



TOBACCO COMPANY QUOTES: NICOTINE AS A DRUG

Here are a few of the many quotations from the tobacco companies' own archives that show the industry knows nicotine is an addictive drug and their products are nicotine-delivery devices.

"In a sense, the tobacco industry may be thought of as being a specialized, highly ritualized, and stylized segment of the pharmaceutical industry. Tobacco products uniquely contain and deliver *nicotine*, a potent drug with a variety of physiological effects."

1972 Claude Teague memo, "RJR Confidential Research Planning Memorandum on the Nature of the Tobacco Business and the Crucial Role of Nicotine Therein," Bates No. 2072555994/5997

"I would be more cautious in using the pharmic-medical model--do we really want to tout cigarette smoke as a drug? It is, of course, but there are dangerous F.D.A. implications to having such conceptualization go beyond these walls. . . Perhaps this is the key phrase: the reinforcing mechanism of cigarette smoking. If we understand it, we are potentially more able to upgrade our product."

Philip Morris memo from William L. Dunn to Dr. Helmut Wakeham, February 19, 1969

"Different people smoke cigarettes for different reasons. But, the primary reason is to deliver nicotine into their bodies . . . Similar organic chemicals include nicotine, quinine, cocaine, atropine and morphine."

1992 Memo from Barbara Reuter, director of portfolio management for Philip Morris' domestic tobacco business, Bates No. 2065387288/7290

"We have, then, as our first premise, that the primary motivation for smoking is to obtain the pharmacological effect of nicotine."

1969 Philip Morris draft report by Thomas Osdene, "Why One Smokes," Bates No. 2046754810/4822

"The cigarette should be conceived not as a product but as a package. The product is nicotine. The cigarette is but one of many package layers. There is the carton, which contains the pack, which contains the cigarette, which contains the smoke. The smoker must strip off all these package layers to get to that which he seeks...Think of a cigarette pack as a storage container for a day's supply of nicotine...Think of a cigarette as a dispenser for a dose unit of nicotine...Think of a puff of smoke as the vehicle of nicotine..."

William Dunn, Jr., of the Philip Morris Research Center, "Motives and Incentives in Cigarette Smoking," Bates No. 1003291922/1939

"A cigarette as a "drug" administration system for public use has very very significant advantages: Speed. Within 10 seconds of starting to smoke, nicotine is available in the brain. Before this, impact is available giving an instantaneous catch or hit, signifying to the user that the cigarette is "active." Flavour, also, is immediately perceivable to add to the sensation. Other "drugs" such as marijuana, amphetamines, and alcohol are slower and may be mood dependent."

C.C. Greig in a BAT R&D memo, Bates No. 100515899/5910

"Moreover, *nicotine* is addictive. We are, then, in the business of selling *nicotine*, an addictive drug effective in the release of stress mechanisms."

July 17, 1963 report by then Brown & Williamson general counsel/vice president Addison Yeaman, Bates No. 1802.05

"Let's face facts: Cigarette smoke is biologically active. Nicotine is a potent pharmacological agent. Every toxicologist, physiologist, medical doctor and most chemists know that. It's not a secret."

1982 Memo by Philip Morris researcher Thomas Osdene

"The view has been elaborated that nicotine is the primary reinforcer of continued smoking, and that this reinforcement value is in large part due to the functional contribution that the arousal modifying properties of nicotine makes to the negotiation of everyday life (coping). Two major research objectives are seen to

be appropriate: 1) Fuller understanding of the effects of manipulating nicotine to tar ratio in cigarettes otherwise equated on all parameters. Such inquiry should be closely linked to the contribution of nicotine manipulations (i.e. enhanced nicotine to tar ratios) to producing cigarette designs which require less effort to deliver the required reward.”

R.P. Ferris in a memo for BAT, September 12, 1985, Bates No. 101513832-101513836

“If the nicotine level of cigarettes fails to completely achieve the desired mood change that cigarette will be drawn on deeper, the smoke held longer and consumption will rise (but consumption won't rise at the same rate nicotine declines).

The rush of nicotine into the blood stream and nervous system is short-lived; therefore, reducing consumption would cause withdrawal and all of its unpleasant side effects so long as the smoker is restricted from smoking. Nicotine vacates the system in 30 minutes or so and at that time withdrawal starts.”

1974 Brown & Williamson, “Young Adult Smoker Life Styles and Attitudes,” Bates No. 170040977-170041001

“It is my conviction that nicotine is a very remarkable beneficent drug that both helps the body to resist external stress and also can as a result show a pronounced tranquilizing effect. You are all aware of the very great increase in the use of artificial controls, stimulants, tranquilizers, sleeping pills and it is a fact that under modern conditions of life people find that they cannot depend just on their subconscious reactions to meet the various environmental strains with which they are confronted, they must have drugs available which they can take when they feel the need. Nicotine is not only a very fine drug, but the techniques of administration by smoking has considerable psychological advantages and a built-in control against excessive absorption. It is almost impossible to take an overdose of *nicotine* in the way it is only too easy to do with sleeping pills.”

BAT memo, “The Smoking and Health Problem,” May 29, 1962, Bates No. 100427861-100427883

“We now possess a knowledge of the effects of *nicotine* far more extensive than exists in published scientific literature. . . for good reasons the results of Battelle's work have been kept at a high level of secrecy. . . In the last few years there has been a quite remarkable increase in the production of tranquilizer drugs, and while most of these need a doctor's prescription there is already one on free sale in Switzerland. If such drugs become more freely available they will compete with *nicotine*, which was a -- which is a natural tranquilizer, and will leave smoking primarily dependent on its psychological effects for the maintenance of the habit.”

BAT memo, “The Effects Of Smoking, Proposal For Further Research Contracts With Battelle,” by Sir Charles Ellis, director of research, February 13, 1962, Bates No. 301083820-301083835

“The hypothalamo-pituitary stimulation of nicotine is the beneficial mechanism which makes people smoke; in other words, nicotine helps people to cope with stress. In the beginning of nicotine consumption, relatively small doses can perform the desired action. Chronic intake of nicotine tends to restore the normal physiological functioning of the endocrine system, so that ever-increasing dose levels of nicotine are necessary to maintain the desired action. Unlike other dopings, such as morphine, the demand for increasing dose levels is relatively slow for nicotine. . . In a chronic smoker the normal equilibrium in the corticotropin releasing system can be maintained only by continuous nicotine intake. It seems that those individuals are but slightly different in their aptitude to cope with stress in comparison with a non-smoker. If nicotine intake, however, is prohibited to chronic smokers, the corticotropin-releasing ability of the hypothalamus is greatly reduced, so that these individuals are left with an unbalanced endocrine system. A body left in this unbalanced status craves for renewed drug intake in order to restore the physiological equilibrium. This unconscious desire explains the addiction of the individual to nicotine.”

May 30, 1963 report, A Tentative Hypothesis on Nicotine Addiction produced for BAT by C. Haselbach and O. Libert, Bates No. 1200.01

“In view of its preeminent importance, the pharmacology of nicotine should continue to be kept under review and attention paid to the possible discovery of other substances possessing the desired features of brain stimulation and stress-relief without direct effects on the circulatory system. The possibility that nicotine and other substances together may exert effects larger than either separately (synergism) should be studied and if necessary the attention of Marketing departments should be drawn to these possibilities.”

Conclusion from 1968 BAT Research Conference, Bates No. 1112.01

“The most direct solution to the problem of increasing nicotine delivery in the new product would be to add nicotine alkaloid directly to the tobaccos used in the new blend. The direct approach involves determining at which point in the manufacturing process the nicotine could be added, and secondly, determining where the necessary quantity of nicotine to support a major brand could be obtained. The direct approach involves some serious problems, mainly centering around the intensely poisonous nature of nicotine alkaloid.”

April 13, 1977, report by Lorillard official H.J. Minnemeyer, Bates No. USX095991-USX0951003

“The major goal of the Nicotine Program is to develop nicotine analogues which will have desirable effects on the central nervous system (CNS) without the undesirable effects of nicotine on the peripheral nervous system (PNS). We would like to understand at the molecular level where and how nicotine exerts its beneficial effects on the CNS. During the last year we have made excellent progress in the Nicotine Program. Investigations of the chemistry, pharmacology, behavioral pharmacology and psychological effects of nicotine and nicotine analogues are all making contributions toward the accomplishment of our goals.”

Thomas Osdene in a memo entitled “Status of Nicotine Program,” 11/3/80, Bates No. 2056145895-5896

“Smoking is then seen as a personal tool used by the smoker to refine his behavior and reactions to the world at large. It is apparent that nicotine largely underpins those contributions through its role as a generator of central physiological arousal effects which express themselves as changes in human performance and psychological well-being.”

1984 presentation by Rob Ferris of BAT, Bates No. 500866208-500866233

The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, 1999