’s Health,” *Toronto Star* (21 July 1928), 1.
- 82 Brandt, *Cigarette Century*, 117.
- 83 *Ibid.*, 124.
- 84 *Ibid.*, 125.
- 85 Proctor, *Golden Holocaust*, 155–70.
- 86 For examples, see “Local Doctors Scoff at New Smoking Evil,” *Toronto Star* (23 June 1930), 30; “Don’t See Cigarettes Causing Lip Cancer,”

- Toronto Star* (9 March 1934), 13. For a humour-inflected version of this, see: "The doctor's opinion that tobacco causes your trouble would be more impressive if his cigarette didn't smell so good," *Toronto Star* (25 September 1933), 17.
- 87 Cited in Proctor, *Golden Holocaust*, 158.
  - 88 Brandt, *Cigarette Century*, 124.
  - 89 "Imperial Tobacco Copy Buttonholes Smokers," *Marketing* (11 February 1939), 7.
  - 90 See Karen S. Miller, *The Voice of Business*, 121–48; Brandt, *Cigarette Century*, 159–207.
  - 91 ITC ad, *Toronto Star* (3 September 1935), 16.
  - 92 Canada, Department of Trade and Commerce, *Food Products, Beverages, Rubber, Tobacco and Miscellaneous Manufacturers* (1941), 149.
  - 93 Frederick Wright, "Propagating a New Agricultural Industry," *Canadian Magazine* (August 1928), 16–7; Bruce M. Pearce, "Tobacco –And Wealth," *Saturday Night* (10 January 1931), 21; J.E.T. Musgrave, "Canadian Tobacco," *Canadian Geographical Journal*, Vol. 8 (June 1934), 277–89.
  - 94 Canada, Bureau of Statistics, *Historical Series of Tobacco Statistics* (DBS, 1950), 13. On improved relations between tobacco farmers and manufacturers, see "Kirkwood Speaking," *Marketing* (13 May 1939), 10.
  - 95 Canada, DBS, *Historical Series of Tobacco Statistics*, 35.
  - 96 Frederick Edwards, "Mister, I'm Singing!" *Maclean's* (15 March 1939), 20–22, 34.
  - 97 Edwards, "Mister, I'm Singing," 20.
  - 98 Ibid.
  - 99 Urquhart and Buckley, eds., *Historical Statistics of Canada*, 478, 466. Canada, Department of Trade and Commerce, *Food Products, Beverages, Rubber, Tobacco and Miscellaneous Manufacturers* (1941), 142.
  - 100 *Historical Statistics of Canada*, 466.
  - 101 Canada, Department of Trade and Commerce, *Food Products, Beverages, Rubber, Tobacco and Miscellaneous Manufacturers* (1941), 142.
  - 102 *Historical Statistics of Canada*, 356, 366.
  - 103 *Historical Statistics of Canada*, 463.
  - 104 *Statistical Handbook of Canadian Tobacco* (1947), 43; *Historical Statistics of Canada*, 197.
  - 105 *Toronto Star* (18 November 1935), 12.
  - 106 For example, in 1946 tobacco excise duties, while much higher at \$98.2 million, totalled just four percent of the \$2.4 billion raised in federal tax revenues, *Statistical Handbook of Canadian Tobacco* (1947), 42; *Historical Statistics of Canada*, 197.
  - 107 Reginald Whitaker, *The Government Party: Organizing and Financing the Liberal Party of Canada, 1930–58* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977).

- 108 "History of Federal Ridings since 1867," <http://www.parl.gc.ca/About/Parliament/FederalRidingsHistory/hfer.asp?Language=E&Search=G>. On the fundraising difficulties of the Conservative Party in Montréal during the early 1940s, see J.L. Granatstein, *The Politics of Survival: The Conservative Party of Canada, 1939–1945* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), 49–50, 71–2.
- 109 "History of Federal Ridings since 1867," <http://www.parl.gc.ca/About/Parliament/FederalRidingsHistory/hfer.asp?Language=E&Search=G>. Tory fortunes changed in the 1945 federal election when the party took five of these ridings.
- 110 *Historical Statistics of Canada*, 208–9.
- 111 DBS, *Historical Series of Tobacco Statistics* (1950), 41.
- 112 DBS, *Statistical Handbook of Canadian Tobacco* (1947), 40.
- 113 Stephenson and McNaught, *The Story of Advertising in Canada*, 204.
- 114 "Address Cigarette Copy to Women," *Marketing* (25 June 1927), 530.
- 115 *Ibid.*
- 116 *Marketing* (12 May 1928), 410.
- 117 Ads for Diva cigarettes, made with Egyptian tobacco and targeting high-society women, ran in the magazine, *Le Journal de Françoise*, in the early 1900s. Rudy, *Freedom to Smoke*, 152–3.
- 118 *Ibid.*, 160–1. In Britain, full-blown cigarette advertising to women also began in the late 1920s, although there were a few instances of such marketing in the early 1910s. Penny Tinkler, *Smoke Signals: Women, Smoking and Visual Culture in Britain* (2006), 57. For a discussion of how women still may have found male-centred cigarette advertising appealing, see Cheryl K. Warsh, "Smoke and Mirrors: Gender Representation in North American Tobacco and Alcohol Advertisements before 1950," *Social History* 31 (1998), 183–222.
- 119 "Flapper's Puff Gains Power," *Toronto Star* (15 March 1930), 26.
- 120 LAC, Mackenzie King Diary (10 June 1933), 2.
- 121 "Gowns for Co-Eds New Rule at Queen's," *Toronto Star* (14 November 1934), 26.
- 122 Cook, *Sex, Lies and Cigarettes*, 177.
- 123 Rudy, *Freedom to Smoke*, 150.
- 124 "Women Now Enjoy Smoke Walking on City Streets," *Toronto Star* (13 July 1937), 26.
- 125 Cook, *Sex, Lies and Cigarettes*, 174.
- 126 *Ibid.*, 174–5.
- 127 Sweet Caporals ad, *Toronto Star* (13 December 1938), 3.
- 128 Ted Magder, "A 'Featureless' Film Policy: Culture and the Canadian State," in *Communication History in Canada*, ed. Robinson, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2009), 272–81.
- 129 Rudy, *Freedom to Smoke*, 162.

- 130 Tinkler, *Smoke Signals* 123, 121.
- 131 Iain Gately, *La Diva Nicotina: The Story of How Tobacco Seduced the World* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001), 248.
- 132 Tinkler, *Smoke Signals*, 127.
- 133 Richard Klein, *Cigarettes are Sublime* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 9; Tate, *Cigarette Wars*, 138; Brandt, *Cigarette Century*, 87.
- 134 Rudy, *Freedom to Smoke*, 163.
- 135 Tinkler, *Smoke Signals*, 60.
- 136 Gold Flake ad, *Toronto Star* (19 October 1935), 14.
- 137 K.L. Lum, J.R. Polansky, R.K. Jackler, and S.A. Glantz, "Signed, sealed and delivered: 'big tobacco' in Hollywood, 1927–1951," *Tobacco Control* 17 (2008): 313–23. Other actors included Clark Gable, Joan Crawford, Carole Lombard, Robert Montgomery, Barbara Stanwyck, Robert Taylor, and Spencer Tracy.
- 138 "Historical Statistics of Canada," Statistics Canada, Table A67-69, "Population, rural & urban," <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-516-x/sectiona/4147436-eng.htm#1>
- 139 Rudy, *Freedom to Smoke*, 122.
- 140 Miss de Peyster advice column, *Toronto Star* (9 May 1934), 25.
- 141 Eaton's ad, *Toronto Star* (12 March 1936), 51.
- 142 Life Savers ad, *Toronto Star* (7 September 1933), 10; Wrigley's ad, *Toronto Star* (22 April 1937), 3.
- 143 Elizabeth Arden ad, *Toronto Star* (6 February 1935), 18; Kellogg's Asthma Relief ad, *Toronto Star* (18 May 1938), 24.
- 144 Eaton's ad, *Toronto Star* (12 August 1937), 42. One modern-day comparison is "Cappuccino Brown."
- 145 Dress ad, *Toronto Star* (28 April 1939), 24.
- 146 Classified ad, "Motor Cars," *Toronto Star* (5 December 1930), 41.
- 147 Eaton's ad, *Toronto Star* (15 September 1938), 29.
- 148 Ida Jean Kain, "Transverse Stretch Said Best Way to Slim Waist," *Toronto Star* (21 October 1939), 22.
- 149 Frigidaire ad, *Toronto Star* (30 June 1931), 5.
- 150 Uptown Tire ad, *Toronto Star* (22 May 1940), 18.
- 151 Knox Gelatine ad, *Toronto Star* (26 April 1939), 9.
- 152 Aqua Velva ad, *Toronto Star* (7 March 1935), 23.
- 153 Cigarette premium promotions occurred also in the early 1900s. See Rudy, *Freedom to Smoke*, 128–9
- 154 *Marketing Magazine* (13 May 1933), 5; (5 September 1925), 134.
- 155 ITC catalogue, "Gifts for Poker Hands" (September), 1935. In author's possession. ITC ad ("Save the Poker Hands"), *The Globe* (13 July 1936), 18. In the UK, coupon trading, Hilton notes, had "transformed the cigarette trade" by the mid-1930s, rising from four percent of the market in 1927 to 33 percent in 1933. Matthew Hilton, *Smoking in British*



- Popular Culture, 1800-2000* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 108.
- 156 "Run' Develops on Premium Stores of Tobacco Companies," *Marketing* (10 August 1935), 1; ITC ads, *Toronto Star* (30 August 1935), 6; (7 September 1935), 4.
  - 157 Macdonald Blends ads, *Toronto Star* (13 September 1929), 16; (29 October 1929), 10; (5 November 1929), 34; (4 March 1930), 13; Grads ad, *Toronto Star* (11 September 1934), 8; My Fortune ad, *Toronto Star* (13 July 1931), 10.
  - 158 For a parallel with Wrigley's use of premiums, see Daniel J. Robinson, "Marketing Gum, Making Meanings: Wrigley in North America, 1890-1930," *Enterprise & Society* 5, 1 (2004): 22-24. On the rise of premium marketing, see Wendy A. Woloson, "Wishful Thinking: Retail Premiums in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America," *Enterprise & Society* 13, 4 (2012): 790-831.
  - 159 *Marketing Magazine* (30 January 1932), 70; Turret ads, *Toronto Star* (27 January 1932), 15; (5 February 1932), 14.
  - 160 *Marketing Magazine* (19 November 1932), 213; Turret ads, *Toronto Star* (13 April 1932), 13; (25 April 1932), 5.
  - 161 Draegerman ad, *Globe and Mail* (20 January 1937), 7.
  - 162 British Consuls ad, *Toronto Star* (9 January 1933), 11.
  - 163 Turret ad, *Toronto Star* (5 March 1932), 12; "Cueists Play for Trophy," *Toronto Star* (7 March 1932), 7.
  - 164 "Interesting Photographic Series for Cigarettes," *Marketing* (18 February 1933), 9.
  - 165 Philip Morris ads, *Toronto Star* (14 December 1936), 9; (4 January 1937), 10; (1 February 1937), 9; (15 February 1937), 9; (8 March 1937), 10; Philip Morris ads, *Globe and Mail* (4 January 1937), 19; (1 February 1937), 17.
  - 166 Buckingham ads, *Toronto Star* (1 May 1931), 13; (9 December 1938), 19; (16 May 1939), 13.
  - 167 Buckingham ad, *Toronto Star* (16 July 1930), 4; Frank Bagnall, "Thrill Theme Ties up with News Events," *Marketing* (13 September 1930), 125-126.
  - 168 Buckingham ads, *Toronto Star* (20 July 1939), 16; (17 April 1939), 9.
  - 169 Buckingham ads, *Toronto Star* (4 July 1932), 8; (7 November 1938), 11; (21 November 1938), 5.
  - 170 Oxford ad, *Toronto Star* (24 April 1933), 23.
  - 171 Roxy ads, *Toronto Star* (2 May 1932), 10; (15 April 1932), 13.
  - 172 Allenburys ad, *Toronto Star* (10 November 1932), 34; Smith Brothers ad, *Toronto Star* (29 March 1935), 29; Zubes ad, *Toronto Star* (19 October 1937), 8.
  - 173 Denicotea ads, *Toronto Star* (20 October 1933), 12; (25 October 1933), 8; (6 November 1933), 26.

- 174 Brandt, *Cigarette Century*, 244.
- 175 Proctor, *Golden Holocaust*, 498.
- 176 Spuds ads, *Toronto Star* (20 September 1932), 13; (4 October 1932), 14.
- 177 This ad's head line read, "What is the Irritant in Cigarette Smoke?," Spuds ad, *Toronto Star* (21 November 1935), 21; Spuds ad, *London Free Press* (5 May 1936), 6.
- 178 Spuds ad, *Toronto Star* (16 April 1936), 5.
- 179 Spuds ads, *Toronto Star* (12 September 1938), 11; (12 January 1939), 3; (20 February 1939), 23; (27 February 1939), 5.
- 180 Cameo ad, *London Free Press* (5 May 1936), 5; Cameo ad, *Toronto Star* (9 December 1938), 11. The department store Simpson's issued its own menthol brand, "Artik," whose package features an arctic landscape. Artik ad, *Toronto Star* (8 February 1935), 20.
- 181 Macdonald's Menthol ads, *London Free Press* (1 April 1935), 14; *Toronto Star* (27 March 1935), 13.
- 182 De Reszke ad, *Toronto Star* (8 August 1935), 21.
- 183 Proctor, *Golden Holocaust*, 343.
- 184 Craven 'A' ads, *London Free Press* (2 June 1937), 3; [original emphasis]; *Toronto Star* (20 September 1937), 3; (22 March 1938), 9; in Britain, Carreras used a similar advertising appeal for Craven 'A', adding to that the brand had been granted a "certificate" from the "Institute of Hygiene for quality and purity." Hilton, *Smoking in British Popular Culture*, 99.
- 185 Craven 'A' ad, *Toronto Star* (25 May 1937), 3.
- 186 Macdonald ad, *Globe and Mail* (17 February 1937), 19.
- 187 See "Lice on House Plants," *Toronto Star* (9 November 1935), 6; (7 August 1935), 7.
- 188 du Maurier ads in *Globe and Mail* (21 December 1936), 7; (13 January 1937), 7; (1 February 1937), 5; du Maurier ads in *Toronto Star* (21 December 1938), 8; (31 May 1939), 13.
- 189 du Maurier ad, *Globe and Mail* (1 February 1937), 5.
- 190 du Maurier ad, *Toronto Star* (31 May 39), 13. For other ads see, *Globe and Mail* (21 December 1936), 7; (13 January 1937), 7; (1 February 1937), 5; *London Free Press* (1 June 1937), 5; *Toronto Star* (21 December 1938), 8.
- 191 Proctor, *Golden Holocaust*, 343.
- 192 du Maurier ads, *Globe and Mail* (21 December 1936), 7; (13 January 1937), 7.
- 193 Marc H. Choko and Joanne Burgess, *Imperial Tobacco Canada: 1908–2008* (Montréal: Imperial Tobacco, 2008), 270. This commemorative history is highly sanitized. For example, the health risks of cigarette smoking, and the firm's various responses, are not discussed.
- 194 ITC ad, *Toronto Star* (16 November 1939), 3.
- 195 DBS, *Historical Series of Tobacco Statistics* (1950), 45. They rose from 630 in 1939, to 1255 in 1945.

- 196 For example, see Serge Marc Durflinger, *Fighting from Home: The Second World War in Verdun, Quebec* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006), 59–66.
- 197 Miss de Peyster advice column, *Toronto Star* (28 January 1935), 23.
- 198 “Women Now Enjoy Smoke Walking on City Streets”, *Toronto Star* (13 July 1937), 26.
- 199 Kenneth Lipartito, “Connecting the Cultural and the Material in Business History,” *Enterprise & Society* 14, 4 (December 2013): 703.
- 200 On the moderation ethos and alcohol, see Robinson, ““The Luxury of Moderate Use”” in *Communicating in Canada’s Past*, eds. Allen and Robinson, 109–139.
- 201 du Maurier ad, *Toronto Star* (14 June 1937), 11.
- 202 Robinson, “Marketing and Regulating Cigarettes,” in *Les Territoires de l’entreprise*, 250. Proctor similarly notes that filtered cigarettes in the United States comprised only about one percent of the market during most of the 1940s, but by 1960 accounted for half of all sales: Proctor, *Golden Holocaust*, 343, 347.