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THE MEDICAL JOURNAL OF AUSTRALIA

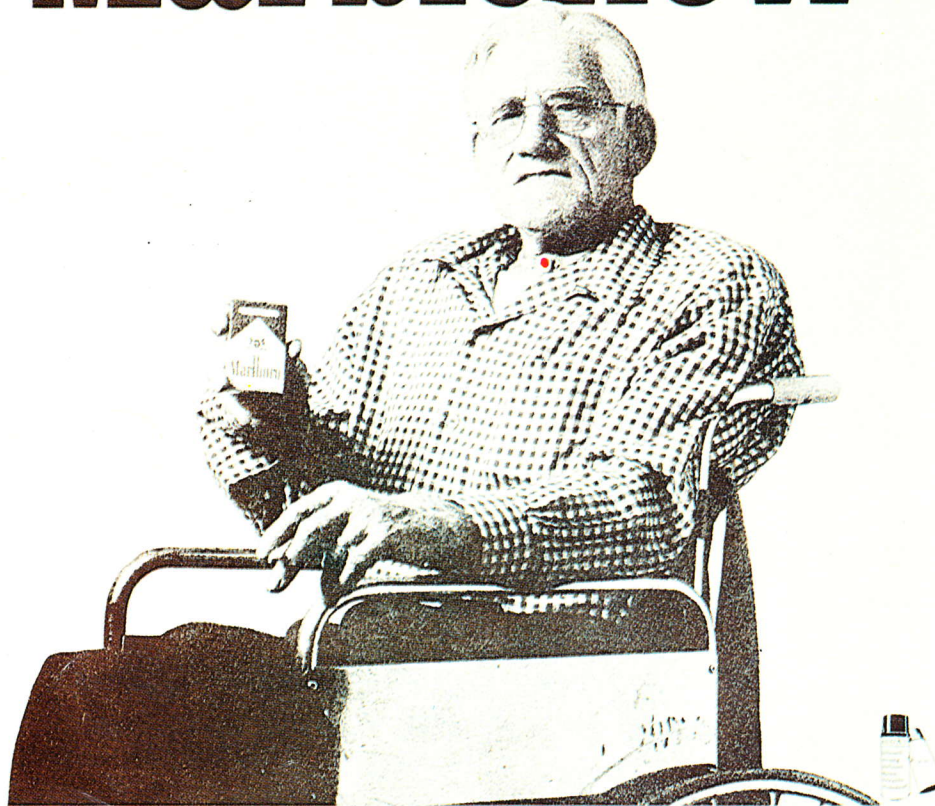


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SEWER SIZE

\$25,000 REWARD For the MarbleRow Man.

# MarbleRow



Mr. Frank C. of Darlinghurst in Sydney is a lifetime smoker. Due to an operation (tracheotomy) he now smokes through a hole in his neck. Frank is B.U.G.A. U.P.'s entrant in the \$25,000 Philip Morris' Marlboro Man Competition, someone they describe as having 'a strong and distinctly individual masculinity — that unique difference that personifies the flavour of Marlboro'.

## DO YOU THINK FRANK WILL WIN?

If you want to help B.U.G.A. U.P.'s fight against the tobacco companies write to: B.U.G.A. U.P., BOX 78, GLENWORTH BLVD., UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY, 2006 N.S.W. AUSTRALIA.

Also in this issue:

■ **Brain abscess:**  
some observations

■ **Intravenous  
cannulas:**  
use in  
elective surgery



*Short Paper*

# A tracheostomy for the Marlboro man

Renee Bittoun

IN RECENT YEARS, attempts at banning billboard advertising of cigarettes have proven so unsuccessful that for at least one group, BUGA-UP (Billboard Utilizing Graffitiists Against Unhealthy Promotions), defacing or re-facing them was the only alternative recourse (see below). I report here on a highly successful and entirely legal sabotage of cigarette promotion.

In Great Britain, although attempts have been made to legislate against all forms of cigarette advertising, the tobacco lobby succeeded last year in blocking a bill before the House of Commons that would have substantially

reduced overt and covert tobacco advertising.<sup>1</sup> In Australia, recommendations have been made to State and Federal governments in the form of a report of the Senate Standing Committee on Social Welfare of 1977, "Drug Problems in Australia—an Intoxicated Society?"<sup>2</sup> One of the 17 recommendations is that "State governments and local government authorities be encouraged to ban the advertising of tobacco products". Failure to implement these recommendations may stem less from a lack of concern on the part of individual State governments than from aggressive lobbying on the part of tobacco producers and manufacturers (as well as the mass media, since cigarette advertising represents a major source of revenue).

In September 1981 a nationwide advertising campaign was commenced by Philip Morris (a multinational organisation

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BEFORE SURGERY



POST OP.

FIGURE 1: On Christmas Eve, 1981, "It's a bore" greeted Sydney drivers, unaccustomed to seeing such a candid pronouncement from Big Brother Marlboro man. BUGA-UP's Fred Cole says, "We are in the business of changing the public consciousness. The automatic reaction is that property is sacred. More so than people's lives. When you think about it and realise the harm they're doing, where does the morality lie? You have to change community attitudes and they are changing because they've been made to think about it. A lady recently thanked me because she said that it helped her so much when she was giving up cigarettes. She'd go past the billboards at White Bay every day and it reinforced her determination to give it up. In turn that reinforced my determination to keep on doing it."

(From an interview with Berwyn Lewis, *Adgauge*, January, 1982.)





FIGURE 2: Philip Morris promotional material. "Reward" poster for a new breed of adolescent outlaw?

with a net profit in Australia of \$18.4 million in 1978-1979<sup>3</sup>) to find the "Marlboro man" of Australia. Posters of their current model were distributed to shops and other tobacco outlets with the relevant details and entry forms. The competition sought someone with "a strong and distinctly individual masculinity" who would win \$25 000 in prize money (Figure 2). State winners were also to be chosen. Each would receive \$2500.

In recent Australian studies, recall of advertising for Marlboro cigarettes was almost universal among 10 and 11 year old children,<sup>4</sup> and the brand was a preferred one among adolescents.<sup>5</sup> Concerned about these findings, a group of Sydney health workers was motivated to enter the photograph of a willing patient who for many years has smoked through his tracheostomy tube. Mere entry into the competition was felt to be an inadequate response, so with the permission of the entrant, a large look-alike poster was designed and printed. This was funded by BUGA-UP.

The objective was to mobilise public ridicule of the Philip Morris competition rather than just to produce an educational "anti-smoking" poster. Within a few days of the circulation of the first printing of this counterposter, articles appeared in several Sydney newspapers on the subject of cigarette advertising and the counteradvertisement in particular. Notable was the *Sydney Morning Herald* issue of October 31, which reproduced the MarbleRow poster in an article entitled "How to keep your pack in the picture." In an interview, Mr Frank Hunt, head of advertising for the Philip Morris account, stated that the BUGA-UP creation was "a bit annoying". He expressed his hope that "laws would be passed to counteract them".

The cost of this competition to Philip Morris was at least \$50 000 in prize money and untold thousands of dollars for its promotion. Costs to BUGA-UP were \$1000 for the printing of 10 000 posters. This expenditure was quickly recouped by subsequent sales of many of the posters, which were particularly popular among schoolchildren and teenagers.

The success of the counterposter can be measured not only by the feed-back to BUGA-UP and the public embarrass-

ment to Philip Morris, but also in the failure of the cigarette company's campaign to capitalise on the Marlboro brand's "masculine" image.

On November 26, a small article appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* (Sydney) called "Shhh! It's a Smoke Puff" which published the name of the winner(?) of the contest and described the presentations of the awards held in "secret" to a "crowd" of 50 people. To my knowledge, this was the only intentional item of publicity achieved by Philip Morris for its promotion.

If the scientific community at large were to take a more active role in mobilising ridicule of cigarette advertising in general (and public relations gimmicks addressed to young people by individual companies in particular), then efforts to reduce cigarette sales may meet with greater success than the finger-wagging campaigns of the past.

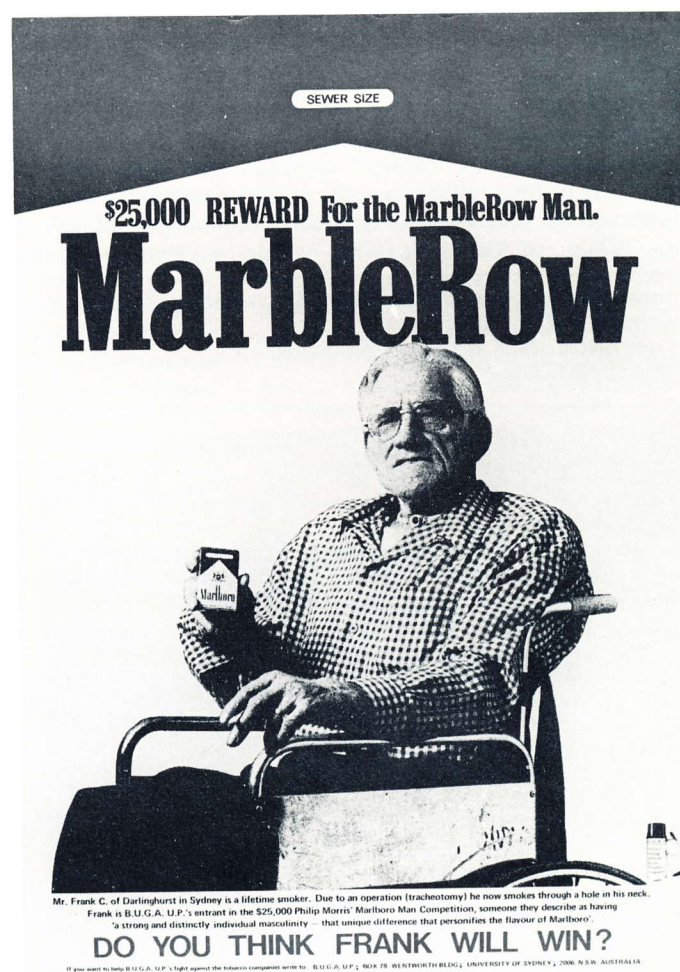


FIGURE 3: The MarbleRow spoof. Truth in jest.

## References

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