



**Your on the
Street Reporter**



Uyless Black

Organic Carbon Monoxide

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[Writer's note to readers: This piece has been placed in the food section of this book because I did not know where else to put it. As with food, the subject is partially about oral satisfaction. The foods described thus far do more harm than good, as they are tainted. It's the same with cigarettes.]

Because this section of the book is about smoking, let's start by dedicating it to former President Bill Clinton, who by his own account knew what he was smoking. But knowing he was destined for fame, he refrained from inhaling.

Further fodder for his dedication and determination is his definition of sex, as in, "I did not have sex with that woman." I think the whole matter could have been cleared-up if the investigators had asked Bill, "OK, but did she have sex with you?"

I've read Monica's feelings were hurt when she learned the President would not admit to her Oval Office Oral Orifice Outing on the President himself, known in my writings as OOOOO! I suspect Monica knew this romance would enter into a Dr. Phil scenario, and she would be rejected. Here's Bill's take on the matter, "Hey, this has to end. The *First Lady* is going to be occupying the Oval Office in a few years, and I'm tagging along. The three of us here...well, you know...it would create an awkward relationship."

Thus, aware of her fate, Monica stored her happy-times dress as a monument to their non-sexual encounters. This strategy insured she would go down (so to speak) in the history books. And I understand the folks at Madame Trousseau's wax museum are considering a Bill and Monica display, but are yet undecided on the poses and positions for the two wax figures.

Bending Words

We Americans have an amazing talent for adding spark to the King's English: *I did not have sex* and *I did not inhale* are good examples. *The New York Times* columnists often feign shock about this state of affairs, but my take is that Americans make the English language more interesting. We make it more fun to talk and write.

Sometimes it is difficult to tell the difference between parody and outright lying. For example, advertising is often written with subtle mistruths. But many ads are strokes of genius, gems of persuasion. I fall for a lot of them. I can easily take-in an advertisement with, "Why don't we have a dozen of those Jell-O knives in our kitchen drawer?" Or, "Like a Rock! Give me another Chevy.

Advertising is propaganda, pure and simple. That's fine by me, because I view the word propaganda in a neutral light to mean *campaigns of persuasion*. These campaigns may be harmful or beneficial to those who are targeted. But one thing is certain: The goal of an advertisement is to sell. If you think an ad from Coke that sings about the world living, "...in perfect harmony" is about friendship and peace, you've been watching too much Oprah. The song means Coke would like to see a world in perfect harmony on the issue of not drinking Pepsi.

Do You Really Know What You're Smoking?

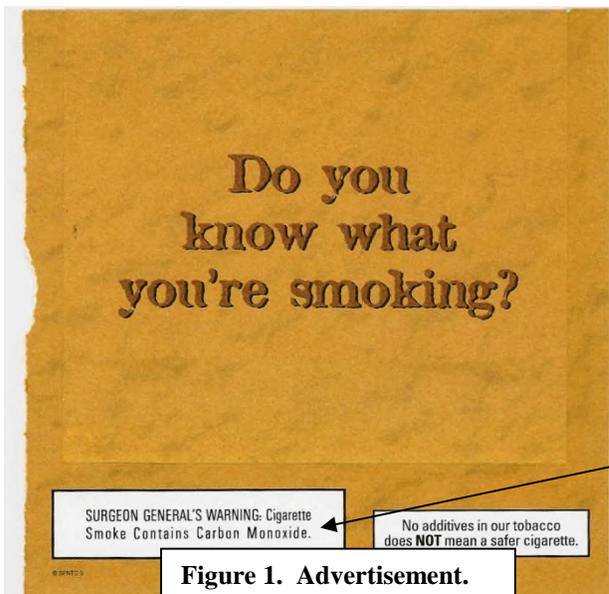


Figure 1. Advertisement.

Consider the advertisement shown in Figure 1.¹ I pulled this ad from an airline magazine while I was flying from one intermediate city to another---often going in the wrong direction--- to somehow arrive at my destination. I hope the owners of this ad, the Santa Fe Natural Tobacco Company, do not mind if I used it for this report. (I've given them credit in footnote 2.)

I admire the chutzpah of this ad. First, it asks if you know what you're smoking? Then it answers: You're smoking carbon monoxide. Yep, carbon monoxide, the same colorless, odorless, toxic gas that kills canaries in mineshafts and humans who light up their Marlboros.²

To clarify my stand on smoking: I am in favor of cigarette companies killing people, if people choose to die by smoking. I favor the idea that each of us should be allowed to chose the manner in which we fertilize our planet. You want to smoke? Be my guest. But keep your smoke away from my lungs. Keep your hospital bills separate from my health insurance fees. Keep your lawsuits away from the courts. Confine your ignorance to your own damage.

But that will not happen. We're locked-into the system. Someone has to pay for the cost of a smoker's health care, his funeral, and his wife's subsequent law suits against the tobacco companies. That someone is you and me. Anyway, Figure 2 is an example of: *How to get a smoker to read an entire ad.*



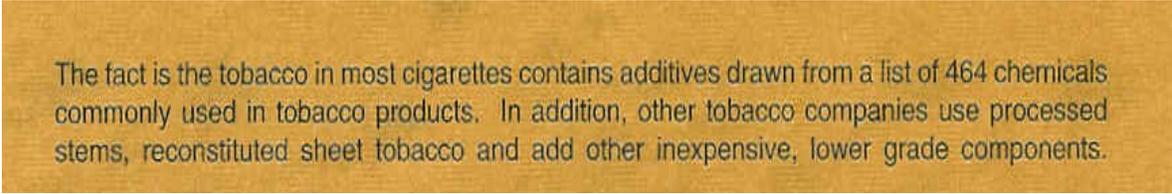
If I smoked, I would definitely be interested in knowing I might be breathing-in something dangerous--- besides carbon monoxide. And the possibility of ingesting from 1 to 464 other chemicals would get my attention. I read this ad in hopes of finding a list of these chemicals. No luck.

¹ An advertisement from the Santa Fe Natural Tobacco Company. The image in Figure 1 is owned by the Santa Fe Natural Tobacco Company. The phrase, "Do you know what you're smoking?" is probably owned by the Santa Fe Natural Tobacco Company, with some borrowings from Bill Clinton's early campaign managers. The phrase, "SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Cigarette Smoke Contains Carbon Monoxide." is allegedly © by the U.S. Government. And the "No additives in our tobacco does NOT mean a safer cigarette." is a candid admission by the Santa Fe Natural Tobacco Company that their product may not be safe. Americans, to protect our legal asses, must attach to every statement the word allegedly. So, I once again back off from my allegedly true claim in order to reduce the odds of my being sued: The produce is allegedly unsafe. There, I should not have to pick up my Go to Jail card.

² In fairness to this organization, this label might be required on all packages of cigarettes. However, the cover declares the cigarettes contain tobacco.

The writing at the bottom of this page was difficult to read, even on the Web site. But then, my eye sight is a bit smoky nowadays.

The image below shows this text enlarged enough to be readable.



The fact is the tobacco in most cigarettes contains additives drawn from a list of 464 chemicals commonly used in tobacco products. In addition, other tobacco companies use processed stems, reconstituted sheet tobacco and add other inexpensive, lower grade components.

I logged onto this company's Web site (www.nascigs.com) in hopes of obtaining more information. No luck. So, I read the remainder of the ad, and learned.

Natural American Spirit is the only brand that features both cigarettes made with 100% certified organic tobacco as well as cigarettes made with 100% additive-free natural tobacco.

Harold, a chain smoker, has just read this ad. He exclaims, "Hallelujah! My troubles are over! I can kick the habit. At last, an addictive-free cigarette."

Horace, who is Harold's sidekick, kicks-in this observation, "Sorry Harold. It's additive-free, not addictive-free."

Harold, "Ah. Right. Hmm, pretty subtle."

Forgive the Queen's English in the paragraph, but what the hell does additive-free mean? It means what Harold first thought it to mean: Brilliant propaganda clothed in deceptive bullshit.

The ad goes on to say, "Nature is not negotiable." I thought about this sentence for a while. I can't figure out what it means. Maybe it's somehow related to additive-free cigarettes. Maybe it's the Greens' warning about global warming. Who knows? Drop me a line if you have a clue.

In addition to the American Spirit being an organic cigarette, and one that does not contain additives...eh, additives, the ad informs us this company is, "...committed to renewable energy sources, including wind power and reforestation." Wow. A green cigarette company.

The most surprising part of this advertisement is a picture of two packages of cigarettes, as shown in Figure 3. The graphic on the package shows a Native American in the process of peacefully killing himself. OK, I exaggerate. He's *allegedly, potentially* and peacefully killing himself.

The image of the American Indian is being exploited! It's worse than the Washington Redskins' use of the name redskin for its mascot. A mascot is not deadly. Inhaling tobacco is, even if it comes through a peace pipe.

What gives? Where are the protests? How can the Santa Fe Natural Tobacco Company get away with a politically incorrect assault on an American icon?

I discovered these facts from the Santa Fe Natural Tobacco Company Web site.

The Santa Fe Natural Tobacco Company Foundation grants financial assistance to organizations that support the preservation, promotion, and advancement of American Indian self-sufficiency and culture in the United States, including programs for (i) the development of American Indian entrepreneurship, (ii) facilitating American Indian

education (particularly college, graduate, and post-graduate education), and (iii) the preservation and enhancement of American Indian languages.



Figure 3. Smoking the organic tobacco peace pipe.

In fact, the purpose of the American Spirit cigarette is to raise money for the American Indian. So, showing an American Indian smoking a substance that is known to kill thousands of people is no big deal? Because it's for a good cause? I don't know the answers to these questions; I'm just reporting facts to you.

Let's take a poll. Is it OK to promote a worthy cause by selling something that is known to be dangerous? Send in your "yes" or "no."

If people want to consume organic carbon monoxide, it's their choice. If a company wants to give away its profits from selling poison to a charitable cause, fine by me, as long as

it doesn't affect my mutual fund portfolio. And I care less about the marketing double-talk to convince someone to ingest a toxic substance. I only ask a smoker to stay out of my breathing space.

By the way: Mystery solved. Take a closer look at the Native American and his peace pipe in Figure 3. Notice anything? He's not inhaling. He's not placing his lips to the pipe. He's not even smoking! Like Bill did in his younger years, he's going through the motions. What a relief.

If Bill had had his wits about him during the Lewinsky hearings, he could have claimed that Monica took the same approach to Bill's pipe. But then, there's that dress. Someone or something did indeed exhale.

Let's wrap-up this piece by taking another poll. Please vote "yes" or "no" to this question: If owner Danny Snyder turned over the profits of the Washington Redskins' operations to Native Americans, would Native Americans continue to protest Danny's use of the name Redskins?

This question is unfair, because the majority of Native Americans do not care about this issue and are not protesting. Let's modify the question: If owner Danny Snyder turned over the profits of the Washington Redskins' operations to the *protesting* Native Americans, would these folks continue to protest Danny's use of the name Redskins?

I look forward to your votes. Here's mine: I'll bet you one deep inhalation from a peace pipe that those protesters would disappear faster than Custer's troops did at Little Big Horn.