



Booze and butts: A content analysis of the presence of alcohol in tobacco industry lifestyle magazines



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ABSTRACT

Background: Advertising influences people's health behaviors. Tobacco companies have linked tobacco and alcohol in their marketing activities. We examined how depictions of alcohol were placed in lifestyle magazines produced by tobacco companies, and if these references differed depending on the magazine's orientation, if it was towards men, women, or if it was unisex.

Methods: Content analysis of 6 different tobacco industry lifestyle magazines (73 issues), including 73 magazine covers, 1558 articles, 444 tobacco ads, and 695 non-tobacco ads.

Results: 14 of 73 (19%) magazine covers featured alcohol; 581 of 1558 (37%) magazine articles mentioned alcohol; 119 of 444 (27%) tobacco ads showed alcohol images; and 57 of 695 (8%) non-tobacco ads portrayed alcohol. Male-oriented magazines (*Unlimited*, *CML*, and *Real Edge*) contained the most alcohol references, and the references were mainly beer, mixed drinks, and liquor or spirits. Female-oriented magazines (*All Woman* and *Flair*) contained the fewest alcohol references, and wine and mixed drinks were the major types of alcoholic beverage portrayed. For the unisex magazine (*P.S.*), the frequency of alcohol references fell between the male- and female-oriented magazines, and the magazine most frequently mentioned mixed drinks.

Conclusions: Frequent depictions of smoking and drinking in tobacco industry lifestyle magazines might have reinforced norms about paired use of tobacco and alcohol among young adults. The pairing of tobacco and alcohol may particularly target young men. Anti-tobacco interventions need to address the co-use of tobacco and alcohol, change the social acceptability of smoking in social settings, and tailor anti-tobacco messaging by gender.

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1. Introduction

Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable disease and death in the US, accounting for more than 480,000 premature deaths each year (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2014). Every year, 87% of lung cancer deaths, 61% of pulmonary disease deaths, and 32% of deaths from coronary heart disease are attributable to smoking and secondhand smoke exposure (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2014). In 2013, 17.8% of US adults reported smoking within the past 30 days (Jamal et al., 2014). Alcohol use is the third leading cause of preventable death, resulting in nearly 88,000 deaths annually (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014a). In 2013, 7.0% of US adults had alcohol use disorders (National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, 2015). Excessive alcohol use increases the risk

of heart disease, stroke, hypertension, and cancer of the breast, mouth, throat, esophagus, liver, and colon (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014b). The co-use of tobacco and alcohol is even more detrimental to health, and leads to lung disease, heart disease, and cancer of the mouth, throat, and esophagus (American Cancer Society, 2014; Grucza & Bierut, 2006; National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, 1998; Pelucchi, Gallus, Garavello, Bosetti, & La Vecchia, 2006).

The co-use of tobacco and alcohol is common, especially among young adults. In a study of college students in the US, 98% of current (past 30-day) smokers reported alcohol consumption in the past year (Weitzman & Chen, 2005). Smoking episodes often involve alcohol use (McKee, Hinson, Rounsaville, & Petrelli, 2004). In a study of young adult bar patrons in San Diego, California, 95% reported smoking while drinking alcohol at a bar or club (Jiang & Ling, 2013). Young adults report that they enjoy smoking while drinking alcohol (Gilpin, White, & Pierce, 2005), and view smoking and drinking as highly paired behaviors, especially in social contexts (Acosta et al., 2008; Budd & Preston, 2001; Gilpin et al., 2005; Hoek, Maubach, Stevenson, Gendall, & Edwards, 2013; McKee et al., 2004; Nichter, Nichter, Carkoglu, Lloyd-

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Richardson, & Tobacco Etiology Research Network (TERN), 2010; Nichter et al., 2006; Stromberg, Nichter, & Nichter, 2007). The paired use of tobacco and alcohol has become the norm, and smoking at bars is regarded as “sociable” by young adults (Hoek et al., 2013). Tobacco companies have researched young adults' drinking patterns and their preferences for alcohol types and brands, and designed marketing strategies to link tobacco with alcohol (Jiang & Ling, 2011). These marketing activities both capitalize on and reinforce social norms about the paired use of tobacco and alcohol.

Advertising influences people's health behaviors. Exposure to tobacco advertising causes smoking initiation and continuation among adolescents and young adults (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2012), and is related to cigarette brand selection (Pucci & Siegel, 1999; While, Kelly, Huang, & Charlton, 1996). Similarly, exposure to alcohol advertising is associated with intention to drink alcohol (Collins, Ellickson, McCaffrey, & Hambarsoomians, 2007; Fleming, Thorson, & Atkin, 2004; Pasch, Komro, Perry, Hearst, & Farbakhs, 2007), increased alcohol consumption (Austin, Chen, & Grube, 2006; Casswell & Zhang, 1998; Collins et al., 2007; Collins, Schell, Ellickson, & McCafferty, 2003; Connolly, Casswell, Zhang, & Silva, 1994; Ellickson, Collins, Hambarsoomians, & McCaffrey, 2005; Fleming et al., 2004; Grube & Waiters, 2005; Pasch et al., 2007; Snyder, Milici, Slater, Sun, & Strizhakova, 2006; Stacy, Zogg, Unger, & Dent, 2004; Wyllie, Zhang, & Casswell, 1998a,b), and brand selection (Chen, Grube, Bersamin, Waiters, & Keefe, 2005). The images and messaging that link tobacco with alcohol, such as some seen in tobacco advertising, are framed to be consistent with social norms about smoking and drinking, and may reinforce the message that co-use—even if it is “I only smoke when I am at a bar and I am drinking”—is a normal part of young adult social activities. It also builds upon other tobacco marketing strategies to influence public perceptions of smoking as a legitimate normative behavior with positive social benefits (Landman, Cortese, & Glantz, 2008).

Research on advertising that portrays both tobacco and alcohol is limited. A previous content analysis of the general magazines popular among young adults found that tobacco advertisements often contained alcohol images or text references to alcohol (Belstock, Connolly, Carpenter, & Tucker, 2008). However, a unique and interesting source of tobacco advertising is lifestyle magazines created by tobacco companies and distributed to smokers via direct mail. The tobacco industry's lifestyle magazines were produced primarily in the 1990s–2000s to enhance connections with smokers and to communicate with young adults (Cortese, Lewis, & Ling, 2009). Many of these magazines were designed to reinforce specific cigarette brand images (e.g., CML magazine designed for the Camel cigarette brand) by featuring young adults' lifestyles and values throughout the magazines, including the articles, images, and ads (Cortese et al., 2009; Cortese & Ling, 2011). In these tobacco industry lifestyle magazines, tobacco companies have editorial control over the content in ways that allow them to seamlessly integrate the marketing messages into the magazine covers, article content, and ads to construct an entire magazine to communicate the advertising messages. This is unlike mainstream magazines (not produced by tobacco companies) where tobacco companies cannot link magazine content with their tobacco marketing campaigns because editorial control is maintained by the publishing companies. Thus the lifestyle magazines represent a unique source to assess how tobacco companies used alcohol to build and reinforce the cigarette brand identity. Today, for unknown reasons, tobacco companies no longer produce most of the lifestyle magazines (Cortese et al., 2009). However these historical texts provide a unique perspective into how, through the creation of lifestyle media, tobacco companies might reinforce the links between tobacco and alcohol use. There is some evidence that these marketing tactics have been transferred into other channels such as tobacco brand websites. A better understanding of these marketing tactics may help inform the development of targeted interventions to address paired use of tobacco and alcohol.

We conducted a content analysis of a collection of the tobacco industry's lifestyle magazines to (1) describe the frequency of alcohol references in different parts of the magazines (i.e., magazine cover, article, tobacco ads, and non-tobacco ads), (2) describe the types of alcohol featured in each part of the magazines, and (3) compare the difference in alcohol references by the targeted gender orientation of the magazines. The frequency of alcohol references (both images and texts) reflects the intensity of using alcohol to promote cigarettes, and may indicate the importance of this marketing tactic to tobacco companies, and if there is a difference by gender. To examine targeting by gender further, the types of alcoholic beverages in the different references may tell if and how tobacco companies might target messages to men or women by using gender-specific preferences for alcohol.

2. Methods

We analyzed all lifestyle magazines contained in the Trinkets and Trash archive (trinketsandtrash.org), a surveillance system and archive that monitors, collects, and documents historic and current tobacco products and promotional materials (e.g., magazines, advertisements, direct mails, e-mails, sweepstakes, coupon promotions and brand websites). Trinkets and Trash utilizes monitors who have signed up to receive direct mail promotions from various tobacco brands, and these promotional items included controlled circulation magazines produced by tobacco companies. This collection represents a reasonably comprehensive sample and the best available collection of limited edition magazines produced by tobacco companies. The collection included 6 different magazines: *Unlimited*, *All Woman*, *CML*, *Pleasure Scene (P.S.)*, *Real Edge*, and *Flair*. There were a total of 73 different issues of the six magazines available. Table 1 presents more detailed information about the magazines included in this analysis (Philip Morris, 1996, 2003, 2004; R. J. Reynolds, 1999). We analyzed the full content of all 73 issues of the magazines, which included a total of 73 magazine covers, 1558 articles, 444 tobacco ads, and 695 non-tobacco ads.

We followed standard content analysis techniques well-established in the literature (Jordan, Kunkel, Manganello, & Fishbein, 2009; Macnamara, 2003; Neuendorf, 2001; Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, 2005). These research techniques have been used to study tobacco and alcohol advertisements in magazines (Balbach, Gasior, & Barbeau, 2003; Belstock et al., 2008; Stubblefield & Singh, 2004). We developed a set of 4 different coding instruments to fit 4 different categories of magazine content (i.e., magazine covers, articles, tobacco ads, and non-tobacco ads). Every coding instrument included sections to code alcohol references and the types of alcohol present. Alcohol references included both the images of alcohol and mentions of alcohol in the text (e.g., either the word “alcohol” or the type/brand of the alcohol). Table 2 presents the definitions of the different types of alcohol (i.e., beer, wine, mixed drink, liquor and spirits, and unknown type). The coding instruments were refined and tested iteratively until consistent definitions were generated to ensure the exhaustiveness and mutual exclusivity of the coding variables.

A comprehensive coding procedure manual was developed for each of the 4 coding instruments. Definitions for coding items were written and revised during an extensive coder training. Five coders were trained and they were blinded to the study objectives. All coders completed test sets of identical materials which were checked for consistency, and then all coders participated in group discussions of the test set. Differences in coding results were examined and discussed, code books were revised, and another test set was completed iteratively until all coders were reliable. Definitions for coding items were modified as necessary to clarify terminology, or to narrow or broaden inclusion criteria to enhance reliability until acceptable reliability was achieved.

We measured intercoder reliability formally using Krippendorff's Alpha (0.704) and raw percentages of agreement (greater than 80%), both of which are acceptable reliability levels for content analyses

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