



# IT ALL "ADS" UP: WOMEN'S ROLES IN TOBACCO ADVERTISING FROM 1880-1920

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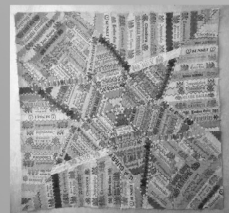
## RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

My research framework lies in the relative categorization of women's roles in the consumer culture surrounding tobacco from 1880-1920. The bulk of my research encompasses pre-magazine advertising and strives to unpack women's influences in tobacco advertising and sales. **I argue that women's roles in American tobacco advertising from 1880-1920 quickened the rise of consumer culture, shifted women's rights issues to the forefront, and caused a lasting social change in accepted morals and values.** These roles are fluid, so there are not rigid dates for each, although the instigators role I identify is more prominent pre-1900, whereas models, smokers and purchasers are focused in post-1900 society.

## METHODOLOGY

For this research, I studied primary sources from 1880-1920, including advertisements, artifacts, correspondence between tobacco companies, and census data from each decade from 1880-1920. After compiling and studying these materials, I researched and reviewed secondary materials and created my research framework and opinions based on this evidence.

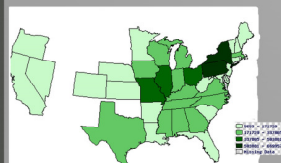
## RESULTS



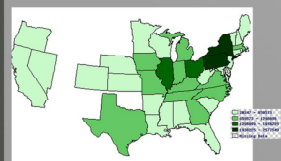
Cigar ribbon quilt, c. 1890  
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/roadshow/archive/199705A39.html>



Duke Sons & Co. Actress Trade Cards  
Vintage Ad Browser.com



Women ages 12-17 by state, 1880  
University of Virginia Historical Census Browser



Total population of women by state, 1880  
University of Virginia Historical Census Browser

### INSTIGATORS

Women instigated men's purchases through:

- Creating cigar ribbon quilts
- Scrapbooking with cigarette trade cards
- Collecting flags packaged in cigarettes

Women were **persuasive** members of their families, convincing men to purchase cigars and other tobacco products in order to gain **social status** based on items in the packages. Women used **branded** cigar ribbons to differentiate social class that tobacco companies had not planned, showing women's **power** in shaping pre-magazine advertising.

### SMOKERS

Women began smoking due to:

- Changing political climate (Suffrage Movement)
- Increased feelings of independence due to advertising
- Shift from private to public practice
- Smoking as an "elite" practice: an inexpensive way to appear wealthy
- Young population influenced by advertising

Women smoked privately for many years, but 1910 was a **significant turning point** for advertisers recognizing the female market. Advertisements from 1910 forward showed women who smoked as **elite members of society**.

## REFERENCES

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### MODELS

Women as models in tobacco advertising:

- Began in 1880s, but no women holding product until 1900
- Women objectified in ads; something men could "attain"
- New social power due to inclusion in advertising socially "risky" products

Advertisers combatted perceptions of women smoking in America, which included **poor health**, "**dirty**", and **prostitution**. Magazines did that by adding women to their advertising arsenal, **placing women in "elite" roles** while smoking to create an association between high class and smoking.

### PURCHASERS

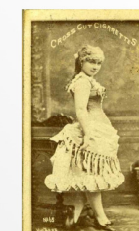
Women began purchasing due to:

- Increased marketing of tobacco accessories
- Independence fostered by WWI
- Social acceptability of smoking due to advertising

By 1919, young women in New York City were smoking with each other at **dinner parties**, and in 1922 **women in New York City were smoking openly on the streets and at bus stops**. The combination of advertising, consumer culture, the First World War, and the women's suffrage movement allowed women to begin smoking publicly.



Flag quilt created approx. 1890



1885 Cross Cut Cigarettes Ad,  
"Old Rags" Tumblr



Lucky Strike Advertisement, 1928



Women Cigarettes Holders Smoking,  
USA (1920), Vintage Ad Browser



Havone Cigarette Case (1916)