

Image and Tobacco in American Life

Directions: Read the story, then answer the questions. Write your answer in the space provided or circle the letter next to the correct answer.

Because smoking is such a visual habit, it has long been associated with a person's individual image. Among the reasons people have always chosen to smoke has been the issue of what someone appears to be if he or she smokes. In the 1800s and early 1900s smoking was considered a manly habit, and a person appeared to be more of a man if he smoked. During this time smoking was very strongly discouraged for woman and considered a scandalous, sometimes illegal, act. Eventually, women achieved many rights previously given only to men, such as the right to wear pants, to drink alcohol, to vote, and even to smoke. Smoking's image then became associated with individualism, being cool and progressive, and strong. With the advent of movies, this image was reinforced as people saw others smoking on screen. Smoking was used as a way to help define a character. The visibility of smoking in films and on television helped drive the acceptance of smoking in real life and vice versa. Eventually, in the 1960s, when the Surgeon General first released a report indicating the dangers of tobacco use, the image associated with smoking began to change again. Smoking began to be perceived as a health issue and not just an issue of how one looked with a cigarette, but how one's physical health was affected. During the time period from 1965 to 1993 smoking rates decreased from 42% to 25% among adults. Just as the turn of the century, smoking was now a controversy, however the conflict was not about men vs. women smoking, but about life and death.

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1. The first social image associated with smoking was:
 - a. individualism
 - b. manliness
 - c. health
 - d. being cool

 2. U.S. smoking rates began to seriously decline when:
 - a. smoking was considered acceptable for women
 - b. people were seen smoking in movies and on television
 - c. the Surgeon General reported the health risks of smoking
 - d. smoking was considered a statement of individualism

 3. Smoking is a visual habit which has always been most associated with a person's:
 - a. image
 - b. health
 - c. sex
 - d. coolness

 4. Describe why the social perception of smoking has changed during the past century:
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