Thank You for Not Smoking: How Tobacco Users are Affected by Regulations Intended to Reduce Tobacco Consumption

by

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ABSTRACT

THANK YOU FOR NOT SMOKING: HOW TOBACCO USERS ARE AFFECTED BY REGULATIONS INTENDED TO REDUCE TOBACCO CONSUMPTION

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This thesis is an investigation of the impact of modern tobacco regulations on cigarette smokers. After decades of decline, tobacco usage has stalled, leaving pro-health organizations seeking out new evidence-based approaches for tobacco control. This thesis contributes to the development of evidence based approaches by developing an understanding of how cigarette smokers are currently affected by tobacco regulations. Qualitative research, specifically depth interviews, were utilized to address this problem from the approach of transformative consumer research. The findings of this thesis indicate that cigarette smokers perceive that current tobacco control regulations reduce their tobacco consumption when said regulations make cigarette smoking too inconvenient or unenjoyable. Further, it may require multiple regulations working synergistically to create a situation where a cigarette smoker decides to abstain from smoking. These findings provide potential direction for health practitioners who wish to continue the reduction of tobacco consumption.
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

After decades of decline, tobacco usage has stalled, with 15% of Canadians being current tobacco users, leaving organizations such as Health Canada and Cancer Care Ontario seeking out new evidence-based approaches to continue the reduction of tobacco use (Cancer Care Ontario, 2011; Health Canada, 2012; Statistics Canada, 2015). The stalling of smoking rates isn’t merely a Canadian phenomenon, as the U.K., Australia, and the United States are also reporting little to no change in smoking rates over the last five years (Reid, Hammond, Rynard, & Burkhalter, 2014). Research out of Australia, a jurisdiction considered “dark” by the tobacco industry due to its near total ban on tobacco promotion, goes so far to suggest that any decreases in smoking rates since 2000 are only due to declining uptake, not a higher number of smokers quitting (Borland, 2011; Burton, Hoek, Nesbit, & Khan, 2015).

Yet, jurisdictions across Canada have implemented multiple new anti-tobacco regulations since 2000. In Ontario, smoking was prohibited in all enclosed workplaces and public places in 2006, the display of tobacco at retail outlets was banned in 2008, and smoking on bar or restaurant patios was banned at the start of 2015 (Government of Ontario, 2016). If smoking statistics indicate that there has not been substantial changes in the number of smokers, this leads us to question exactly how anti-tobacco regulations are impacting smokers.

Reductions in tobacco use are of substantial importance, as tobacco use is a significant modifiable risk factor for cardiovascular diseases as well as chronic respiratory diseases, two of the four non-communicable diseases (NCDs) that account for more than 60% of worldwide deaths (Bloom et al., 2012). The estimated costs of these conditions is in the trillions, and smoking cessation has been identified as an important way to reduce the economic impact of NCDs globally.

Smokers face increased risk of cancer, stroke, as well as heart and lung disease, and an estimated 37,000 Canadians are killed by tobacco-related illnesses annually (Health Canada, 2012). Tobacco use also has a multi-billion dollar impact on Canada’s healthcare system, with direct healthcare costs estimated at $4.4 billion, and health and economic costs estimated at $17 billion (Health Canada, 2012). The negative impact of cigarette butts may even pose a threat to human health via biomagnification in marine life, as metals within discarded cigarette butts can leach into marine environments or be consumed by marine animals (Dobaradaran et al., 2016).
Tobacco control organizations have turned to marketing in the past, as they study the tobacco industry’s marketing strategies while utilizing their own marketing activities to convey anti-tobacco messages; institutions as large as the World Health Organization consider controlling tobacco marketing activities as a recommended measure to reduce tobacco consumption, per the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (Hastings & Aitken, 1995; Jiang & Ling, 2011; Ling et al., 2014; Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, 2013; World Health Organization, 2005). Marketing research has been successfully used in the past to generate insights that contribute to public health initiatives and successful tobacco interventions.

One recent intervention was the removal of point of sale tobacco displays in convenience stores, also known as power walls. In this instance, research on brand identity demonstrated the importance of repeating brand messages to encourage product familiarity, and also demonstrated that the stimuli used for point of sale displays encourages unplanned purchases (Dewhirst, 2004; McCarville & Bee, 1999). This information was used to support a ban on point of sale tobacco displays. Evaluation research has since identified that these bans were successful in reducing impulse purchases of tobacco, as well as decreasing children’s perception of peer smoking prevalence, an important step towards the denormalizing smoking behaviour among children (Robertson, McGee, Marsh, & Hoek, 2015).

This thesis builds on the contributions that market research has made to tobacco reduction though understanding how cigarette smokers are impacted by today’s regulatory environment, with the goal of informing future regulatory efforts. This thesis has come to understand what may be occurring when a regulation does impact cigarette smokers in a way that reduces their tobacco consumption. Further, although some regulations may appear to unintentionally enhance tobacco consumption, their net impact on cigarette smokers appears to be negative.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Evolution of Tobacco Regulations in Canada

Canada’s first anti-tobacco efforts were undertaken by the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) who successfully lobbied the Canadian government to introduce a bill to ban cigarettes in 1903, however, lobbying from the tobacco industry and a poor understanding of existing health research prevented the bill from passing for many years (Collishaw, 2009). Finally in 1908, the federal government passed the Tobacco Restrain Act, which merely limited the sales of tobacco products to those 16 and over (Collishaw, 2009). The Tobacco Restrain Act was the last piece of federal tobacco legislation to be implemented for eight decades, as aggressive lobbying and a patchwork of minor concessions from the tobacco industry stalled the implementation of new federal tobacco legislation until 1988.

In Canada and the United States, widespread awareness of the link between smoking and lung cancer occurred in 1952, when Reader’s Digest published an article on the subject (Collishaw, 2009). However, no anti-tobacco regulations followed; the tobacco industry responded by introducing filters to cigarettes, which appeared to serve as health protection devices (Collishaw, 2009). Although there was little evidence to suggest any health benefits from filtration, this action eased the public’s concerns, and number of smokers continued to rise. Tobacco consumption peaked in 1964, when 50% of Canadian adults and 42% of American adults were current smokers (Canadian Cancer Society, n.d.; CDC’s Office on Smoking and Health, 2013; Collins, 2004; Haustein & Groneberg, 2010). The beginning of the decline in tobacco usage is widely attributed to the 1964 Surgeon General’s report, in which the U.S. Surgeon General publically announced that there is substantial research to believe that smoking causes lung cancer, and may be related to heart disease.

Today’s anti-tobacco efforts aim to reduce tobacco consumption through denormalization, particularly in public settings (Chapman & Freeman, 2008; Hammond, Fong, Zanna, Thrasher, & Borland, 2006). In addition, anti-tobacco movements attempt to frame tobacco as a hazardous product which imposes a social, economic, and health burden on both smokers and non-smokers alike, while framing the tobacco industry as deceitful (Ashley & Cohen, 2003; Chapman & Freeman, 2008; Thetruth.com, n.d.).
The success of these efforts is evident in the fact that the prevalence of tobacco use has declined such that current smokers only account for 15% of the Canadian population and 18% of the American population; across North America there are more consumers who were smokers and successfully quit than there are current smokers (CDC’s Office on Smoking and Health, 2013; Statistics Canada, 2012, 2015). Even tobacco smokers have a negative perception of tobacco use; over 75% of smokers believe the tobacco industry is not to be trusted, and 80% of smokers believe that society disapproves of smoking (Hammond, Fong, Zanna, Thrasher, & Borland, 2006). Recent data has also indicated that the average number of cigarettes smoked is also declining, with daily smokers consuming 13.9 cigarettes per day in 2013, a decline of approximately 3 since 1999 (Statistics Canada, 2015).

The tobacco industry fights back against these efforts, relying heavily on its adherence to regulations as a source of legitimacy, positioning itself as a business that produces and sells legal products in a responsible manner (Chapman & Freeman, 2008). However, this argument may be undermined by the actions of individual tobacco users, who violate smoking regulations through smoking in areas where smoking is banned, such as sheltered areas near doorways, or purchasing contraband cigarettes (Kaufman, Griffin, Cohen, Perkins, & Ferrence, 2010).

2.2 Tobacco Policy in Canada

In Canada, the legislation of tobacco use occurs at a federal, provincial, and municipal level. The federal government is responsible for legislating the manufacture, sale, labelling, and promotion of tobacco products, as well as smoking in spaces under federal jurisdiction (Health Canada, 2005). The Canadian federal government has now established an official stance on their role in tobacco use, which is “preventing children and youth from starting to smoke; helping people to quit smoking; helping Canadians protect themselves from second-hand smoke; and regulating the manufacture, sale, labeling and promotion of tobacco products by administering the Tobacco Act” (Health Canada, 2012, p. 3).

The province of Ontario, the jurisdiction of this study, has the power to make more sweeping bans than the federal government, and does so through the Smoke-Free Ontario Act (Government of Ontario, 2016). Municipalities also have the ability to enact further by-laws
regarding tobacco consumption, and private property owners can restrict tobacco usage as they see fit.

Tobacco taxation also occurs at a federal, provincial, and municipal level, where the federal and provincial governments place excise taxes on the sale of tobacco, and select municipalities charge licensing fees to retailers who wish to sell tobacco products (Ministry of Revenue, 2010; Parliamentary Research Branch, 1988). Opponents of products such as casinos, cigarettes, or alcohol, support this heavy taxation as remuneration for the damage such products may cause to the community (Humphreys, 2010).

Internationally, continued efforts to reduce tobacco consumption are supported by the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control which includes implementable guidelines to reduce tobacco consumption through price and tax measures, non-price measures, and supply reduction (World Health Organization, 2005).

2.3 Resistance to Tobacco Legislation

The Tobacco Restrain Act was the first of many instances where the tobacco industry lobbied to limit attempts to restrict tobacco consumption. The tobacco industry has a history of creating a collective identity through sponsoring pro-tobacco associations, which existed to counter information and research generated by governments and health practitioners in an effort to delay and discredit anti-tobacco efforts; these organizations were often not explicit about their direct connection to tobacco manufacturers (Collishaw, 2009; Dearlove, Bialous, & Glantz, 2002; Jiang & Ling, 2013; Mandel & Glantz, 2004; U.S. v Philip Morris USA Inc., 2006). In the United States, the collective identity of the tobacco industry was represented through groups such as the Tobacco Institute, the Center for Indoor Air Research, and the Council for Tobacco Research. Parallel groups in Canada included The Canadian Tobacco Manufacturers’ Council (National Association of Attorneys General, 1998; U.S. v Philip Morris USA Inc., 2006).

Although tobacco sponsored organizations in the United States were initially successful at countering health research and pushing for ventilation to be the solution to indoor tobacco use, all of these groups were eventually dissolved due to the Master Settlement Agreement (National Association of Attorneys General, 1998; U.S. v Philip Morris USA Inc., 2006). Further, in the judgement for U.S. v. Philip Morris (2006) the tobacco industry was scolded for “engaging in a
lengthy, unlawful conspiracy to deceive the American public about the health effects of smoking and environmental tobacco smoke, the addictiveness of nicotine, the health benefits from low tar, “light” cigarettes, and their manipulation of the design and composition of cigarettes in order to sustain nicotine addiction.” (U.S. v Philip Morris USA Inc., 2006, p. 1). The Master Settlement Agreement also barred the American tobacco industry from creating new associations resembling any of those three previously mentioned organizations. The Canadian Tobacco Manufacturers’ Council was also dismantled at this time.

In Canada, the tobacco industry also sponsored several smaller organizations such as the Smokers’ Freedom Society, the Association for the Respect of Smokers’ Rights in Canada, and MyChoice.ca (Mychoice.ca, n.d.; Non-Smokers’ Rights Association, 2003). These organizations claimed to represent smokers (without clearly stating their ties to the tobacco industry) and focused on utilizing human rights based arguments based on freedom of choice, representing themselves as activists and attempted to utilize tactics such as public rallies. These strategies were unsuccessful, as rallies attracted only a handful of participants, and increased restrictions to tobacco legislation continued, unconcerned with freedom of choice arguments (Mychoice.ca, n.d.; Non-Smokers’ Rights Association, 2003).

Although the tobacco industry was once a lobbying powerhouse, publically receiving money from the tobacco industry can ruin a politician’s career, and institutions who accept donations from the tobacco industry are publically criticized, even if there are no conditions for the donation (Chapman & Freeman, 2008; Spurgeon, 2003).

2.4 Existing Research on Unchanging Tobacco Consumption

Existing research has established several potential reasons why smoking rates may have stopped declining even in the face of new regulations. One potential explanation for stalling smoking rates could be a result of the social nature of tobacco consumption. Social implications are already recognized as an important part of smoking, for example, many adolescent smokers actually start smoking because of peers and friendship groups with prosmoking norms, not direct pressure (Dewhirst & Sparks, 2003; Pechmann & Knight, 2002). Even non-smokers believe that smoking can create a sense of affiliation or identify group membership (Hamilton & Hassan, 2010).
It has been suggested that regulations designed to curtail smoking through limiting it to specific spaces may reinforce this social nature of smoking. Tan and Qui Hui (2013) found that in a study of smokers in Singapore, an environment that harshly judges smokers, designated smoking spaces help enhance bonds between smokers and reinforce individual identity as a smoker. Further, the act of hiding one’s smoking to avoid the judgement of others, as well as restrictions on the purchase and consumption of tobacco, may result in creating an air of exclusivity among smoking groups and bestow special status upon those who have access to such a restricted product (Collins, 2004).

Identity is extremely important to smokers, and social identity theory has recognized that smokers use tobacco consumption to differentiate themselves, while simultaneously having a connection to a group identity (Moran & Sussman, 2014; Sheffels, 2008; Tajfel, 1974). This is important because using smoking as a tool to define your individually has been shown to counter dissonance generated from disapproval. Social identity has even been shown to be more important than safety, so antismoking campaigns focused on health concerns, including warnings on cigarette labels, may be trumped by the degree to which an individual’s social identity is linked to smoking (Berger & Rand, 2008).

However, there is also research that indicates an individual’s identity as a smoker may not carry positive traits. Where smoking was once associated with qualities such as virility, current tobacco users face a substantial stigma, the identity of a smoker has been described as spoiled (Chapman & Freeman, 2008; Debevec & Diamond, 2012; Goffman, 1990; Starr, 1984). Further, tobacco users have been labeled as disgusting, gross, litterers, selfish, unattractive, and liabilities for employers and national health systems. A designated smoking area may reinforce an individual’s identity as a smoker, but this could clearly carry both positive and negative implications.

Anti-tobacco legislation has also been shown to inadvertently lead to benefits to the tobacco industry as a whole. The removal of tobacco commercials from US televisions resulted in tobacco manufacturers incidentally reaching much larger audiences through sport sponsorship - which had an international reach, and paired cigarettes with the positive attributes of sports (Hoek, 2002). When sponsorship was banned, tobacco companies found loopholes to pay actors to smoke in movies.
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Gaps

At this point, we understand that after decades of progress smoking rates have stalled, and that there is the potential for current smoking regulations to reinforce smoking behaviour, both unintentionally, and because of clever maneuvering by the tobacco industry. In the context of this public health issue, it is both important and timely to examine the effects of regulations intended to reduce tobacco, and this sort of need has inspired transformative consumer research in the past (Talukdar, 2008). Further, this highly contextual research has not been conducted in today’s regulatory environment. A current understanding of today’s smoking environment is needed as recent regulatory changes may have had an impact of the actions of smokers; a full understanding of the current impact of tobacco regulations is necessary to understand where to go next.

This thesis will subsequently explore smokers’ experience with current smoking regulations, with the intention of answering two research questions:

RQ1: How do cigarette smokers perceive that current tobacco control regulations impact or reduce their tobacco consumption?

RQ2: Do cigarette smokers feel as though tobacco regulations are at times unintentionally supportive of their tobacco consumption?

A particular focus will be placed on understanding the overarching themes that smokers connect with achieving the goals outlined by tobacco regulators, in particular, the reduction of tobacco consumption. Through understanding the mechanisms that reduce tobacco consumption, consumer well-being can be enhanced through developing further interventions to reduce it.

3.2 Research Methods

These research questions are addressed from the approach of transformative consumer research (TCR), which is focused on studying complicated social problems with the goal of using said research to enhance consumer well-being (Crockett, Downey, Firat, Ozanne, & Pettigrew, 2013; Mick, 2006). In the spirit of TCR, which places a significant focus on bringing together interdisciplinary research teams (Ozanne et al., 2011), this thesis was also developed in partnership
with the Population Intervention for Chronic Disease Prevention (PICDP) program. PICDP brings together academics and students across disciplines to develop studies aimed at informing solutions to prevent chronic disease. Input from academics outside the realm of consumer behaviour provided input throughout the thesis proposal process.

As the objective of this study is to describe and organize the perceptions and feelings of a consumer group, who is engaging in a specific behaviour which is heavily impacted by the context in which the observed phenomena occurs, the most appropriate approach for this study is qualitative (Garud, Jain, & Kumaraswamy, 2002). The specific research instrument which will be used for this study is long interviews, as outlined by (McCracken, 1988). Long interviews were chosen because they allow for a researcher to see the world from the perspective of another individual. Further, individual interviews have been chosen due to the fact that smoking is a heavily stigmatized behaviour which is linked to individual and group identity. Using a format that communicates with smokers in groups is likely to influence participants to respond in a manner that feels socially appropriate within the group, and greatly affect the results of this study. This thesis also received ethics clearance from the University of Guelph Ethics Board (REB #15MR032).

All interviews were conducted in August and September of 2015. This timing became relevant to the interview process, as September is the time when many students had returned to Guelph in order to resume their studies at the university. This milestone came up many times during interviews, as it created moment where many participants changed their smoking behaviour, with reports of both increasing and decreasing consumption.

3.3 Sampling

Interviews were conducted with individuals over the age of 19 who are current smokers, which means they smoke cigarettes either daily or occasionally, per the definition of a current smoker as defined by the Health Canada, Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey (Statistics Canada, 2012). Participants were also required to live or work within the municipality of Guelph, Ontario, as tobacco legislation in Canada is instituted by varying federal, provincial, and municipal laws. Limiting participants to one regulatory area, thus limiting the study to a single context in a single area, eliminates potential confounding influences such as varying community norms and
regulations (Deephouse, 1996; Deephouse & Carter, 2005). Young adults were specifically targeted because they exhibit the highest tobacco usage rates in Canada, and they have also experienced less legislative change during their smoking tenure, again constraining the context of this study to eliminate confounding influences. Any participant under the age of 28 would have never been legally allowed to smoke indoors in the province of Ontario, as public, indoor smoking was banned across Ontario in 2006. Further, it was preferred if participants were students or staff at the University of Guelph so they experienced the Universities smoking regulations. However, consistent with transformative consumer research, several participants from outside the latter two groups were accepted in order to increase the relevance of this study’s findings (Crockett et al., 2013).

The sample size was focused on attaining a smaller number of in-depth perspectives. The initial round of interviews used 8 participants, which was the number recommended by McCracken (1988). Interviews were continued until substantially new and relevant information was no longer being generated through the addition of participants. In total, 11 long interviews were conducted. Interviews ranged in length from 25 to 107 minutes, with the average interview time being 75 minutes.

Recruitment was conducted primarily through posters and online recruitment using social networking sites with localized audiences such as reddit. Several unsuccessful attempts were also made to directly approach those seen smoking cigarettes in public. Participants were interviewed within one week of recruitment, and interviews took place in public locations which were mutually decided between the researcher and the participant, primarily coffee shops. Participants were compensated $30 for their time.

3.3.1 Procedure

This thesis was conducted using the long interview format, as outlined by McCracken (1988). The first and second steps, which include a strong literature review and linking existing literature to your own experiences in an attempt to identify unexplored relationships, have already been conducted in the literature review portion of this thesis.

The third step is the creation of the interview guide (Appendix A). As recommended by McCracken (1988), interviews started with a series of grand tour questions to understand the background of the participants and to develop rapport. The interview then utilized a protocol where
general topics were explored through broad questions (Belk, Fischer, & Kozinets, 2013; Merriam, 2009). The researcher asked probing questions when participants offered information related to the topics of tobacco and tobacco regulations (Thompson & Coskuner-Balli, 2007; Thompson, Locander, & Pollio, 1989). Specific questions regarding participant demographics were asked at the end in order to develop a profile for each participant, if that information did not arise during regular conversation.

The interviews also used a projective photo-elicitation technique, an interview strategy which has been shown to provoke more detailed and complete responses than questions alone (Collier, 1957, 1979; Harper, 2002). The use of photographs helps the research participant manufacture distance between themselves and their behaviour (Heisley & Levy, 1991; McCracken, 1988). Manufacturing distance prompts participants to explain everyday objects and situations, which assists researchers in accessing taken for granted actions and assumptions. Photo elicitation also helps research participants get past socially acceptable responses, through creating a situation where they can indirectly discuss sensitive topics (Belk et al., 2013). Techniques that offer the participant an opportunity to approach or express their feelings through the combination of different research techniques have also been suggested by transformative consumer research practitioners, in order to reduce the chance that participants are unwilling or unable to express themselves through a particular medium (Crockett et al., 2013).

In this thesis, participants were shown pictures of designated smoking areas in various contexts (see example photographs in Appendix B), and asked to indicate which pictures were familiar to them, or if they had any thoughts about the pictures. Designated smoking areas were used because previous research has indicated that the creation of a space for smoking may be beneficial to smokers (Tan, 2013), so regulations which created such spaces were of particular interest for this thesis. Participants then had the opportunity to discuss the pictures, prompted (when necessary) by a line of questioning that started with an indirect description of the designated smoking area, including who would be using it and when, and how it relates to their experience.

All interviews were recorded, with the researcher only taking notes when there were situations or questions he wanted to return to later. The interviews were later transcribed for analysis.
3.3.2 Data Analysis

Analysis of the interview transcripts was conducted in stages, as outlined in the fourth step of the long interview process (McCracken, 1988). The first stage was reviewing each interview individually, and during this process, utterances that were related to tobacco regulations were coded using NVivo 10. What qualified an utterance to be coded was that it either mentioned a regulation specifically, referred to a situation that was impacted by regulations, referenced a situation where a regulation had indirect effects, or referred to a situation where outcomes which were similar to those intended by regulations occurred (e.g. reduced tobacco consumption, reduced harm to non-smokers from second-hand smoke). These utterances were then coded based on what specific regulations or outcomes they pertained to. The impact of these specific regulations were then analysed to identify and organize themes which crossed multiple regulations. These themes are addressed in the discussion portion of this thesis.

3.3.3 Participant Profiles

3.3.3.1 Jack - Male, 24

Jack grew up in a city located in Canada’s Niagara region. It was there, in his final year of high school, he started smoking Bullseye cigarillos with his friends - his favourite flavour being peach. After moving to a new city, Jack attempted to purchase Bullseyes, which unbeknownst to him, had been banned by new flavoured tobacco regulations. Since he couldn’t find Bullseyes, he bought a pack of cigarettes. Jack estimates he has been smoking for six years. Although Jack once successfully switched from cigarettes to an e-cigarette for a period of 4-5 months, he now smokes 12 cigarettes throughout the day, when he works at a facility on campus. In the evening he switches back to an e-cigarette. Jack would like to try and quit again before school resumes for the year.

3.3.3.2 Steve - Male, 22

Steve is a local. He started smoking at the age of 14, and as the number of smokers dwindled throughout his high school career, his response was that people had become wimpier. At the age of 17 Steve’s full time job at a gas station gave him easy access to tobacco, so he supplied his peers, and made a small profit in the process. Steve now works in a bar, alongside a large number of smokers. Steve smokes an average of 16 cigarettes a day, and would like to quit because his father suffers from a smoking related disease, and because he finds smoking to be expensive.
3.3.3.3 Bowie (Bo) - Male, 19

Bo was born in one of Ontario’s mid-sized cities, and moved to Guelph for University. Bo was really against tobacco at the start of high school, but his mind changed when a friend suggested he try mixing marijuana (which he did smoke) and tobacco together. Three months later he was smoking cigarettes “because, obviously, you can’t just go around smoking bongs everywhere.” His smoking accelerated during a year off where he worked in a call centre with a very strong smoking culture. Bo currently has a summer job at a local grocer, where he tries to avoid smoking as much as possible. Bo once quit smoking for a period of a few months, but then started smoking cigarillos, which led to him returning to cigarettes. These days Bo only smokes five cigarettes a day, and he intends to quit when school resumes and his girlfriend returns to town; she doesn’t know Bo is smoking again.

3.3.3.4 Ron - Male, 20

Ron grew up in a small south-western Ontario city. He just returned to Guelph to start his second year of school, after spending the summer working in a manufacturing facility. Ron started smoking after he graduated high school. While stepping outside to accompany a friend who smoked, Ron was offered a cigarette and decided he would see what it was like. Ron doesn’t have a favorite brand of cigarettes, he tends to purchase a new brand every time he buys a pack, occasionally assembling a small list of potential brands based on what his friends smoke, and what others recommend in an online community for smokers. Ron smokes 2–4 cigarettes per day, and although he feels like he could quit any time, he hasn’t tried to quit, and doesn’t intend to.

3.3.3.5 Veronica - Female, 22

Veronica is a nomad - having traveled Canada and the world, she came to Guelph to start her masters. Veronica’s first cigarette was when she was 16 on a ski lift - a friend stole a cigarette from her dad, which she and Veronica then shared. Veronica’s smoking has varied since then, at one point she smoked 24 cigarettes a day, at another she quit for 6 months, but now she smokes 5-7 cigarettes a day. Veronica is not fond of the warning labels on cigarette packs, and will occasionally ask for a pack without a specific warning, or remove/deface the warning she doesn’t like. She currently smokes menthols and is concerned about their eventual ban in Ontario. Veronica wants to cut back on her smoking because she wants more endurance while exercising, and she believes the tobacco industry has a significantly negative impact on the environment.
3.3.3.6 Wendy - Female, 28

Wendy is a local. She recently finished her undergraduate degree and is completing a few extra courses so she can take her masters. Wendy smokes every hour, on the hour, unless something like work stops her, or a stressful situation leads to her smoking more. To Wendy, a cigarette is a cigarette, and keeping the cost down dictates her brand choice. Wendy was almost 20 when she started smoking, and she believes she tried her first cigarette because she was curious, and rebelling after growing up in a strict household. Since then, her parents have come to terms with her smoking, even buying her cigarettes on occasion, because she becomes irritable when she hasn’t smoked. Currently Wendy smokes approximately 12 cigarettes per day. She once quit smoking for three months, but right now she doesn’t believe quitting would be feasible, although cutting down would be nice.

3.3.3.7 Jan - Female, 24

Jan grew up in the Greater Toronto Area, and has lived in Guelph for several years. Jan usually smokes two cigarettes per day, typically before or after a meal because she finds they calm her stomach, although sometimes she’ll smoke more. Jan started smoking at the age of 17, while she was dating a heavy smoker. She would have the occasional cigarette with him, his brand was Belmont, and that is what she has been smoking ever since. Jan doesn’t like the taste of cigarettes, so other brands seem to taste worse. Jan once successfully quit smoking for four months, and she occasionally abstains because she doesn’t have money, or her smoking is impacting her ability to engage in athletic activities. Jan has said that her 30th birthday will be when she finally quits smoking for good.

3.3.3.8 Tara - Female, 20

Tara grew up in Canada’s capital, Ottawa. She came to Guelph for her undergraduate degree, but she typically goes home for summers. Tara smokes 4-5 cigarettes per day, and particularly enjoys having something to drink with her while smoking, usually Tea. Tara’s first cigarette was when she was 14, when her and two friends thought they would be “super bad ass and have a cigarette”. However, she didn’t start smoking regularly until university. While living in residence, Tara would join a friend for an occasional cigarette, until she went home for Christmas and stole two packs of cigarettes from her grandmother. Tara’s smoking gradually increased after that. Tara believes cigarettes help her with stress and depression. Tara wants to
quit, but it’s not a priority for here right now, and she worries there will be a negative impact on her mental health.

3.3.3.9 Shay - Female, 30

Shay first arrived in Guelph during her undergraduate degree. She moved to Toronto for her masters, and continues to live there while she completes her PhD in Guelph. Shay had her first cigarette when she was 14 - after that she smoked for a few weeks, but stealing cigarettes from her family was a challenge and she didn’t want to waste her allowance, so she quit. She picked up smoking again at 17 after her sister offered her a cigarette. At that time she had a job and found a convince store that thought she was 19, so she continued smoking. Shay successfully quit for a few years during undergrad, but resumed smoking during her master’s degree. Shay thought she would stop smoking when she turned 30, and did successfully for short time, until a number of stressful situations occurring at the same time caused her to turn to cigarettes as an opportunity to alleviate stress. Shay currently smokes 7-10 cigarettes per day, but a particularly stressful Blue Jays game can lead to her smoking a little more.

3.3.3.10 Michael - Male, 26

Michael moved from Toronto to Guelph in 2012 to start his undergraduate degree. Michael started smoking at the age of 13, when he was spending the summer at a cottage campground area, and there were older friends who smoked. He would steal 1-2 cigarettes per day from his parents, until he reached the age of 16, when started getting his own cigarettes through asking strangers outside of convenience stores. Michael successfully quit for two years, but resumed smoking three years ago due to a stressful family situation, first purchasing cigarillos, and then buying cigarettes. In a typical day, Michael smokes 10 cigarettes. Michael doesn’t believe he will quit smoking in the near future, as he doesn’t feel ready at this point.

3.3.3.11 Kyle - Male, 19

Kyle is from a mid-sized Southwestern Ontario city, and moved to Guelph one year ago to start his undergraduate degree. He actually doesn’t remember specifically when he started smoking, but it was sometime when he was 15. Kyle’s smoking varies significantly - he didn’t smoke at all during the day while working in the summer, but his smoking has increased to a pack a day since returning to Guelph, and he starts chain smoking while drinking. Kyle doesn’t plan to quit anytime soon, but he would like to cut down because it’s expensive and he notices that he
coughs frequently during time periods where he’s smoking heavily. Kyle thinks he’ll quit as soon as he has kids, as his dad did the same thing.

3.4 Study Context

The tobacco regulations which impact the jurisdiction of this particular study exist at a federal, provincial, municipal, and institutional (university) level. The below list of regulations which affect tobacco smokers is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all tobacco regulations, merely those which consciously impact the activities of cigarette smokers.

3.4.1 Federal Regulations

The two federal acts which pertain to tobacco consumption are the Tobacco Act, and the Non-Smokers health act. The tobacco act regulates the manufacture, sale, labeling and promotion of tobacco products.

3.4.1.1 Promotion of Tobacco Products and Accessories Regulations (Prohibited Terms) (SOR/2011-178)

The above regulation prohibits the terms light and mild, or any modifier such as extra or ultra to be used in the promotion, sale, or display of tobacco products (Tobacco Act, 2011b). These terms were previously phased out by Canada’s major tobacco manufacturers after an agreement with the Canadian Competition Bureau, before this law was implemented (Competition Bureau Canada, 2006)

3.4.1.2 Tobacco (Access) Regulations (SOR/99-93)

The above regulation establishes that only government issued ID is legal identification for the purpose of purchasing tobacco, and retailers must have signage indicating that it is illegal to sell tobacco to those who are under the legal smoking age, as mandated by the province. (Tobacco Act, 1999)

3.4.1.3 Tobacco Products Information Regulations (SOR/2000-272)

The above regulation outlines the requirements for government sourced warning labels that must be included on almost all tobacco packaging, including cigarettes. Where packaging doesn’t allow for a warning, a leaflet can be used. Manufacturers are required to cycle through the provided warnings, such that no warning is used on less than 3.25% or more than 9.25% of a given tobacco
products package. The package must also include a description of all toxic constituents in the product, using their full name and specific and accurate measurements of the contents. (Tobacco Act, 2000)

3.4.1.4 Tobacco Products Labelling Regulations (Cigarettes and Little Cigars) (SOR/2011-177)

This regulation further outlines the requirements for the appearance of tobacco warnings on the packages of cigarettes and little cigars, specifically addressing how warning labels should be placed on packages that aren’t rectangular (Tobacco Act, 2011a).

3.4.1.5 Non-smokers’ Health Act R.S.C., 1985, c. 15 (4th Supp.)

The Non-smokers’ Health Act was created in 1985 to restrict smoking in federal workplaces, as well as on airlines, ships, and trains, outside of designated smoking rooms/ Although the act initially permitted smoking areas and designated smoking rooms in office buildings, it was later amended to completely eliminate indoor smoking (Human Resources and Social Development Canada, 2008; “Non-smokers’ Health Act,” 1985).

3.4.2 Provincial Regulations

The jurisdiction of this study is the province of Ontario. In Ontario, smoking laws are outlined by the Smoke Free Ontario Act.

3.4.2.1 Sale and Supply

The Ontario government restricts the sale or supply of tobacco to those over the age of 19, however this does not mean that it is illegal for someone under the age of 19 to possess and consumer tobacco. To enforce this law, merchants are legally required to ask for identification from anyone who appears to be under 25 years old (Government of Ontario, 2016).

3.4.2.2 Display and Promotion

The display of tobacco products is restricted such that it is not legal for a consumer to view or handle tobacco products before purchasing. In turn, tobacco products cannot be promoted through any sort of product association, product enhancement, promotional material, or promotional items. However, tobacconists, duty retailers, and some other specific retail scenarios are exempt from these rules (Government of Ontario, 2016).
3.4.2.3 Sales Bans

The sale of tobacco in Ontario is banned in many retail environments, such as hospitals and other medical facilities, pharmacies, and within schools including colleges and universities. Cigarettes may not be retailed from a vending machine (Government of Ontario, 2016).

3.4.2.4 Packaging

In Ontario, cigarettes and cigarillos may not be sold in packages smaller than 20. Packages must also include warning labels, as required by law (Government of Ontario, 2016).

3.4.2.5 Flavoured Tobacco Products

The sale of flavoured tobacco products is currently banned in Ontario. This ban currently has an exception for menthol, but legislation indicates menthol will also be banned on or before January 1, 2018 (Government of Ontario, 2016).

3.4.2.6 Smoking Restrictions

Ontario does not allow tobacco use or even the holding of lighted tobacco in any enclosed public space, workplace, school, apartment common area, child care centre, entertainment venue, playground, publically owned outdoor sporting area, or bar/restaurant patio. Further, regulations also ban smoking with 9 metres of the entrance of a hospital, and 20 metres from a children’s playground or publically owned sports field. Employers are responsible for ensuring their employees comply with these laws, and employees cannot be punished for enforcing the act. Likewise, the proprietor of any public place is also responsible for ensuring those within the space are complying with the law. Some exceptions do exist for properly ventilated smoking rooms in facilities for veterans, long-term care facilities, and psychiatric facilities.

Less sweeping bans also exist in several situations. Those providing health-care within people’s homes also have the right to request that a patient does not smoke in their presence. They are welcome to leave the home if the patient does not comply. It is also illegal to smoke or hold lighted tobacco in a vehicle where someone under the age of 16 is present. (Government of Ontario, 2016).

3.4.3 Municipal Regulations

Within the municipality of Guelph, the jurisdiction of this study, smoking by-laws have been overshadowed by the laws enacted by the province. For example, a Guelph by-law indicates
“An Employer may designate an area of not more than 25% of an Enclosed Workplace as an area in which Smoking is permitted” (The Corporation of the City of Guelph, 1995, p. 3). This law was overshadowed by the provincial ban on smoking in workplaces. Although the city was debating creating new smoking by-laws to address smoking in public places such as parks and sports fields, these bans were addressed in the most recent changes to the Smoke-Free Ontario Act (Mercury Staff, 2015). There are not current by-laws that are specific to Guelph.

3.4.4 Private Regulations - University of Guelph

As private property owners are permitted to implement regulations regulated to tobacco consumption, the University of Guelph, the campus where this study has taken place, has chosen to implement additional restrictions on tobacco consumption. On the university campus, smoking is prohibited within nine meters of any building entrance or exit, loading dock, fresh air intake, or compressed gas storage area (University of Guelph, 2014). Smokers are also explicitly expected to use provided ashtrays and receptacles for cigarettes, however it is worth nothing that at the time of this study, all of the ashtrays had been removed from campus, even in areas explicitly labeled as designated smoking areas. Smoking is also prohibited in all residence facilities including rooms and common areas (Student Housing Services, 2015).
CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Throughout the interview process, it became clear that participant’s tobacco consumption was affected by tobacco regulations - regulations and instances where smoking regulations impacted smoking behaviour were regularly mentioned during research interviews. Regulations did successfully lead to situations where a participant would refrain from smoking, and there were regulations which could have potentially prevented several participants from ever smoking, had they been implemented earlier. However, the full effects of some regulations were less direct than others, the degree to which an individual was impacted by a particular regulation varied substantially, and there existed situations where tobacco users felt empowered by tobacco regulations.

Overall, regulations related to tobacco consumption did degrade the experience of smoking, which is perhaps best expressed by Michael as he indicated that ongoing changes to the regulatory environment of tobacco consumption are directly related him to feeling ashamed of smoking.

**Michael:** Yeah. It almost feels shameful.

**Researcher:** Almost feels shameful. How so?

**Michael:** There's been so many pushes to regulate smoking for the past ten years.

**Researcher:** Just because of the regulations?

**Michael:** Yeah. They got rid of smoking indoors, and in bars, and then within 10 meters of a doorway or something like that. Over the past summer, you can't smoke on patios.

We will continue to look at the results as they pertain to specific regulations which existed within the context of this study.

4.1 Indoor Smoking Restrictions

Primarily a result of the Smoke Free Ontario Act (Government of Ontario, 2016), the participants in this study are not legally allowed to smoke indoors in public buildings, or on outdoor patios at bars or restaurants. This requires participants to go outside to smoke, and there were many instances of these regulations affecting the actions of study participants, primarily while at work, and while at a bar or restaurant. Perhaps it is a reflection of the age of the smokers
interviewed, but the idea of going outside to smoke was very unremarkable for almost every smoker interviewed in the study, going outside to smoke was just mentioned as a fact. For example, Steve, who worked at a local music venue, goes outside frequently to smoke while at work, and smoking before, during, and after performances isn’t a monumental occasion.

Steve: That's usually when I down a shit-ton of coffee, a shit-ton of cigarettes, because I'm just waiting on a band either to arrive or to set up. Then sound check, go outside, do that with the band, get the next band to set up, sound-check them, get the last band to set up, tell them “We'll start in 20 minutes”, go outside for another smoke, come back in, grab a beer and away I go. Sets are usually about 45 minutes long. When a band finishes I'll tell them, "All right, you guys get yourselves set up. I already have it saved on the board from when we sound-checked." I just hit a button and then I go outside for a cigarette while they set up again. I do that three times before the night ends.

Further, when the researcher pressed research participants about any sort of process or fanfare for going out to smoke while hanging out at a bar, Jan’s response below was fairly typical.

Jan: I don't know. I just decide to go out, and then I would go out and I would smoke if I felt like it.

Although leaving a workplace to smoke and leaving a bar or restaurant to smoke could be seen as different experiences, given that one involves working, and the other involves carousing, the act of smoking in both of these situations was similar in that regulations require the smoker to stop what they’re doing and go outside. Both of these scenarios had similar processes for an individual to go smoke outside. Further, going outside wasn’t ever described as being forced to comply with regulations, instead leaving an indoor environment in order to smoker was almost consistently referred to as a break, regardless of the activity taking place. These smoke breaks may have also conferred additional benefits, such as building social relationships with co-workers.

Jack: Yeah. Smoking at work's a break from what you're doing. You get to occasionally hang out with other people and talk to them while you're doing it. Smoking at home is really just to fulfill that craving.

Researcher: When you're at work, are you always just with one other person or does it ever change?

Jack: No, there's just that one other person at work. Once or twice there's been a third person with us.

Researcher: Do you feel like smoking with this person affects your social relationship at all?
Jack: Yeah, I think we've become pretty good friends because every couple of hours we're out there talking, chatting, non-work related.

Jack clearly identified exiting the building to smoke at work as a break, and a distinctly different experience from smoking while he is at home, which may only occur to fulfil a craving. Jack also indicates that that there are actually benefits to leaving the office in order to smoke, namely, having a chance to engage in a non-work related discussion with a co-worker. Jack believes his friendship with this co-worker is a direct result of their smoking.

Several participants worked in environments where employees smoking was the norm. Veronica worked in a restaurant, where getting outside the restaurant to smoke with other staff members was the time when they could catch-up.

Researcher: When you go on a smoke break at work, was it taken alone, or were others around?

Veronica: Usually, others around and it would be more of a social time, at work especially. That's how I first starting smoking, as a social thing. I found out it was this way to make friends, outside of establishments. It's easier to approach someone, I found. It was something I'd have in common. I'm like, "Oh hey. A new friend that I can go take breaks with."

Researcher: Where there a lot of people who smoked at your [restaurant]?

Veronica: Yeah. Definitely. I feel like a lot of cooks in general smoke. They'd be some of the servers, too. They all smoked. Maybe not super frequently. At work we were all so close, so we'd take those smoke breaks. It was kind of a nice chill time. Take a few minutes away from work. Actually have a break together and catch up and smoke.

Veronica later elaborated that spending time with her coworkers while smoking was also connected to the first time she bought cigarettes.

Veronica: I bought my first pack when I started working at the [restaurant]. I had worked in restaurants before, and I kind of wanted to. I feel great and I feel like a cigarette once in a while won't hurt. But, I fell into a bad habit again. It's all my fault. That was probably why.

I knew I'd make more friends at work when I smoked. Even regardless, if I did or didn't, I still would make those friends, but I think we had that more time together as a result. Shared interest.

As shown above, participants would leave their workplace to take smoke breaks, and the social nature of those breaks contributes to their enjoyment of smoking. The trend of smoking being a break from an ongoing activity also carries over into non-work examples. Take a look at
these examples from Jan, Ron, and Veronica to see how smoke breaks occur even in situations where no work is taking place.

**Jan:** If I was out I would probably go out to smoke cigarettes because sometimes a bar atmosphere isn't always...it's sometimes crowded. If you want a break from that.

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**Veronica:** Usually a typical night out I would go to one of the few bars that I like. [laughs] I'll go with a similar group of people each time. Usually after work we'd all go to the same place, from work, and then have some beers and play some games. Then have frequent smoke breaks, more frequent in the evening with drinking more alcohol.

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**Ron:** This past week, I stayed at my friends, they've got three different people there who all smoke different [brands]. I come in with the fourth kind and we all go out for a smoke break on a patio no bigger than this booth.

These three participants all referred to going outside to smoke as being a break, even when the activity that the participant was engaging in was socializing, playing games, or even a completely non-descript activity. Here, another two participants refer to taking smoke breaks, except this isn’t in a situation where a defined activity is taking place - the smoker is just socializing with friends. However, it’s worth noting that that referring to smoking as a break, is literally interpreted as a break, not just a term for going outside to smoke. You can see how Jan refers to smoking as a merely break from her routine.

**Researcher:** If you could make up your ideal time or place to smoke, do you have one?

**Jan:** Just outside, alone. I enjoy being outside. I guess it's not so pleasant when it's minus 30 outside. It's nice to go outside, enjoy the weather. Experience the weather. Just get a break from your routine. I like smoking at night.

Bringing this all together, regulations that force smokers outdoors, whether that is in a workplace, or in other public spaces like bars or restaurants, may reinforce the idea that smoking is more than just filling a craving, it may also be an opportunity for a break to socialize. Perhaps that was best explained by Jack’s earlier quote, where smoking at work was a great time to socialize, and smoking at home, an environment where he did remain indoors, was just filling a craving.
The theme here seems to be that anytime a participant was not smoking, and they had to go somewhere else to smoke, it was seen as a break. It’s possible that this would not occur if the participants were able to remain indoors, where smoking would not interrupt their behaviour.

4.2 Patio Ban

Six months before research interviews were conducted, smoking was banned on all bar and restaurant patios in the province of Ontario (Government of Ontario, 2016). This change in regulation is particularly noteworthy, as it is the first major shift in smoking law that most of the interview participants had encountered. Several of the participants interviewed in this study did notice it affected their smoking habit.

**Shay:** When you could still smoke out on patios, we would spend the entire time on the Turkey’s Nest patio, smoking and drinking. Now that you have to leave your drink and exit the bar. Less often there will be smoking and drinking. In that case though, if I'm the only smoker, I probably won't go outside to have a cigarette alone and leave all the fun. In there, its contingent that someone else there smokes so that I can continue hanging out while I have a cigarette.

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**Researcher:** Do you notice a difference between being able to smoke on the patio, or having to go out front?

**Kyle:** I'd say I probably smoke less, actually, that I have to go out front and smoke. It was pretty convenient on the patio, just sitting out there with everybody, and just have a Dart whenever you feel like it. Now, if you don't feel like going out by yourself, out front of the bar to have a smoke, but you want to have a couple guys with you, if they're not feeling it, or they're having a drink right now, then you're going to have to wait.

For both of these participants, the challenge created by the patio ban is that smoking becomes particularly inconvenient, and perhaps less enjoyable, because it may mean they have to stop socializing with their friends, or wait until later to smoke - something that wasn’t a problem before the patio smoking ban. In fact, Shay stopped visiting the Turkey’s Nest after the smoking ban. However this was not a universal experience. Some participants were unaffected by the idea of going in front of a bar to smoke, finding it to be a similar experience to going out on a patio.

**Steve:** Go out front. I don't consider it that hard of a thing to do. You're outside anyway. Why not go outside, just the other direction?

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Researcher: Does it feel any different to you now having to go out to the front of the bar versus having to go out to a patio?

Jan: I guess it depends how busy it is. Sometimes in Guelph it can get really, really busy. You go outside and looking for a little bit of peace and it's louder than the noise inside. In those instances, no. Generally, it's late at night and there's not that many people and it's the same kind of environment. Except there's no seating.

It’s worth nothing that participants who were impacted by the patio ban were focused on spending an entire night hanging out on a patio, smoking freely throughout the evening. The act of hanging out was lost, and for those participants smoking was now an interruption to their fun, where it was once part of it. Those who didn’t feel the effect of the ban were spending the night indoors, only going outside to smoke. Thus, going outside to smoke was the same experience in a different location.

The way bars implement the patio ban tends to vary - although there were no examples of bars not enforcing the actual patio ban, once a smoker was off the property, bar staff paid little mind to where the smokers went. Typically upon leaving the bar the smoker would receive some sort of ticket, or they would give their ID to the bouncer so they could come back inside after they finished smoking.

4.3 Smoking Spaces as Social Areas

Many of the participants interviewed for this study indicated that there was a high degree of socialization which occurred between smokers, while smoking outside of bars, restaurants, workplaces, and university buildings. Although some participants mentioned they did not enjoy leaving their friends to smoke, there was a thriving social scene within smoking areas. Occasionally these spaces were officially designated as smoking areas by the owner of a given property, but it was more typical that this sort of space would be created unofficially, becoming recognizable as a smoking area because of the presence of cigarette butts (which one participant referred to as “artifacts”). Participants indicated that time spent in a smoking area created fast friendships, and relationships even budded between cigarettes.

Wendy: It's like smokers have this bond thing with other smokers. You see another smoker, and even if you don't know them at all, if you're smoking then you have a conversation with them.
Jack: I'd probably be inside drinking and talking to people and then every half-hour, 45 minutes, go out for a smoke. Especially when it's at a club you can't really hear anybody inside. Go outside, there are other smokers there, you meet random people, you start talking and then you go back.

Veronica: Maybe if I meet a friend who's a smoker, we'll smoke together, like here. I meet friends like that.

Researcher: Have you met any smoking friends yet in your program?

Veronica: Yeah. Not in my program, but in my faculty. We went out last night for ciders. I didn't know she smoked, so I didn't say I was going to go for a smoke break, but then she said, "I'm going for a smoke break." So, "I'll go, too."

Researcher: Are you close to this person now? Did you get to know her better as a result?

Veronica: For sure. Yeah. We got to know each other better through that. We're not super close. I just met her two days ago. It definitely was something we had in common that we didn't know we did.

In Veronica’s case, it is clear that heading outside to smoke helped her develop her friendship with a fellow student, something is quite beneficial, given that Veronica only moved to Guelph several days before the interview. It appears that it was not just the time together that helped build a relationship, but also having smoking cigarettes in common. Further, this isn’t the first time this participant had used smoking to develop social relationships, as Veronica indicated elsewhere that smoking at her previous job was a catalyst to her relationship with her boyfriend.

Another research participant, Bo, spent some time working in a call centre, where smoking wasn’t just a catalyst for social relationships, it felt like one of the only ways someone could get out of the office and socialize.

Bo: I used to work at a call center. Because I took a year off after high school. It was almost a requirement to smoke at that place. It wasn't written or anything.

I remember this one time, I was walking in, and this guy was walking out for a smoke. He was like, "I wouldn't have taken this job if they told me that smoking was mandatory." He was essentially like, that was the only place you could socialize. [...] Not only that, it was a really stressful job. The only thing to really look forward to was to go outside and have a cigarette. Plus you actually got to go outside. There was no windows in that place. It was like just nice to be able to take a load off. I definitely liked smoking a lot more after that. It felt a lot more like I would have continued smoking then.
Bo later mentioned that he wasn’t entirely sure where non-smokers went or what they did during their breaks, although the occasional non-smoker would come out and socialize with the smokers. Bo seemed to feel like smoking in order to get breaks from the high-stress environment inside the call centre was essential, and his smoking colleagues felt the same way. Meanwhile, Ron even found instances where smoking alone seemed like a social experience.

**Researcher:** You mentioned the social experience a lot. How does that compare to, say, if you're playing [computer games online with friends] and then everyone's going out to smoke on their own?

**Ron:** In a way, it kind of feels like a spiritual smoke break. It's still kind of a social thing, in a sense, because you've been talking to the same guys for four or five hours at a time. It's nice to just take a break for 5, 10 minutes.

Ron frequently played computer games online with his friends who smoked, and still found that there was a social aspect to them all taking a smoke break at the same time. Perhaps this indicates that the social factors associated with going outdoors to smoke run much deeper than the actual socialization taking place, and participation in the event of smoking is part of the social experience itself - even when no socialization is taking place.

4.4 Lack of Awareness

Although research participants knew that they could not smoke indoors, they often did not know where they could smoke outdoors. In the city of Guelph, there is no by-laws which extend smoking restrictions beyond those set out by the province, a practice that is not consistent within Ontario, as other municipalities have added their own regulations. For example, the city of Toronto bans smoking within a 9 meter radius of the entrance or exit of a public building (City of Toronto, 2013). However, the University of Guelph did enact a 9 meter ban (University of Guelph, 2014), however participants often did not know exactly what the rule entailed.

**Researcher:** The area where you'd go to smoke on res. What was that like?

**Bo:** It was like you just walk outside and get what you imagine is seven meters, I think it is, away from the building.

A lack of knowledge about smoking restrictions didn’t always lead to smoking occurring in prohibited areas. For some it meant that they just stayed far away from buildings so they could completely avoid any potential issue.
Wendy: We're supposed to be away from everyplace is like eight feet or whatever the thing is, so I usually cross the street and smoke on the other side.

And for others it was just plain frustrating. Seeing a butt stop or ashtray placed within an area where they believed smoking was illegal just frustrated participants who wanted to comply with laws, but found it difficult to do so.

Tara: I'm always seeing signs that are no smoking within nine meters. This not nine meters. This is like a foot. It's like a foot from the doors. It's like, do buildings when they put up [butt stops], do they not have to think about the nine meters? Or were they before the nine meter law? I don't know how old that is.

And further, Tara also found it frustrating how ashtrays were often challenging to see. She believes that she would go to areas with ashtrays receptacles if she was able to find them, and she wasn’t alone in this belief.

Tara: Also, its little smoking things are more identifiable than this one [pointing to a small cylindrical butt-stop in a picture], because that's like, how am I supposed to know that's a smoking thing. If it's a more obvious one, then it's easier to see. It's easier to know, "Oh, this is where other people will go to smoke. This is a better area to smoke in." It's more likely that I'll go there.

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Wendy: If there was an ashtray in the place that I smoke, then I would smoke there. I would be cued, an ashtray. Less likely to throw it on the ground, too. If there's no ashtray and I need a smoke. I'm not going to walk all the way to the library to get rid of the cigarette.

On the campus of the University, there actually used to be ashtrays, which research participants indicated they would use in order to know where to smoke. However, all of the ashtrays were removed - even a location that was specifically marked as a designed smoking area lacked a receptacle for cigarette butts.

Wendy: I try to [comply with regulations], but especially if it's on campus, it's hard. I don't have a measuring tape. I'm not going to measure that. It's hard because they've taken away all the ashtrays except for the one in front of the library [Note: this was not true at the time of the study - there was no ashtray]. Whereas before, they had ashtrays other places and that would cue to me "OK, I'm in a good place. I can smoke by the ashtray." Now, that they're not there, it's like I don't even know where the allowable places are. It's not even obvious.
4.5 Designated Smoking Areas

One solution to the issue of smokers being unable to recognise where they can legally smoke is the creation of designated smoking areas. These are typically created by the owners/managers of private property, and use signage, ashtrays, and/or other markings to indicate the area is has been deemed appropriate for smoking. But pushing smokers to stay in designated areas through the placement of highly visible ashtrays can be complicated. Some research participants appreciated measures that indicate where smoking is permitted, but it was more common for research participants to criticize the spaces for a variety of reasons.

At the Toronto airport, where smoking is restricted to outdoor spaces nine meters away from doors, designated spaces have been created with clearly marked lines. When viewing a picture of this area during the photo elicitation task, some participants appreciated having a clearly marked smoking area. Although Shay quickly noticed that that someone in the photo was clearly smoking outside the line, and Tara felt that some smokers may go outside the line out of spite.

Shay: That's helpful. Demarcating is good. Smokers could be more considerate. Penning them in, to some extent, is good. When it's clearly labeled like this, then you might encourage people, who would otherwise do it anywhere. Although, it didn't seem to have an impact on these people. That guy might be smoking outside the line.

Tara: It's probably a good idea. I wouldn't say it's necessary. It's still a good idea to have that, to remind smokers to stay behind this area, and not blow smoke into people's faces. It's also yellow, so it's not super like, "You must stay in here." They're not doing that kind of thing, which is nice. It's like, we respect that you might not listen to us. That's kind of what that's saying to me.

Researcher: Do you think it could it look harsher, I guess? When you say, "You still see a certain level of respect," if they didn't have any respect?

Tara: I was thinking of a big red line, words to say like, "No smoking beyond this point," because that's like, "Well, now I want to smoke beyond this point because you're telling me that I'm not allowed to."

Other participants did not appreciate the line at all. In Michael’s case, the line made him feel unwanted and ashamed of smoking.

Michael: That's kind of the point I was making, where I said earlier that I feel ashamed to smoke.
**Researcher**: Because of the line?

**Michael**: Yeah. It's just telling you that you are not wanted anywhere else besides in the box.

The most common response to the line marking the smoking area was sarcasm. Participants sarcastically pointed out the lines inability to stop smoke from leaving that area, thus, the line was not actually protecting non-smokers.

**Steve**: Interesting. You can't smoke on the other side of that line?

**Researcher**: No.

**Steve**: But you can smoke...? *(Sarcastically)* That line totally protects all the smoke from going outwards.

**Researcher**: Do you think that the line really matters?

**Interviewee**: Seriously, if you just say, "Hey, guys, can you please just smoke closer to this edge?" People will probably smoke closer to that edge.

**Jan**: It seems a little bit silly because smoke travels outside of the lines.

The airports inclusion of an ashtray was also brought up. The ashtray was useful and appreciated by some smokers, while others saw it as ugly and unappealing, as it was a large stone rectangle with a pit of sand at the top, which contained dozens of visible cigarette butts.

**Jan**: It's kind of unappealing to have the receptacle for cigarette butts. There are more appealing signs. Because it's such a large receptacle. I guess it's supposed to be, it should be, because it's an airport. It's unappealing to have such a large ashtray.

Finally, although this was not specific to the airport example, even where a smoking area was placed also led to some controversy. Designated smoking areas aren’t always placed in areas where research participants want to smoke, and they felt slighted for not being consulted on the subject. For example, Bo, found himself quite frustrated when his workplace moved the smoking area several times.

**Bo**: But they really don't care about the smokers. Like they'll push them pretty much anywhere. Originally, it was in one spot, and then they were like, "Oh, people were walking across the lane too much." So they moved it somewhere else. Or they didn't want it in front or something like that. It was a whole bunch of things. They just really didn't care if it seemed like...it's not really surprising, to be completely honest at this point in time that people don't care about smokers. Kind of seems like a general trend, but I can see why they would want to push them away. I don't know.
There was just like, I don't know. It just seems like there's no input. It's just like we're going to put you guys here. It's not like where do you guys...where would you guys like to put something. At least that's how it seemed.

But even if a smoking area were to include all the features that a participant desired, there are some smokers who are simply not interested in using one.

**Researcher:** What about the [designated smoking area], over to the other side of the library?

**Kyle:** Oh, I've never...never use that.

**Researcher:** Why not?

**Kyle:** I don't know, honestly. I've never had the effort to walk over there and sit down.

### 4.6 Designated Smoking Areas as Permissive Spaces

One interesting theme that developed from situations where smokers were using, or discussing, designated smoking areas is the sense of permission they can create. When a smoker was in a designated smoking area, they were doing the right thing and should not be bothered. The spaces that were most commonly identified as permissive were areas specifically assigned for smoking within a larger space. This could mean an ashtray or “butt-stop” outside of an office building, or a location such as a bar patio which had been assigned as the smoking area. The patio example was particularly interesting, because although it was once legal to smoke on patios, this did not mean the patio was for smoking and smokers exclusively. Yet, several research participants expected non-smokers to accept smoking as part of their patio experience.

**Steve:** Yeah, and that's where the Turkey’s Nest patio was the best for shit like [smoking a cigar]. You'd be on the back patio, you'd have a cigar in your hand, and a beer in the other. You just put down the cigar, go grab another drink, come back, still smoking the cigar. Somebody once complained about me smoking a cigar and I told them to fuck off. Mind you, it was somebody I knew.

**Researcher:** Was it a real complaint?

**Steve:** Yeah, he was like, "Do you have to smoke that? It makes me uncomfortable." I was like, "You do understand you're on a smoking patio, right?" [laughs] [...] He is a smoker. He really shouldn't have said anything. It was just because cigars probably made him nauseous, which is an understandable thing, but not to be saying to somebody on a smoking patio at a bar at 1:00 in the morning.
Interesting enough, the same feeling was shared by Shay about the exact same bar. Even though Shay was quite considerate about her smoking in other situations, she took issue to the idea of a non-smoker being bothered by smoking on said patio. When asked if she had ever been confronted on that patio, Shay responded:

**Shay:** No. First of all, no one has ever said anything. Second of all, the only people on that patio were smokers. Anybody else who was on that patio came with smokers.

**Researcher:** It's expected?

**Shay:** It's the purpose of going out to that patio. It's not a nice patio. The furniture's beat up. There's no view. It exists to smoke.

**Researcher:** What if somebody did? If they were out there and they were uncomfortable?

**Shay:** I might not smoke, but I would think that seems to be ignoring a social norm there, or something like that. Like you've gone into an area that exists for that purpose. So, "Wait inside until we come back in," or, "Don't come," or something like that. I probably wouldn't keep smoking. Not that kind of person. But, I probably wouldn't invite them the next time. [laughs]

This sense of permissiveness extends beyond the above examples, where both situations were at the same bar, and participants were interacting with people they knew. At the University of Guelph, where almost all of the research participants went to school, there is a designated smoking area beside the library. This smoking area also happens to be very close to a busy path, but several participants indicated that they aren’t considerate of people around that space, because it is a designated smoking area. The presence of a designated smoking area may have deferred the blame to whomever put it there.

**Shay:** I take that into consideration. I'm not going to not smoke because I'm in a high-traffic area, but if there's an option, I'll pick the lower traffic area.

**Researcher:** The area beside the library is pretty high-traffic.

**Shay:** It's pretty high-traffic, but I don't feel any qualms about smoking there because it's a designated smoking area. I feel like everybody knows that because there's always a crowd of smokers standing there. If anyone chooses to walk along those pathways, it's like they know what they're getting into.

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**Veronica:** Someone must have approved that. It says, "Designated area for smoking." All the smokers just hanging out there.
Tara: You'll feel a little awkward just because there's a path that goes right in front of it, but it has a sign that says designated smoking area, so it's like, if you want to walk on this path, then you should know that this is a smoking area, and you can't complain about the smoking here.

Moving outside of the university, the feeling of permission extended to participants reflecting on the picture of the designated smoking area outside of Toronto airport.

Kyle: I don't know. With a designated smoking area, people expect to see you smoking there, so you don't have to feel guilty about doing it in a public place.

An area also didn’t need to be explicitly marked as a designated smoking area to create this sense of permission - the presence of an ashtray came with the idea that someone must have designated a particular space as a smoking area. Note that this is different from being in a place where you’re allowed to smoke, it’s believing somewhere is a place where smoking belongs. The presence of an ashtray can even defend smoking in front of a no smoking sign.

Steve: No, it was literally right in front of that "No Smoking" thing. People got pissed. I was like, "Why'd you put an ashtray here? That's just stupid."

Several research participants indicated that they had been confronted about smoking in the past. These participants were asked how being in a designated smoking area may have changed the confrontation. All of these participants felt like the designated area was their space going as far as mentioning that they have a right to be there, so others should not be bothering them for smoking.

Researcher: If you were [in a designated smoking area, and someone from a previously mentioned confrontation about smoking] came up to you, do you think it would've felt different?

Tara: Probably, especially just because it's like, "Now you're basically coming into my territory. This is where I am. This is where smokers are specifically allowed to be." And so, like it's even more and more unwarranted to come up to us. If somebody came up to us outside the library and was like, "You guys aren't allowed to smoke here," I'd be like, like I’d still be kind of rude, of course standing there is rude as well. But I’d still kind of be like “What are you doing?” But [in this designated smoking area], that would never happen, because it's like, we can smoke here. [...] It's also like, we have a right to be here, and who are you to come and just start yelling at us?
**Wendy:** I've had people be like, "Don't smoke. It's bad for you." Especially, if there was an ashtray there, and I was smoking there. I would be like, "Well, I'm allowed to smoke here."

Michael does a great job of summarizing research participant’s reactions to someone confronting them about smoking while they are in a designated smoking area. At the time of Michael’s interview, a nearby designated smoking area was being used to conduct some video interviews, and Michael actually sat down and started smoking. Michael was not confronted, but if he was:

**Michael:** I would've laughed, probably.

### 4.7 Product Regulations

The banning of specific tobacco products has impacted, or will impact, several of the participants in this study. The most relevant regulation being the ban on flavoured tobacco products. Several research participants began smoking with flavoured cigarillos, products which are now illegal. It is challenging not to speculate that if flavored cigarillos were banned earlier, these participants may have never started smoking in the first place. For one participant, a failed attempt to buy flavoured cigarillos after the ban was the catalyst for him to start smoking cigarettes.

**Jack:** It all started with, they were called Bullseye Cigarillos, had a gold wrapper on the filter that was actually covered in sugar. They were generally fruit flavored. I preferred the peach ones, made it a little more tolerable.

I would say, because it was a cigarillo, it had a brown wrapper, it looked different. Somehow we were thinking, "This isn't a cigarette, it's different. We're not starting smoking. It's a different thing."

**Researcher:** At what point did you switch to cigarettes?

**Jack:** When I moved to Toronto. I went to university, I searched around like three different shops and could not find the cigarillos. I just picked a brand of cigarettes and that's how that started.

Jack followed the exact path that flavoured tobacco bans were implemented to correct. Jack started smoking flavoured tobacco because it made tobacco more tolerable. Jack wasn’t the only participant to graduate from flavoured cigarillos to cigarettes. Both Michael and Bo successfully quit smoking, then started smoking the occasional flavoured cigarillo, thinking that it wasn’t bad because they weren’t smoking cigarettes. Both participants resumed smoking cigarettes soon after.
Bo: Then, near the end of the year, I started smoking Colts, which are cigars, because I have this idea that it was like, "Oh well, it's not the same," and did that whole thing. I was smoking those during the school year. As soon as summer started, I bought a pack of smokes, because I went home. I like to smoke and drive.

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Michael: Yeah I started with flavored cigarillos. [...] I think cherry.

Researcher: How long do you think it was before you went back to cigarettes again?

Michael: A week.

There is still one flavoured tobacco ban that has yet to be implemented, which is the Ontario ban of menthol cigarettes. Veronica smokes menthol cigarettes, and she does believe that a ban on menthol products could lead to her quitting, because she can’t tolerate regular cigarettes.

Researcher: What's going to happen when the menthol ban starts?

Veronica: I don't know, I’ll probably get a supply. Supplies only last. [laughs] Clear them out of Benson & Hedges. Maybe I'll quit again for a bit. If I really, really am wanting a smoke, then I'll get my boyfriend to send me them or something.

Researcher: You think you're that attached to menthol?

Veronica: Yeah, the kind of cigarette. The brand and the menthol aspect. Yeah. I really like those. I wouldn't switch any time soon.

Researcher: You wouldn't switch to the non-menthol version of the cigarette?

Veronica: No. I like the menthol ones.

Researcher: What do you like about it?

Veronica: It's smoother and it's less harsh on your lungs than regular cigarettes. Sometimes I'll have a cigarette of my boyfriends and I just don't like them.

Veronica’s attachment to menthol cigarettes is consistent with the reasons used by organizations such as the Canadian Cancer Society to justify a menthol ban - the numbing and cooling effect created by menthol makes it easier to smoke, and this effect encourages people to keep smoking (Weeks, 2015). It appears that if these flavoured tobacco bans were in place earlier, several participants would have never started smoking.
4.8 Display Ban

The ban on the display of tobacco in Ontario means that retailers are no longer allowed to display any cigarette packages or tobacco point-of-purchase displays. Where a consumer used to expect a wall of tobacco products behind convenience store cashiers, these displays are now covered with grey doors, hiding tobacco products behind them. This change was brought up multiple times by interview participants. Wendy, who started smoking as an adult, before the display ban was in place, believes that she would have been less likely to go buy a pack of cigarettes if the displays were not open. Speaking about buying her first pack of cigarettes:

**Wendy:** The smoke places are now closed, you can't see the cigarettes. They used to be open. It was around the time before they changed over.

At that point, I could see them. I could see what they were. It made it easier to buy my first pack. A couple of months later, when it was closed, I would have probably been less likely to buy one because I would have no clue what they looked like.

Another participant, Ron, differs from many smokers, in that he is not brand loyal at all. Ron is a light smoker, who tries to buy a different brand every time he buys cigarettes. Due to the display ban, Ron has to actively seek out cigarette brand information from others, in person and through online smoking communities, as he can’t browse cigarettes at the store.

**Ron:** No, I don't smoke very often. I get a different pack every time to see what's out there.

**Researcher:** How do you decide what you're going to buy?

**Ron:** I usually ask around people, like, "Hey, what do you smoke? What else have you smoked?" Sometimes on Reddit there's the cigarette subreddit. I go on there and some people will say, "Oh, yeah, I smoke this or that."

I do up a little list, three or four things, because a lot of the variety stores and stuff around here don't have everything. I'll see what they have and get something, give it a try, see how it goes. [...] I'll usually go top-down and I'll ask, "Hey, do you have this?" If they do, then I'll get it, and if not I'll go to the next thing on the list.

**Researcher:** Is it r/Cigarette?

**Ron:** Yeah, r/Cigarettes, with an S.

**Researcher:** What makes someone recommend a smoke or something?

**Ron:** Sometimes there's the post, like, "Hey, what do you guys recommend?" A lot of people have in their flair [an indicator beside their username] what they smoke. Sometimes I'll go through the comments and pick out what seems to be
popular or something I haven't tried that looks interesting. Jot it down and keep it in mind.

**Researcher:** Is this something you've always done?

**Ron:** No, it's only something I've really done the past couple months because I've run out of people to ask suggestions for. [laughs] But, it seems to be working out pretty good so far.

In the case of Ron, he started by seeking out advice on what cigarette brands to buy, but ended up running out of people to consult. Thus, he actually started participating in an online community which was created to support people who smoke. This pro-smoking community believes “This is not the place to tell people smoking is bad for them. We know.” and members of the community can advertise what brand of cigarettes they smoke alongside their username. Ron doesn’t love this process though - having to prepare a list of brands, then ask the store clerk is inconvenient for him and he feels the need to wait until no customers are in the store.

**Ron:** It kind of makes me feel a little bad. Tying up the line, if there's a line. I'll try usually to wait for the line to dissipate, for it to end, because you'll be there a few minutes, trying to figure out what they have. I like to window shop, look at stuff, say, "That would be good." You can't, you kind of have to ask. You have to ask, "Do you have this?" Get a yes or no answer. They'll have four or five different kinds of a brand. It's definitely inconvenient. I can understand the reason why they're there.

Ron was unique in his conviction to browse multiple brands of cigarettes, as it was more typical of participants to indicate they find new cigarettes when they are sharing cigarettes with others.

**Researcher:** How would you typically end up switching brands?

**Veronica:** Usually, it would be from someone else offering me one of theirs. Saying, "Oh, that's actually really good." I don't find I can go out to a gas station and say, "What do you guys have?" I don't know half of what they have available, half the cigarette brands in general. I'll usually just stick to something that I've heard of, or that someone liked, or my friend offered me one and I liked it. That's how I switch.

So when purchasing cigarettes, the most common experience was that a participant would ask for one, maybe two, brands they knew and wanted. If those brand weren’t available, they would just go somewhere else.

**Shay:** I did notice the change because you couldn't walk in and figure out whether the convenience store had your cigarettes. You had to ask. Not that that really
changed anything, but that's definitely why I noticed. Because I wouldn't be able to visually see if my brand was there. [...] Yeah. As I was saying earlier, there was the brand that I smoked. There was the different cigarette of the same brand that was a reasonable replacement. If they didn't have that one, I would go to that one. If they didn't have either, I would go to a different store.

Although Shay found that covering the cigarettes didn’t make a difference to her, she did believe that hiding cigarettes could be beneficial from those attempting to quit.

Shay: No. I don't know how effective it is. I have a hard time imagining that anyone is... Maybe it's really good for people trying to quit. I think not seeing cigarettes is really good for people trying to quit. I don't know that it prevents new smokers. It certainly might prevent relapses. It doesn't bother me at all. At this point, I forget that it used to be the other way around.

4.9 Naming Regulations

In Canada, the terms light and mild were banned from cigarette packages in 2011, although most tobacco companies phased them out in 2006-2007. For most of the interview participants, these terms changed before they started smoking, and the topic did not arise during the course of their interview. However, two participants did still use the terms lite and extra lite, as they had encountered these cigarettes before the ban. For Ron, he picked up the term because that’s what his dad smoked.

Ron: I typically go for light. I've tried rich and bold of different brands and it can be a little much. Especially if you're not used to them.

Researcher: Although, have they changed the names now so they're not light anymore?

Ron: Yeah. It's been a while actually. Right around when my dad quit smoking. My dad smoked Players Extra Light. It was just around the time that he quit that they changed it to smooth and extra smooth. I still just refer to them as light and extra light because that's what I'm just used to as a kid. But, the government put a ban on it because there's no such thing as a light cigarette. It's not light anymore, I guess.

The term also stuck with Shay, who did have experience buying light cigarettes as she was 30, and had been smoking for 13 years. Shay specifically mentioned the change taking place when referring to a brand she used to smoke.

Researcher: You mentioned that you smoke Belmont Silvers? Have you always smoked Belmont?
Shay: No. I used to smoke Benson and Hedges Ultra Lights they were called. They're not called that anymore, because you can't use words like light anymore. They're called Sapphire now. Then, I was hanging out with a lot of people who were smoking Belmonts.

4.10 Age Restrictions for Purchase

Most of the participants interviewed in this study engaged in smoking while underage. This meant that they had to acquire cigarettes illegally, usually from someone else. In Ontario, providing cigarettes to a minor is illegal and can result in serious fines, however, most participants found it quite easy to get tobacco while they were underage. The most popular way to get cigarettes was simply through asking a friend who was of age to purchase them.

Ron: I was 18. I was getting smokes and I had connections. I would be on the phone with people, "Hey, can you get me a pack," and they'd be like, "Yeah, sure."

Researcher: Did you have to pay them?

Ron: Oh yeah. I'd usually give them the cost of the smokes and usually a couple of extra dollars. As a convenience fee for the thing. But, a lot of the time I would just bum smokes off people or give a dollar to someone for a smoke.

Researcher: It was pretty easy to get smokes then?

Ron: Yeah. Pretty much anyone that already smokes, that is 19, is more than willing to go get you a pack when they go get a pack too. It wasn't really an issue.

Consistent with Ron's example, most participants offered some sort of compensation to those who bought them cigarettes. When a participant couldn't get cigarettes through an older friend, they would often engage in a technique known as shoulder tapping - asking strangers outside of convenience stores.

Michael: I would do what we called shoulder tapping. [...] We would stand around a convenience store and approach people entering and ask them questions.

Researcher: Was that challenging?

Michael: Yeah. Maybe one out of 10.

Researcher: One out of 10. Would that take a long time?

Michael: Depending on how busy it was, approximately an hour.

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Researcher: How'd you get your smokes when you were in grade 12?
Kyle: Just random people, I think. I'd stand outside a convenience store out front, and ask somebody to buy me a pack of smokes as they went in.

Researcher: Was that very hard?

Kyle: No, not hard at all. Typically worked every time.

Researcher: Did it take long?

Kyle: No.

Researcher: Would anyone ever tell you off or anything?

Kyle: No, never. If they didn't want to do it, they'd just say, "No. I'm not going to do that." That was basically it.

Although participants did say that it was not difficult to get cigarettes when they were underage, it became clear that they only started smoking regularly when they gained unimpeded access to tobacco. For some that meant turning 19, but several participants gained unimpeded access to tobacco before they could legally buy cigarettes. Bo started smoking regularly after a new job at a gas station gave him access to tobacco.

Bo: I didn't really get into heavy smoking until I was around 17, when I started working at the gas station, because I had easy access to smokes. I have anxiety, so it was something that could pull the stress level down, especially while working. It was a full service gas station, so I was just constantly running around. Those brief few minutes, I can just say, "Well, I'm just going to go have a smoke," was a lot better than just being like, "Well, I'm just going to go sit on my ass for 10 minutes."

Shay also found she was able gain unimpeded access to tobacco at 17, which coincided with her starting to smoke regularly.

Shay: Finding a convenience store where people thought I was 19, was not that difficult. So, I started smoking.

4.11 Health Warnings

Tobacco packages in Canada require health warnings. Individual warnings affected each participant differently, as an individual’s personal situation meant that some warnings were very relevant and quite jarring, yet other warnings were easy to disregard.

Jan: I would say a lot of them pertain towards children. Smoking if you're pregnant or second-hand smoke to kids. I disregard those ones a little bit because I don't plan on having kids and I don't spend time around any kids. The ones I don't like would probably be the ones that have graphic pictures of organs that are diseased. It's pretty strong of a reminder that you pretty much just can't get away from.
Kyle: I don't know. Some of the ads aren't bad, and then the other ones are pretty unpleasant to look at. Like the one woman, they show every aspect of her face and how it changed because of smoking, and how her lungs changed, and her fingers. That's pretty gross to look at.

The really unpleasant ones I don't enjoy seeing. Some of the other ones, the guy in a wheelchair isn't bad, or the guy with the hole in his throat isn't bad, either. I think the more visual ones are unpleasant to look at.

One interview participant, Veronica, felt so strongly about specific health warnings that she would take steps to avoid or deface packages she found uncomfortable (although she would still buy tobacco with said warnings). Veronica had spent some time living and working in Australia, and there was a warning label that included a picture of a man named Bryan, an American that died of lung cancer. Most of the pack is covered by a picture of Bryan, when he was hours away from death at the age of 34, and in a small corner, there is a headshot of Bryan from 10 weeks prior, appearing completely healthy. Bryan’s mother said that his dying wish was that his story could help one person. Veronica avoided Bryan, and suggested that other Australians did too.

Veronica: Oh yeah. They're worse. They're some real bad ones. There was one actually with Bryan. It says, "This is Bryan." It has a before and after, and it shows him completely dead. It turned out that Bryan's family had sued the cigarette company because Bryan died of AIDS or something. There are some really brutal cigarette packages.

Researcher: Would you ever try to avoid those at all?

Veronica: I avoided Bryan. […] I'd say, "Not Bryan."

Researcher: Did a lot of people in Australia avoid Bryan?

Veronica: Yes. Oh yes. A lot of people avoided Bryan. Someone first told me about that pack before I went to the shop and then I got it. I was like, "Oh. This is what you were talking about." It's really, really disturbing, and in Australia, I wouldn’t buy a pack of cigarettes, I would buy tobacco. On the tobacco, you'd get a package like that and you would have a large picture. Really large. The cigarettes I smoke now are really slim and so the picture is kind of small. It's easier to kind of avoid it. Whereas, if you have your rolling tobacco and you see Bryan and you just….ah…he gets you.

The fact that Bryan was so disturbing also may have supported a widespread rumour that Bryan had died from AIDS, not a tobacco related illness, and his family had sued a tobacco company for using his image (see the Bryan warning in Appendix C). And Veronica wasn’t the
only person in Australia who did not like Bryan. An Australian quit line reported a substantial increase in calls after Bryan was introduced to tobacco packaging (Wells, 2012). Veronica also likes to use a sharpie to deface other warnings that she finds disturbing.

**Veronica:** The ones here. Yeah, there are some disturbing ones. I find that I'll notice them and there's the tongue ones. That one gets me really gaggy.

To be honest, I've sharpied over it just to not see that when I'm smoking cigarettes. Or I'll rip it off or do something. It's pretty real and terrifying. It's doing its job for scaring you against smoking.

Shay found all tobacco health warnings to be jarring when they were initially introduced, but their effect wore off over time, excluding one warning that particularly bothered her.

**Shay:** I really don't like the teeth one because I've got a weird teeth thing. There are certain ones that bother me less, like the ones about smoking while pregnant, or "Don't smoke around my kids." I'm like "Whatever." The eyeball one I'm weirdly fascinated with. It reminds me of a Salvador Dali film where they slice open an eyeball. It's like one of those things that you get used to. When they first switch from one thing to the other, it was jarring. Then you got used to it and now you don't notice anymore. When they got bigger, it was momentarily jarring, and then you don't notice anymore.

Being a relatively more experienced smoker, Shay also made another observation worth noting. She believes that as warnings have become larger and more graphic, cigarette packaging has become much nicer.

**Shay:** When I first started smoking, they were about to move to the visual ads. When I first started smoking, it was still black block text on white background warnings. In terms of the rest of the packaging, cigarette packaging has probably gotten nicer.

Probably to combat the messages. It might be that the '90s and the early 2000s sucked aesthetically. I don't know. But, cigarette packages have improved. They use silver a lot more often now.

There is also a second aspect to the health warnings, which is a small card with pro-quitting messages which are included in every pack of cigarettes. In the one case they were discussed, they seemed easier to disregard than the visual warnings on the packages.

**Researcher:** What about those little cards that come in the smokes, the little yellow and white cards? What do you do with those?

**Kyle:** Throw them out, typically. Sometimes we'll have a bunch on the table, call them Belmont trading cards. Have a bunch of little advertisements, it's pretty jokes.
The one says, "Never quit trying to quit," and my buddy will just rip off the quit so it says, "Never trying to quit." He'll think it's pretty jokes.

4.12 Littering

Although not a tobacco regulation specifically, littering, and the littering of cigarette butts came up as a theme among several interview participants. Littering is illegal in the province of Ontario, yet cigarette butts are easy to find all over the ground, so this regulation has warranted consideration within this thesis. Several of the interview participants mentioned the creation of litter as a part of smoking, particularly when they are in an outdoor space and ashtrays are not available.

**Researcher:** Do you have ashtrays or anything [outside of the bar]?

**Steve:** We do at the Turkey’s Nest, not really at Lichtenstein’s. Really should.

**Researcher:** I'm not here to judge, or anything.

**Steve:** No. Hell, I'm judging myself here. But nonetheless, when it's a bar scene, late at night, the place is a disaster afterwards usually.

Michael actually reported that he frequently used designated smoking areas, but found them unappealing because there were cigarette butts all over the ground. In fact, it was the only thing he didn’t like about designated smoking areas.

**Michael:** The designated smoking area's not exactly pleasant.

**Researcher:** It's not pleasant?

**Michael:** There's cigarette butts all over the ground.

Michael also pointed out that this was less of an issue when there were still ashtrays on the University campus - the removal of ashtrays was something that several participants mentioned. Michael typically used the ashtray for his cigarette butts, but their removal meant he had to put them on the ground or find a garbage if convenient. Some participants tried a little harder to find a garbage or ashtray because they hated littering.

**Shay:** There's a garbage can. I'll put my butt in there, but there's no ashtray. I can't think of one on campus. I always try to find a garbage because I hate littering.

For Bo, the only time he had ever been in a confrontation about smoking was after his friend threw a cigarette butt on the ground.
Bo: I can think of one time we got harassed about smoking. We were walking across campus. I guess I kind of understand it. My one buddy was having a smoke. He put it out, like dropped it on the ground and stepped on it. This guy just was like, as he was walking by, because I guess he wasn't brave enough to say anything directly.

He just yelled something about littering and us being pieces of shit or something like that. We're like, "There's no garbage around here, and if I throw it in the garbage, it's lit. It's a cigarette. I don't want to burn the garbage down or anything." We just blew it off. I try and throw my butts in the garbage if I ever have them.

4.13 Enforcement

When it came to the enforcement of tobacco regulations, enforcement only ever took place on private property, by the owners and employees of said property. Several participants had seen someone being asked, or have been asked themselves to move while smoking on private property, however no participant had, or had even heard of, someone getting in trouble from law enforcement for smoking in a non-smoking area.

Researcher: Have you ever heard of anyone getting approached by the cops?

Tara: No, never heard of that. One time, when I was Starbucks, I just sat down at one of the tables outside, when I was with my friend. Then the Starbucks lady came by, she's like, "Sorry, you're not allowed to smoke here. You're going to have to walk a little bit further."

I know there were probably signs around, but I've smoked outside of Starbucks before, and I've never gotten in trouble. This is in back in Ottawa, so that was just the one time that I've ever been asked by a worker to move. It's the only time that I can remember.

Researcher: Have you been asked to move before?

Bo: Not for a "You're bothering me" kind of way. Mostly just like, "You're standing too close to the door. You're not allowed to smoke here." Whatever. That happened when I was at the airport once. I was standing somewhere, and they were like, "You can't smoke here. You got to go way over there." That was just what happened with that. I was like, "OK, sorry."

As a bar employee, Steve actually had to deal with smoking patrons after the ban on patio smoking took effect. It seems as though the bar never developed an official policy of what to do with those who broke the new law, as some security personnel wanted to kick the offending smoker out, where Steve thought asking them to stop was enough.
Steve: Yeah, some people are still attempting to smoke back there, but pretty much nobody. I saw somebody that used to work there, also somebody that I've known for years, I guess he was celebrating his birthday, went onto the patio, lit up a smoke. I was like, "Dude, just go out back. You know that you can't smoke here." He was like, "Fuck you, turkey man. It's my birthday." I was like, "I hate you." [laughs]

Steve: I remember that a lot of the security guys were really trying to be enforceful of it and wanted to kick people out when they were smoking. I was like, "You guys don't need to be dicks. You can be like, 'Sorry, man, there's a law. You can't smoke,'" instead of being like, "I'm going to kick you out of the bar. You're smoking." It's like, "Dude smoke, too. You smoked here yesterday." [laughs]

Actual punishment for smoking in an area where a research participant was not allowed to smoke only took place in private workplaces, and in residence at the University of Guelph. Bo was working in a call centre that was located inside of a mall, and smoking outside of the call centre’s designated smoking area could result in you being written up.

Bo: Yeah. There was like three different smoking places, I think, in the time that I was there. They were like...I remember, there was like this alcove. It didn't have a thing over top of it, so there was no legal reason why you couldn't smoke there. I guess it was close to a door. But the wind didn't hit there, because it had walls on both sides.

They used to yell at people for going over there. Got in trouble for that. It was pretty crazy.

Researcher: They used to actually yell at people?

Bo: Well, you get written up if you smoked under the canopies.

The commonality between these two situations seems to be that each respective business can face repercussions if they do not enforce smoking legislation. A bar or coffee shop can face significant fines if they fail to enforce tobacco policy, and the call centres location within a mall likely means that the malls management requires the tenant to abide by a certain set of rules - the call centre once had to move their smoking area because it was impeding parking lot traffic.

In the case of Kyle, smoking was banned in residence at the University of Guelph, however he and several others would smoke in their residence rooms anyways, usually hanging out of the window. They were caught once, and the residence staff issued Kyle a provisional fine for smoking, as well as tampering with the smoke alarm on his ceiling. Speaking about his time in residence:
Kyle: The screens were already taken out of [our windows], so it's easy to lean out and smoke.

Researcher: Did anyone ever catch you?

Kyle: Yes. Our RAs actually came to my room one time. One of the guys opened the door, and we had a towel underneath the door to block the scent from coming out. They walked in, they said, "Yeah. It smells like cigarettes." The smoke alarm was missing off the roof, so they knew pretty well what was happening. That was the only time though.

Researcher: They get you in any trouble for that?

Kyle: I had to go to a meeting and shit. Basically it was my only write-up of the entire year, so they were kind of like, "We'll give you a $50 conditional fine. If you screw up again this semester, you'll get fined. If not, then whatever." Their main concern was taking the smoke alarm off the roof.

Private enforcement was the only enforcement witnessed or experienced by any research participant. No participants had even heard of any sort of by-law or police enforcement for smoking in an area where smoking was not permitted.

Researcher: Have you ever seen anyone get a ticket or heard of anyone getting a ticket before?

Shay: Literally never.

And this isn’t just something that was noticed by research participants - the city of Toronto implemented a by-law that banned smoking within nine meters of the entrance or exit of any building used by the public, but one year later, in spite of 212 public complaints, no tickets were ever issued (Johnson, 2015). However, Shay had heard of enforcement actions taking place against people for giving cigarettes to minors, and against establishments which let people smoke.

Shay: I've heard of people getting tickets for giving cigarettes to minors, but I've never heard of someone getting a ticket for smoking. I've heard of establishments getting tickets for letting people smoke, but never an individual person getting a ticket.

Meanwhile, on campus at the University of Guelph, there is a policy which requires smokers to move nine meters away from any doorway. However, there is a significant issue with smokers congregating directly in a corner, next to the main entrance to the library - this location was mentioned by multiple research participants. In spite of countless policy violations taking place in this area, the only response from the university was to put up a bigger no smoking sign.
**Tara:** When it's cold out, to get away from the really cold wind, that's why the smokers all go on the other side of the library doors, where they just put up the giant sign that said, "no smoking," which didn't stop anybody.

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**Wendy:** The library's probably the best spot. This is an example, but there's a big non-smoking sign, and everyone smokes. I've definitely done it. Part of it is no one does anything about it. No one cares. Especially in the winter, you don't want to. I've done this before when I was here, walk all the way over to the smoking area.

It is interesting to note that Wendy believes a lack of enforcement or confrontation when smoking beside the library also means that no one cares. And further, the University putting up a big no smoking sign wasn’t considered to be evidence that someone cares. When one research participant was confronted about smoking while being in this space, it was focused on the health repercussions of smoking, not the act of smoking by the library.

**Tara:** I was smoking outside of the library one time. I was just finishing my smoke. This girl came up to me. She's like, "Smoking gives you cancer." I threw the cigarette butt down and was like, "Oh, my God, what? I had no idea. Why don't they tell me these things?" She shook her head and walked away. I was like, "Yeah, trust me, we know."

**Researcher:** Where was that, by the library?

**Tara:** Again, the little smoker's area...I was the only one there at that time. She just came up to me. She told me off for being a smoker. Not for smoking close to the doors, but smoking.

However, adding a larger sign was enough to discourage Shay from smoking by the library doors. Conveniently, she also finds an actual designated smoking area beside the library fairly inviting. But Shay did propose that some smokers may see the large no smoking sign as a challenge.

**Shay:** I'll usually sit on the bench. It's fairly inviting. Maybe not inviting enough because they still get people who go around the corner to smoke right underneath the sign that says, "Please don't smoke here." Obviously, probably no one should be making smoking places more inviting, unless there's tobacco lobbyists. But, it's a fairly nice place to have a cigarette.

**Researcher:** Do you ever smoke in the location around the corner? We can almost see it from here.

**Shay:** No. Never. There's a sign right there. That's the one place on campus I would be self-conscious about having a cigarette. People are going up and down that ramp all day. You're standing right there. The sign says don't do it. I even feel bad when
I'm walking up the stairs and I'm finishing a cigarette before I walk in the McKinnon. Because they've done a good job of advertising that they don't want people to smoke there. Maybe some people take it as a challenge.

4.14 Other Deterrents to Tobacco Consumption

With the goals of Canadian tobacco regulation being to help people quit smoking, stop them from starting, and protect others from second hand smoke, it is important to consider how other, non-regulatory, factors could contribute to achieving the same outcome. Initially, most research participants were quite adamant that every time they have a cigarette, it is quite enjoyable.

**Jack:** I don't know if I could say [laughs] there's a least-favorite cigarette. Yeah, I don't think there's any time or place to smoke one that is unenjoyable. Any more so than any other time.

This problem is exemplified by the fact that smoking can be enjoyable with, or without, other smokers. Most participants enjoyed smoking by themselves, and further, they enjoyed smoking with others too. Interestingly enough, it was fairly common for a participant to indicate that they preferred to smoke alone.

**Jan:** I'm half and half. Like I said, I really like my alone time. I wouldn't want just one or the other, if that makes sense. I guess I enjoy [smoking] more alone, because I am happier when I'm alone.

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**Wendy:** Smoking for me is not necessarily a social thing. If there's other people around, and they're smoking, then I'll smoke with them. It's more of a necessity. I get really uptight and freak out if I go without a cigarette for too long.

However, in Ron’s experience, it was possible for smoking with multiple people to create an unenjoyable, even nauseating situation. Lots of people smoking in a small space means a lot of smoke in the air.

**Researcher:** Are there times when you actually find smoking a little less enjoyable?

**Ron:** Yeah. If it's a bunch of people in a relatively small enclosed space then it’s just four or five different types [of cigarettes] going up at a time. This past week, I stayed at my friends, they've got three different people there who all smoke different stuff. I come in with the fourth kind and we all go out for a smoke break on a patio no bigger than this booth. It was like on a roof and all that. It would get overwhelming. You're trying to breathe in and it'd be, what's the word I'm looking
for, a mixture of different stuff. Sometimes you want to throw up because it's just too much.

Being outside was a catalyst for smoking for many participants. In the case of Steve, on days when he spends more time outside, he smokes more often - if he doesn’t have a reason to go outside, he’ll smoke less.

**Steve:** I smoke significantly less if I don't leave the house. It goes from almost a pack a day to about three cigarettes a day. It significantly drops. Even then it's still because I'm outside and I just figure, why not? I have a dog, so, whenever I have to take him outside, I'm just like, "I guess."

The most common reason for a participant to reduce their cigarette consumption was that it became too uncomfortable to be outside during bad weather. Inclement weather and Canadian winters make smoking so unpleasant that some participants almost entirely quit because they didn’t have a sheltered area to smoke in during the winter months.

**Researcher:** So the wind can kind of make or break smoking?

**Bo:** Yeah. Same with the cold actually. It sucks to smoke in the winter. In fact, it sucks so much that it makes you realize I don't even want to smoke. It's way too cold. I don't want to stand out there with those losers shivering my ass off smoking a cigarette, just because I need that nicotine fix. The cold weather in Canada actually for me personally makes me want to not smoke that much at all.

**Researcher:** Weather is a factor as well?

**Jan:** It's pretty hard to smoke outside when it's pouring rain or if it's really windy. I'd say that's a factor. If it's pouring rain or it's too windy, I'll probably abstain for the most part.

**Shay:** The weather has a huge impact on whether I'm going to smoke or not because I don't smoke in my own house. So, if I'm going to smoke at home, I have to go outside. If it's really cold, it's not worth it. If it's really nice out, I'll sit there on the balcony and smoke quite a bit because it's nice to be out there.

**Veronica:** Yes. I quit for a long time in Montreal because it was just so damn cold.

Bo also indicated that he anticipates smoking more this winter, compared to last winter, because he can smoke in the garage of his new house. The impact of weather is even strong enough that participants would refrain from smoking while drinking, which is typically a time when
tobacco consumption increases. In the case of Ron, smoking while drinking at a bar in the winter was a hassle because not only was it cold, it also meant that he had to deal with the inconvenience of going to (and paying for) the bar's coat check multiple times to get and return his jacket.

**Ron:** I'm a little more reluctant to go outside, because it is freezing cold. When I go out I'll put on a coat and go out. If it's not like negative 30, I'll go out like normal just with a coat and pants on, not a lot. If it was way, way, way too cold, then I'd try to avoid it if possible.

**Researcher:** What about if you're at a bar?

**Ron:** I'd try to go outside. I'd usually wait till if we were leaving or something, and a lot of people do. It's that way because usually you're going to check your coat in. If you uncheck your coat and you've got to pay again to have it checked back in. A lot of people will just wait until they absolutely need one, or they're going out to a different place, or going home, or what have you.

Even when weather doesn’t entirely deter an individual from smoking, it may impact the amount of time someone spends smoking, or their ability to be comfortable and socialize.

**Researcher:** Did you find the weather tended to affect people’s smoking?

**Ron:** Typically, yeah. Some people would only go out, have a real quick smoke and then come back in, like if it was raining. If it was damp everyone would kind of stand around, they wouldn't sit down. Other than that, people would still go out, but they wouldn't go out as long, I guess.

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**Researcher:** You mentioned how in the evening, you're watching TV and you're smoking every hour, on the hour. Would that change at all in the winter?

**Wendy:** It didn't really when I was living where I was because we smoked outside. Quickly have a smoke, go back in thing. I've learned how to smoke really fast. I can make it last, but I can also inhale it pretty quickly if it's in a situation like it's pouring rain or a snowstorm or stuff like that.

Even when weather alone wasn’t a deterrent to smoking, it could compound with other inconveniences to make a research participant not smoke. Earlier, Ron said he didn’t want to smoke while out at a bar because the weather, plus the coat check, was too much to deal with. Bo had a similar experience, resulting from his residence room being far from the buildings exit.

**Bo:** Not only was it a long ass walk to get to the door, but then you had stand out there in the freezing cold and walk all the way back, right?

**Researcher:** A long ass walk to the door in residence?
Bo: Yeah. Because we were in the furthest one, so we had to walk all the way across and then out. It was almost more trouble than it was worth sometimes.

For Kyle, the winter pushed him and his friends to smoke indoors, which was an issue as he lived in the University’s residence, where smoking was not permitted. He believed that there was a big increase of smoking indoors in residence during the winter.

Researcher: Was it any different in the winter?

Kyle: No, not really. Honestly, I think a lot more people smoked in their rooms in the winter, but it was probable that you still saw a bunch of people outside.

Several other participants also indicated that bad weather created situations where they would ignore regulations, or smoke in a manner or location where smoking would bother others.

Tara: While it's warm out, I always go to the picnic tables, the actual designated smoking area. When it's cold out, to get away from the really cold wind, that's why the smokers all go on the other side of the library doors, where they just put up the giant sign that said, "no smoking," which didn't stop anybody.

Tara also admitted that she found it very tempting to smoke in sheltered areas when it was raining, and suggested that the solution to her not smoking in a problematic area was the creation of smoking areas that had overhangs.

Tara: Honestly, I think when it comes to designated smoking areas in most places, even if they were a little bit further away from the doors, they have a little thing over it. That would be so much more attractive for smokers, so much more. Then if it's raining, you're not going to get soaked.

Moving away from weather, another theme that was connected to reduced amounts of smoking was situations where going to smoke would have placed the participant in an environment they didn’t enjoy.

Shay: When I was flying through Paris, Charles De Gaulle Airport has these coffin-sized smoking rooms. Even though, I got off an eight-hour flight. It was like 50 old French men in a room that could comfortably fit maybe 20, shoulder-to-shoulder smoking. I was like, "Not worth it." Otherwise, I can't imagine myself in a situation where I wouldn't have the option of going somewhere else.

Having fun with non-smokers was also a factor that reduced participant smoking. Although smoking is often an entertaining break for smokers, when a participant was in a situation where they were the only smoker, they found that they smoked far less so they could stay with their friends.
Researcher: Do many of the friends you go out with smoke?

Michael: None of them.

Researcher: Do you smoke when you go out with your friends?

Michael: I do. I definitely don't smoke as often as I would otherwise.

Researcher: You smoke less when you're out with them? What's it like when you decide you want to go for a smoke?

Michael: I don't know. Just normal going out for a smoke. I occasionally get the, "Oh, why?"

Researcher: Do your friends sometimes give you shit for smoking or anything like that?

Michael: Yeah. Once a month, probably. It's annoying. They just nag at me to quit.
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Discussion

The findings of this thesis suggest that cigarette smokers are affected by tobacco regulations in ways that impact their day-to-day smoking experience. Several key themes emerged regarding exactly how smokers are affected. The first theme is that there is no universal experience for how smokers are affected by regulations. Although research participants were all engaging in tobacco consumption, the degree to which a regulation affected a given participant varied significantly. When participants did indicate that a regulation or regulations reduced their tobacco consumption, the overarching effect of the regulation was that it contributed to making smoking inconvenient, less enjoyable, or some combination of the two. Smokers did feel that regulations were occasionally unintentionally supportive of their smoking behaviour, as designated spaces seemed to empower the research participants, however, this effect appeared to be overpowered by the negative experience of being forced to smoke in a specific location.

6.1.1 No Universal Experience

Across the entire study, it became clear that smoking is not experienced in the same way for any two individuals - all of the participants had different relationships with tobacco and tobacco regulations. Some participants started smoking when they were young, others when they were much older. Introduction to tobacco sometimes occurred via friends and stolen cigarettes, sometimes via flavoured cigarillos, and even once by making a conscious decision to go out and buy a pack of cigarettes. When and where participants smoked also varied, with some working through a pack of cigarettes a day, smoking every hour on the hour, and others only smoking the occasional cigarette.

The fact is, smokers are people who smoke tobacco, and their actions while smoking are likely a reflection of who they are as an individual, not smokers in general. This finding is consistent with existing research on consumer identity and tobacco consumption, where it was found that although that tobacco consumption is used to support group identity, it is also very important for differentiating an individual’s identity (Moran & Sussman, 2014; Sheffels, 2008; Tajfel, 1974). Although it’s tempting to consider smoking as an all-encompassing term for a behaviour, the way in which an individual engages in smoking tobacco provides them an
opportunity to put their identity on display, perhaps making smoking a much more individual behaviour than an outsider would initially believe.

The lack of a universal smoking experience is an important part of how tobacco regulations affect smokers because a particular regulation may affect one individual while having no effect on another. This occurred across every regulation discussed in this thesis, but the most prominent example is individual reactions to the warnings on cigarette packages. Participants who spoke about the warnings found that some really bothered them, while others were easy to disregard, but which warning was which depended on that participants personal situation. Alternatively, some research participants worked quite hard to obey tobacco regulations and be considerate, while others didn’t care.

6.1.2 Inconvenience

The first broad effect of smoking regulations was creating inconvenience. Inconvenience occurs when the time and effort necessary to engage in a particular behaviour is increased, which can also be perceived as increasing the non-monetary cost of product consumption (Berry, Seiders, & Grewal, 2002). Regulations made buying cigarettes, finding a brand of cigarettes, and going to smoke (in a variety of situations) require far more time and effort than in an unregulated environment. This non-monetary cost was frequently connected with situations where a participant would decide not to smoke. Previous research suggests that a smoker may require a greater outcome to coincide with their increased effort, so increased inconvenience without an increased benefit may result in an individual deciding that their next cigarette is not worthwhile (Oliver & Swan, 1989; Seiders, Voss, Grewal, & Godfrey, 2005).

This inconvenience was created through indoor smoking bans, the recent ban on restaurant patio smoking, forcing smokers into designated smoking areas, the ban on the display of tobacco in stores, and age restrictions for the purchase of tobacco. These regulations made smoking much more complicated than just lighting a cigarette, and dealing with this inconvenience regularly had an effect on a participant’s smoking behaviour.

The effect of inconvenience is most obvious when considering the fact that almost every participant indicated they started smoking a lot more when they gained regular access to cigarettes. When participants had to have friends buy them cigarettes, or had to get cigarettes from strangers, processes which required a great deal of time and effort, they would only smoke occasionally.
When a participant became legal to purchase cigarettes themselves, or found another means to get unimpeded access to tobacco, they started smoking a lot more.

The threshold of when a cigarette was too inconvenient also varied substantially. Some participants would smoke far less on days when they didn’t have to walk to class, because they wouldn’t leave the house just to smoke a cigarette, and they didn’t want to smoke indoors. Others were willing to go as far as breaking laws and regulations (e.g. smoking indoors in a university residence) in order to conveniently smoke.

There were situations where smokers appeared to unintentionally benefit from smoking being inconvenient, but their ability to smoke was still reduced. Being forced to leave a workplace and smoke outdoors may provide a smoker with a break and the ability to socialize with their co-workers, but it also means that they need to make time available to go smoke, and they cannot just start smoking while working. Looking to the domain of service research, convenient and inconvenient factors have been shown to cancel each other out during a consumer’s evaluation of a given service, so the inconvenience of having to go outside could substantially harm the total convenience of a cigarette break (Berry et al., 2002).

6.1.3 Reduced Enjoyment

The second broad effect of tobacco regulations was reducing the enjoyment of tobacco consumption. When a regulation affected a research participant through reduced enjoyment, the participant would enjoy smoking less, and the anticipation of an unenjoyable cigarette could make a participant avoid smoking all together. However, it is important to note that reduced enjoyment was not the same as feeling guilty, which is an important distinction as the activation of guilt can actually increase the pleasure of hedonic consumption due to a cognitive association between guilt and pleasure (Goldsmith, Cho, & Dhar, 2012).

Bans on flavoured tobacco, as well as indoor/patio smoking bans, particularly during bad weather, were the most common regulations to reduce the enjoyment of smoking. Several participants reminisced about previous nights spent on patios, when they would openly smoke and drink, while acknowledging that smoking at a bar is no longer the same exciting experience. Once indoors, many participants did not want to go outside, because they now had to choose between smoking or spending time with their friends, and being unable to socialize and have fun with their friends made a cigarette seem less enjoyable. Further, having to go outside also had indirect
consequences, in that the research participant would be stuck outside in unpleasant weather, a factor which made many participants decide that going to smoke wasn’t worthwhile. Smoking environments could also be made unenjoyable for other reasons, for example, one participant literally declared smoking in an airport smoking room was “not worth it” due to the fact the room was small and overcrowded with other travelers.

Health warnings also played a role in the enjoyment of cigarettes, as most participants indicated that there were particular warnings that brought on feelings of disgust. Specific warnings were described as gross, unpleasant, and made one participating feel like vomiting. Alternatively, the cards included in cigarette packages that use positive messages and tips for quitting smoking were rarely mentioned. On the occasion that they did come up, they were easily disregarded, with one participant calling these cards “Belmont trading cards”.

The increased enjoyment of flavoured tobacco products was also linked to three participants starting to smoke, and one continuing to smoke. Two participants had quit smoking, then started smoking flavoured cigarillos before returning to cigarettes, another started smoking with flavoured cigarillos as a teenager, and another can only smoke menthols as regular cigarettes are too harsh. It is possible that if these more enjoyable tobacco products did not exist, these participants would not be current smokers.

Other research in the context of food suggests that making smoking less enjoyable also has the potential to guide current smokers to engage in more healthful activities, as reducing the enjoyment associated with consuming unhealthy food has been shown to increase the consumption of healthy food (Belei, Geyskens, Goukens, Ramanathan, & Lemmink, 2012; Raghunathan, Naylor, & Hoyer, 2006).

6.1.4 Do Regulations Unintentionally Support Tobacco Consumption?

Although the initial results of this thesis clearly show that smokers are affected by anti-smoking regulations, the question remains - do smokers feel as though tobacco regulations are at times unintentionally supportive of their tobacco consumption? Where most regulations were clearly not supportive, when it came to regulations that resulted in the creation of designated smoking areas, participants had both positive and negative experiences, similar to the potential positive and negative implications of identity and tobacco consumption.
When a participant was in an area that included an ashtray, or was specifically labeled as a designated smoking area, they felt like smoking was an appropriate action within that space. There was an inherent sense of permission to smoke, as it was an area for smokers, and that permission was validated by the fact someone had invested the time and effort to place an ashtray or signage [it’s worth noting that no smoking signs did not garner an equally passionate response]. The idea of a smoker being confronted about smoking in a smoking area was met by frustration, sarcasm, and even aggression. Participants believed it would be inappropriate for anyone to be bothered, frustrated, or judgemental about smoking in a space with an ashtray or a designated smoking area. Although this effect was very specific to certain contexts, it was seen across almost every research participant.

There was also the additional benefit of socialization, as participants felt a sense of affiliation with other smokers, and felt comfortable talking to anyone who had decided to visit a smoking area. However, this effect may be more related to the act of smoking than the smoking area, as previous research had found that the act of smoking created a sense of affiliation between smokers (Hamilton & Hassan, 2010). For one participant, smoking regulations unintentionally supported his sense of affiliation in a different way. Being unable to window shop for cigarettes, he turned to an online pro-smoking community to advise him on which cigarette brands to purchase. Although Ron was an outlier in this regard, his actions are reminiscent of the tobacco industry bouncing back even stronger after tobacco products were banned from television advertising and event sponsorship.

The limitation to the idea that designated smoking areas can empower smoking behaviour is twofold. Although a sense of empowerment occurred, most participants indicated that they did not smoke in these spaces, and enforcement of space related smoking legislation was practically non-existent, provided an individual was not on private property. Going to a designated location to smoke was regarded as inconvenient as there were other open areas which seemed appropriate for smoking, or poor weather made huddling by a doorway a preferred option (even if it was explicitly not permitted to smoke in that space). Smokers even found that large ashtrays within designated smoking areas were very unappealing, and felt the same way about smoking areas that became littered with cigarette butts.
In situations where participants were forced to use a designated smoking area, because a private property owner actively forced them to, participants were simultaneously empowered to smoke, while also feeling ashamed or frustrated that someone had the right to move them around on a whim. Heavily demarcated smoking areas, particularly one with a thick yellow line around its perimeter, were met with aggressive sarcasm, and even the suggestion of smoking outside of the smoking area out of spite. Visually defying the rules may align with the rebellious nature of tobacco consumption.

So when it comes to the idea of smoking regulations having an unintended positive impact on tobacco users, the results are still mixed. However, the fact that participants were only using such spaces when they were explicitly forced to may shift the overall impact to negative, as being forced to go to a particular space, one that a participant found unappealing, seemed to overshadow any sense of empowerment gained from being in a designated smoking area. This may have eliminated any opportunity for smokers to experience positive outcomes from tobacco regulations such as the ability to “reformulate their spoiled identities” (Tan, 2013, p. 173).

5.2 General Conclusion

Cigarette smokers perceive that current tobacco control regulations impact or reduce their tobacco consumption by increasing the inconvenience, or reducing the enjoyment of cigarette smoking. These factors can act together to create a situation where a smoker may find that their next cigarette is not worthwhile. Cigarette smokers do feel that some regulations may have unintended effects that are supportive of their tobacco consumption, but these unintended effects appear to be overshadowed by the intended anti-smoking effects of the same regulations.

These results are particularly interesting because causing inconvenience or reducing enjoyment are not the stated intention of tobacco regulations, which generally intend to work by denormalizing tobacco consumption, framing tobacco as a hazardous product, or portraying the tobacco industry as deceitful (Ashley & Cohen, 2003; Chapman & Freeman, 2008; Hammond et al., 2006; Thetru.com, n.d.). Yet inconvenience and reduced enjoyment have potential to accomplish the outcomes desired by Canadian regulators; those being helping smokers quit, limiting the risk of second hand smoke, and stopping youth from starting to smoke (Government of Ontario, 2016; Health Canada, 2012).
Further, a single regulation may not create enough inconvenience or reduced enjoyment to change a smoker's mind, but a web of regulations using multiple strategies will. This is similar in nature to existing research that found comprehensive anti-tobacco programs can work synergistically to influence tobacco consumption (Shiu, Hassan, & Walsh, 2009; Wakefield & Chaloupka, 2000). However, the results of this thesis go one step further, understanding that higher-level constructs such as inconvenience and reduced enjoyment are the result of this synergy. In order to continue the reduction of smoking rates, tobacco regulators need to create a web of regulations that apply across various situations so every current or potential smoker finds their moment (or moments) where smoking cigarettes is just too inconvenient or unenjoyable.

5.3 Policy Implications

Health Canada and Cancer Care Ontario are seeking out new evidence-based approaches to continue the reduction of tobacco use. This thesis provides ample evidence that a smoker's decision to smoke cigarettes can be impacted by reducing the convenience of smoking or the enjoyment obtained by smoking a cigarette.

This research immediately suggests that widespread bans related to flavoured tobacco products, including menthol, should proceed as soon as possible. Flavoured tobacco products were important steps towards smoking for multiple participants in this study, and these individuals may not be smokers today had flavoured tobacco been banned earlier. It is also suggested that designated smoking areas should no longer be permitted to include shelters, as weather appeared to be an important factor for reducing the enjoyment of smoking. However, such a move would need to be met with increased enforcement, as smokers may seek shelter in doorways or other areas where smoking is not permitted.

Considering inconvenience, businesses, hospitals, and universities that wish to make a contribution to anti-smoking efforts should ban tobacco use from their grounds. The effort required to go smoke could substantially impede a smoker's interest.

Looking to the future, inconvenience and reduced enjoyment could also be implemented through the packaging and sales of cigarettes. Although warnings appear to be causing some level of reduced enjoyment, making cigarette packages easily crushable could greatly affect the convenience of smoking, and the enjoyment of cigarettes, however it is important to note that
disruptive packaging changes could also have other unexpected implications (e.g. Bagga, Noseworthy, & Dawar, 2016; Sundar & Noseworthy, 2015). Looking to the sales channel, forcing cigarettes to be purchased through a specific medium could also affect the individuals perceptions of the product itself (e.g. Galoni & Noseworthy, 2015).

Finally, the idea that it takes multiple regulations to actually impact a smokers inconvenience or enjoyment is also important, because it means that the solution to Canada’s stalled smoking rates does not lie in a single new regulation. Thus, when debating any potential new smoking regulation, said regulation should not be considered and evaluated in isolation from the broader regulatory environment. Instead, new regulations need to be considered in a highly contextual environment, that can account for the way other regulations and cultural factors play into a consumers experience with tobacco consumption.

5.4 Future Research

Existing research has already shown that short-term rewards can increase long-term goal persistence (Woolley & Fishbach, 2016). Building on that concept, reduced enjoyment and increased inconvenience are both short-term influencers on an individual’s smoking behaviour. It would be worth investigating if not engaging in an activity like smoking when it’s unenjoyable and inconvenient could be perceived as a reward, as you get to continue enjoying your current experience. This could again show another avenue for long term tobacco reduction, as well as changing behaviour in other fields.

This thesis could also be used as a catalyst to change the current approach for studying tobacco regulations, such that regulations are only studied within the context of the existing regulatory environment. Studying regulations in this way would provide a more realistic assessment of the impact of any individual regulation, as the impact of a regulation may differ when it is considered as part of a broader regulatory strategy than when it is being evaluated independently.
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Appendices

Appendix A: Interview Guide

1. Introductory Questions
   a. Introduce self
   b. Warm up questions: Have you been (interview location) before? Ever done any studies with us before?
   c. Informed consent (Recording starts here)
   d. So did you grow up in Guelph? (background), So are you working in town then? (occupation). And you’re also a student?

2. “Grand Tour” Questions:
   a. So I want you to think about a typical work day for you, walk me through what you did yesterday (follow up questions as necessary, consider the topics below as suggestions for follow up)
      i. Morning – first cigarette (is that typical?)
      ii. Amount of smoking – usual? (days you smoke more)
      iii. Did you have a favorite cigarette? (what is your favorite cigarette)
      iv. Least favorite? (what is your least favorite)
      v. Are there times of day you smoke more? (tell me about that)
      vi. Do you smoke with others?
      vii. Is that where you always smoke?
      viii. Are there ashtrays, distance from door?
      ix. How do you feel about non-smokers joining you? Are they part of the group?
      x. Do others care if you smoke - family, roommates?
      xi. Smoking power walls and patios.
      xii. Walking and smoking.
      xiii. Do non-school days make a difference in your smoking?
      xiv. Avoided smoking because of….
      xv. Ask more about smoke breaks at work – where, with whom, how often.
      xvi. Ask more about patio restrictions mattering at bar.
      xvii. Winter/summer.
      xviii. Getting smokes.
   b. When did you start smoking - do you remember your first cigarette? (where, when, who etc. Did your friends smoke, did someone buy smokes for you?)
      i. Prompt on brand (brand changed – probe loyalty – friends smoke the same? – have you changed brands lately – would you consider changing brands?)
      ii. Do many of your friends or family smoke?
   c. Do you go to bars very often? Tell me about a typical night out
      i. Who are you with? (Do they smoke?)
      ii. Is your smoking different when you go out?
iii. While out, do you meet people smoking
iv. Do friends join you while smoking?

3. Photoelicitation
   i. I’m going to show you pictures of several spaces, what I want you do is pick the one that feels the most familiar to you (show pictures of several designated smoking areas, including: outside of office, factory, campus, bar, and mall – setting will be clearly visible from picture)
   ii. Tell me about this picture (starting with indirect line of questioning - prompts: who would you expect to see here, when, who wouldn’t be here, how often people visit this space, etc.) End with the more direct question of why did you choose this picture?
   iii. May also ask about areas that do not feel relevant after.

4. Direct interview questions (if they didn’t come up earlier) PACKAGING
   a. Can you tell me about a time when someone confronted you about smoking?
   b. Do you ever feel like others are often looking at you while you’re smoking? (Probe, where/when more or less judgement) – Specifically interested in bars, work, on campus, other smoking areas, family, parents
   c. If we were to compare when you smoke (here) vs (here) would you say they’re different experiences? (use different times of day, or different locations mentioned earlier in interview)
   d. Do you ever have to smoke in places you don’t want to be?
   e. Is there anything else you think I should have asked, or you’d like to talk about?

5. Tobacco Use Profile
   a. When was the last time you smoked?
   b. How often do you smoke?
   c. Are you a daily smoker?
      i. How many cigarettes do you typically smoke in a day?
   d. Quitting profile:
      i. Are you thinking of quitting within the next 6 months? (30 days?)
      ii. Have you tried quitting in the last year? (How many times have you quit for at least 24 hours)

6. Other
   a. What year were you born?
   b. How do you define your gender?

7. Thank for participation
Appendix B: Photo Elicitation Examples
Appendix C: Australian Tobacco Warning - Bryan