

## CIGARETTE ADVERTISING IN BLACK, LATINO, AND WHITE MAGAZINES, 1998–2002: AN EXPLORATORY INVESTIGATION

**Objectives:** To examine the number, type (menthol vs non-menthol), brand (Black, White, Women's, Other), and size of cigarette ads in Black, Latino, and White magazines.

**Method:** Analysis of digital photographs of 274 cigarette ads appearing in *Ebony* (Black), *People* (White), and *People in Spanish* (Latino) for the 4.5-year period of January 1998 to August 2002.

**Results:** Black magazines were 9.8 times and Latino magazines 2.6 times more likely than White magazines to contain ads for menthol cigarettes. Black and Latino magazines also contained significantly more ads for brands (*Virginia Slims*) that target women.

**Conclusions:** The tobacco industry continues to target Blacks with menthol cigarette ads, appears now to be targeting Latinos similarly, and targets Black and Latino women with additional, tailored cigarette ads. (*Ethn Dis.* 2005;15: 63–67)

**Key Words:** Blacks, Ethnicity, Latinos, Tobacco Advertising

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### INTRODUCTION

Cigarette advertising plays a role in smoking initiation and maintenance in several ways: 1) advertising may encourage youth to experiment with smoking and to initiate regular smoking; 2) it may deter adult smokers from quitting; 3) it may prompt adult former-smokers to begin smoking again; and 4) it may increase daily cigarette consumption.<sup>1–3</sup> In addition, cigarette advertising appears to shape both youth and adult perceptions about the acceptability and pervasiveness of smoking, which in turn plays a role in the aforementioned processes.<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately, the extent to which cigarettes are differentially advertised to different ethnic communities is unclear.<sup>3</sup> Although a “large and increasing portion of advertising and marketing is targeted to racial/ethnic groups,”<sup>3</sup> studies examining this effect have focused primarily on African Americans. For example, most studies of cigarette advertising on billboards have examined the greater advertising in African-American vs White neighborhoods, with only a handful of studies examining such advertising in Latino or Asian neighborhoods.<sup>3,26–28</sup> Likewise, studies of cigarette ads in ethnic magazines have examined magazines geared for African Americans vs those targeting Whites/the general public, but no study has investigated ads in magazines that target other ethnic minority groups.<sup>3</sup> We conducted the first study of cigarette ads in magazines that target Latinos, and we used prior studies on African Americans

as a model for this preliminary investigation.

Studies have found more cigarette ads and more ads for menthol cigarette brands in Black than in White/general public magazines, irrespective of whether the readers of the magazines tend to be adults (>25 years) or young people (17–24 years).<sup>4–10</sup> The most well known of these studies is the 1987 Cummings et al study<sup>4</sup> because it is the only study designed to examine ads in Black vs White magazines (rather than in magazines for youth). Cummings et al examined cigarette ads in one year (June 1984 through May 1985) of issues of three African-American (*Ebony*, *Jet*, and *Essence*) and four White/general public magazines (*Newsweek*, *Time*, *People*, *Mademoiselle*). They found 12% more cigarette ads in the Black magazines and found that 65.9% of the cigarette ads in the Black magazines were for menthol cigarette brands, but only 15.4% of the cigarette ads in White/general magazines were for such brands. This targeted advertising of menthol cigarettes (eg, *Newport*, *Kool*) to Blacks and of non-menthol cigarettes (eg, *Marlboro*, *Camel*, *Winston*) to Whites<sup>4–11</sup> might account for the finding that most Black youth and adult smokers smoke a menthol brand, whereas most White youth and adult smokers smoke a non-menthol brand.<sup>8–17</sup> The marketing of menthol cigarettes to Blacks is particularly problematic because smoking mentholated (vs non-mentholated) cigarettes has been linked to increased rates of cancer

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of the pharynx<sup>18</sup> and lung,<sup>19</sup> and both types of cancer are 50%-60% higher in Blacks than in Whites,<sup>18-19</sup> despite their equal smoking prevalence rates.<sup>3</sup>

Although the Cummings et al<sup>4</sup> study is important and served as our model, the study has a few limitations. Notably, Cummings et al examined only one year (1984-1985) of magazines. In addition, the Black and the White/general magazines used were not comparable: the Black magazines were popular magazines (focusing on celebrities, music, entertainment, and so forth) but only one of the White/general magazines (*People*) was a popular magazine. Two of the White/general magazines were news magazines (*Time*, *Newsweek*) and hence not similar to *Ebony* or *Jet*, and the third White/general magazine was a women's magazine (*Mademoiselle*) and hence also not similar to the Black magazines. Likewise, Cummings et al focused on menthol vs non-menthol brands but did not examine possible targeting of minority women by placing ads for cigarette brands that are tailored to women (eg, *Virginia Slims*, *Misty*, *Eve*)<sup>20-24</sup> in minority vs White magazines. Finally, possible differences in the size (number of pages) of tobacco ads in minority vs White magazines have yet to be examined. Hence, in this preliminary study, we explored the total number, type (menthol vs non-menthol), brand (Black, White, Women's, Other), and size of cigarette ads in comparable

**Table 1. Number of menthol vs non-menthol cigarette ads in ethnic magazines\***

	Menthol Ads % (N)	Non-Menthol Ads % (N)
White magazine ( <i>People</i> )	17.3% (17)	82.7% (81)
Latino magazine ( <i>People in Spanish</i> )	35.3% (18)	64.7% (33)
Black magazine ( <i>Ebony</i> )	67.2% (84)	32.8% (41)

\* Overall likelihood ratio  $\chi^2_{df=2} = 60.266, P<.0005$ ; White vs Black  $\chi^2_{df=1} = 58.551, P<.0005$ ; Black vs Latino  $\chi^2_{df=1} = 15.103, P<.0005$ ; White vs Latino  $\chi^2_{df=1} = 5.801, P<.016$ .

Black, Latino, and White magazines for the first time.

## METHOD

Three popular magazines were selected: *Ebony* (Black magazine, 2002 readership=1.89 million), *People* (White magazine, 2002 readership=3.62 million), and *People in Spanish* (Latino magazine, 2002 readership=approximately 500,000).<sup>27</sup> *Ebony* and *People* were used in the Cummings study<sup>4</sup> and have been used in other studies as well<sup>5,9</sup> to represent Black and White magazines, respectively. Latino magazines, however, have never been analyzed. *People in Spanish* was selected as the Latino popular magazine for two reasons. First, *People in Spanish* and *Hispanic Lifestyle* have the largest (equal) nationwide circulation among Latinos.<sup>25</sup> In addition, *People* and *People in Spanish* are the same magazine, with the same publisher. Selecting the Spanish version of *People* as the Latino popular magazine thereby controls for magazine content, length, advertising policies etc, such that any differences in tobacco ads between the English and the Spanish versions of *People* provides strong evidence for differentially targeting Latinos vs Whites. Hence, *People in Spanish* was viewed as superior to *Hispanic Lifestyle* for data-analysis purposes.

Every issue of the monthly magazine (*Ebony*) was examined, along with the first weekly issue of each month of the weekly magazines (*People* and *People in Spanish*) for the 4.5-year period of January 1998 through August 2002. This

method yielded 56 issues of *Ebony*, 54 issues of *People*, and 32 issues of *People in Spanish* (first year of publication=1999), for a total of 141 issues of magazines. Each of the 141 issues was searched for cigarette ads. Digital photographs were taken of all ads discovered, and these were used in analyses of the number, type (menthol vs non-menthol), brand, and size (length x width, number of pages) of cigarette ads. These ad characteristics were coded by 2-3 research assistants for each ad with 100% agreement.

## RESULTS

### Number of Ads

The 141 magazine issues contained a total of 274 cigarette ads. The White magazine (*People*,  $N=54$  issues) contained 98 ads (mean=1.87 ads per issue), the Black magazine (*Ebony*,  $N=56$  issues) contained 125 ads (mean=2.25 ads per issue), and the Latino magazine (*People in Spanish*,  $N=31$ ) contained 51 ads (mean=1.58 ads per issue). Analysis for differences in the average number of ads per issue by magazine approached but did not reach statistical significance (ANOVA mean square=4.718,  $F_{2,141}=2.923, P=.06$ ).

### Menthol vs Non-Menthol Ads

Significant differences in the prevalence of ads for menthol cigarettes (*Newport*, *Kool*, *Salem* etc) were found. As shown in Table 1, 67% of the cigarette ads in the Black magazine, 35% of the cigarette ads in the Latino magazine, and 17% of cigarette ads in the White

**Table 2. Brands of cigarettes advertised in ethnic magazines\***

Magazine	White Brands		Black Brands		Women's Brand		Other Brands	
	%	(N)	%	(N)	%	(N)	%	(N)
White ( <i>People</i> )	31.4%	(33)	15.2%	(16)	6.7%	(7)	46.7%	(49)
Latino ( <i>People in Spanish</i> )	27.5%	(14)	45.1%	(23)	27.5%	(14)	0%	(0)
Black ( <i>Ebony</i> )	3.1%	(4)	56.9%	(74)	16.9%	(22)	23.1%	(30)

\* Overall likelihood ratio  $\chi^2_{df 6} = 116.342, P=.0005$ ; White vs Black  $\chi^2_{df 3} = 76.568, P=.0005$ ; White vs Latino  $\chi^2_{df 3} = 60.391, P=.0005$ ; Black vs Latino  $\chi^2_{df 3} = 41.808, P=.0005$ .

magazine were for menthol cigarettes. Each of these differences was statistically significant, with Black>Latino>White magazines for the presence of menthol ads, and White>Latino>Black magazines for presence of non-menthol ads. To clarify this finding, a stepwise logistic regression predicting menthol vs non-menthol cigarette ads from magazine type (ethnic audience) was conducted. Results revealed that the Black magazine was 9.8 times more likely (OR=9.761, 95% CI=5.13,18.56,  $\beta=2.278, P=.0005$ ), and the Latino magazine 2.6 times more likely (OR=2.599, 95% CI=1.19,5.65,  $\beta=0.955, P=.01$ ) than the White magazine to contain ads for menthol cigarettes.

### Ad Size

Analyses of the average size of all tobacco ads by ethnicity of magazine audience revealed no significant differences (ANOVA  $F_{2, 285}=1.228, P=.294$ ).

### Brands Advertised

Sixteen different brands of cigarettes were advertised in the White magazine, compared to 7 brands in the Black magazine, and 4 brands in the Latino magazine. To explore the possibility that a restricted set of specific brands of cigarettes are marketed to minorities, all brands were categorized as follows, in a manner consistent with prior studies: White brands (those advertised most often to Whites)=*Marlboro + Camel + Winston*,<sup>4-9</sup> Black brands (those advertised most often to Blacks)=*Kool + Newport*,<sup>4,9</sup> and women's brand (advertised most often to women)=*Virginia Slims*.<sup>20-24</sup> All remaining brands were

categorized as other brands (*Pall Mall + Basic + GPC + Carlton + Salem + Cambridge + Merit + others*). As shown in Table 2, the magazines differed significantly in the pattern of ads for these four categories of brands: for *White brands* of cigarettes, the pattern of ads was White magazine>Latino magazine>Black magazine. For *Black brands* of cigarettes, the pattern of ads was Black magazine>Latino magazine>White magazine. For *women's brands* of cigarettes, the pattern of ads was Latino magazine>Black magazine>White magazine. For *other brands* of cigarettes, the pattern of ads was White magazine>Black magazine>Latino magazine. Stated differently, brands advertised to Whites were *other brands>White brands>Black brands>women's brands*. Brands marketed to Blacks were *Black brands>other brands>women's brands>White brands*. Brands targeting Latinos were *Black brands>women's brands=White brands>other brands* (based on  $\chi^2$  analyses and analyses of  $\chi^2$  residuals).

## DISCUSSION

The total number of cigarette ads in White, Black, and Latino popular magazines did not differ, and this finding is contrary to that of Cummings.<sup>4</sup> One possible explanation for this is that Cummings might have found more ads in Black than in White magazines because the magazines examined were not comparable; ie, the Black magazines were popular magazines whereas 75% of the White magazines were news maga-

zines (*Newsweek, Time*) and magazines for women (*Mademoiselle*), both of which might contain fewer tobacco ads than popular magazines. Alternatively, our finding of a similar number of cigarette ads per issue, irrespective of the ethnicity of the magazine's audience, might be an artifact of our small sample size; therefore, the analysis approached but did not reach statistical significance ( $P=.06$ ), with the trend suggesting more ads in the Black magazine as Cummings found. Our preliminary finding must be verified by studies that use a larger sample of comparable magazines to assess the extent to which the number of cigarette ads per issue does or does not differ by ethnic audience.

Although the number and size of cigarette ads did not differ across the magazines, the content of those ads did, in three important ways. First, cigarette ads in the Black magazine continue to be for menthol brands, with the Black magazine 9.8 times more likely to have such ads than the White magazine, and 67% of all cigarette ads in the Black magazine were ads for menthol brands. This finding is consistent with that of the Cummings study,<sup>4</sup> where 66% of the cigarette ads in the three Black magazines examined were for menthol brands. Likewise, we found that 17% of the cigarette ads in the White magazine were for menthol brands, and this finding is comparable to the Cummings finding of 15.4%. Although we examined only one (prototypical, popular) magazine for each ethnic group, our use of 3 to 4.5 years of those magazines (as opposed to only one year, as Cummings

did) may make our data comparable to the Cummings data.

Likewise, in this first exploration of cigarette ads in magazines for Latinos, we found many ads for menthol brands: the Latino magazine was 2.6 times more likely than the White magazine to contain ads for menthol cigarettes; 35% of ads in the Latino magazine (vs 17% in White magazine) were ads for menthol brands. Because the magazines in question were the same magazine—the English versus the Spanish version of *People*—these data strongly suggest that the tobacco industry targets Latinos in a manner that it does not target Whites, and indeed, in a manner highly similar to its targeting of Blacks. This interpretation is bolstered by the findings on specific brands of cigarettes marketed to Blacks and Latinos relative to Whites: 57% of the brands advertised to Blacks were Black brands, and 45% of the brands advertised to Latinos were Black brands, compared to only 15% Black brands in the White magazine. This suggests that the tobacco industry may view Blacks and Latinos similarly and so treats them similarly, ie, with a preponderance of ads for what may be the most dangerous brands of cigarettes and with ads for a specific, restrictive set of brands (ie, 16 different brands advertised to Whites, vs 7 brands to Blacks, vs 4 brands to Latinos).

The third finding was on the advertising of *Virginia Slims*. The purpose of this cigarette is to attract women to smoking by ads that link smoking this brand to women's emancipation and empowerment.<sup>20–24</sup> In the 1960s, the slogan for *Virginia Slims* was “You've come a long way, baby,” and that slogan purposefully has been changed each decade to continue to attract women to smoking.<sup>24</sup> In the 1970s and 1980s, the slogan was changed to “We made *Virginia Slims* especially for women because they are biologically superior to men;” in the 1990's it was changed to “*Virginia Slims*. It's a woman thing,” then to, “*Virginia Slims*. Find your voice,” and

most recently to, “Tame and timid? That goes against my instincts.<sup>24</sup>” In this first exploration of targeting minority women by placing ads for this brand in popular, minority magazines, we found significantly more ads for *Virginia Slims* in minority than in White magazines: 27.5% of the brands advertised to Latinos were *Virginia Slims*, compared to 17% for Blacks and 7% for Whites (Latino>Black>White magazines in ads for *Virginia Slims*). This finding suggests the targeting of minority women, Latina in particular. Further research comparing the number and types of cigarette ads in popular magazines for White (*Glamour*, *Cosmopolitan*), Black (*Essence*, *Black Woman*), and Latina (*Glamour in Spanish*, *Cosmopolitan in Spanish*) is needed to clarify this possibility, and such a study is underway. This novel finding requires verification through additional studies.

Each finding reported here requires verification and must be viewed in light of the limitations of this exploratory study. Foremost among those is that only one magazine was examined for each ethnic group. Although those magazines are comparable, and both *Ebony* and *People* have been used in prior studies, different results may have been found if greater number and diversity of magazines had been included. Our finding on advertising menthol brands to Blacks vs Whites is comparable to the Cummings finding, which suggests that our results may be valid, but verification is needed. Likewise, the total number of magazine issues examined was small and limited. Therefore these findings are preliminary, require verification through studies with larger samples of magazines, and are regarded as suggestive.

Prior studies have noted that the tobacco industry has targeted Latinos by sponsoring sporting and cultural events in Latino communities, by a greater percentage of tobacco billboards in Latino than in White neighborhoods, and by marketing the culturally tailored *Rio* and *Dorado* cigarette brands to Latinos.<sup>3</sup>

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This preliminary study is the first to examine cigarette ads in Latino magazines, and it suggests that the tobacco industry may target Latinos in a manner similar to its targeting of Blacks, ie, with ads for menthol brands. This study highlights the need for further research on the tobacco industry's targeting Blacks and Latinos and implies the need for more active tobacco-control efforts in those minority communities.<sup>3,26</sup>

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