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Sociology Senior Exercise

"Addiction and Good Taste:" A Bourdieusian Analysis of Two College Smoking Cultures

**Abstract:** Many studies of smoking among young adults and college-aged students focus on peer pressure and the biological addictiveness of nicotine as the primary factors supporting tobacco use. However, smoking among college students may be supported by other factors, which are linked to class and status in the individual's social circles. This study takes the position that smoking among college-aged students is not policed by peer pressure, but rather, it is supported by subtle social benefits derived from smoking as a mechanism of social distinction. This study attempts to compose an ethnographic profile of the smoking cultures at two colleges in Central Ohio, which are distinguished from one another by class. This profile is then interpreted according to a framework of Bourdieusian theory as it applies to cultural capital and social distinction.

## Introduction

There is abundant literature focusing on the mechanics of how and why students begin and continue smoking. However, the study of what *meaning* smoking carries for college students remains a fledgling field of research. In order to obtain a more complete picture of the culture surrounding smoking, we have to understand the cultural associations smokers have of the practice of tobacco use. What is more, the unique dynamic of the college campus, being as it is a microenvironment of social interactions, subject to social norms and standards often set apart from the worlds of adulthood and childhood, carries associations with smoking that are specific to its own *milieu* and that do not always translate to other social environments.

Previous research has often been too narrow in its focus, a result of the purpose-driven approach taken to identify specific causes of smoking within a targeted population and informing efforts to disrupt those learned behaviors and values. In these studies, the emphasis is often placed on peer pressure and the addictive effects of nicotine, which, while representing a legitimate point of inquiry, ignore the cultural factors that encourage continued participation in the on-campus smoking culture, particularly in the population of "casual" smokers (smokers who are not regular habitual users of tobacco). The sociological approach becomes key in this area, in terms of its ability to recognize the social realities of cultural capital, normative behavior, individual and group agency, social and individual control, and symbolic self-expression. In looking at how these social factors shape smoking behavior, we must also consider the societal mechanisms that resulted in the social milieu out of which participants come. In the theoretical approach adopted in this study, the impact of class on the formation of these factors is taken as the primary area of investigation.

This study does not seek to identify smoking in the context of a social ill, nor does it aim to present a solution to the behaviors represented herein. Rather, this study aims to explore the cultural meaning of smoking amongst smokers, and to specifically examine how this relates to class. The objective in doing so is to create a vivid and comprehensive picture of the "smoking culture" on the college campuses to be examined.

### **Research Question**

How does class shape the cultural perceptions and choices related to smoking on college campuses? In other words, this project aims to examine the differences between populations of smokers on different college campuses in a targeted region, comparing such variables as their introduction to smoking, their cultural associations with smoking, the situations under which they smoke, the methods they use to smoke, the frequency with which they smoke, and how these differences may be related to income and class differences.

### **Literature Review**

The study in the literature of youth smoking culture that provides the most important context for my own study is Haines et al., "Becoming a 'real' smoker: cultural capital in young women's accounts of smoking and other substance use." This study uses Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital and its related concepts to structure their analysis of the narrative accounts of adolescent women in Toronto, Canada, as to what role and function smoking serves in their

social lives. In terms of theory, Haines et al., applied Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and field to the social circles and interactions of young women in order to set up a framework by which these interactions could be analytically described. The authors recall that "in Bourdieu's framework, socialisation occurs through the habitus, inculcated through experience, habit, or gentle and repetitive actions; as unconscious social conditioning rather than deliberate indoctrination. (Haines et al. 2009: 67)" This stands in marked opposition to the usual assumptions of youth smoking studies, which often emphasize the role played by peer pressure in the initiation into smoking. The authors identify the social rules and context of youth-specific interactions as a critical part of the field in which the interactions and smoking behavior of their subjects take place, citing Bourdieu's theory that interactions within a field are subject to field-specific standards of conduct that govern actions according to an internal logic (2009: 68). In terms of cultural capital, the authors make use of the work of Forman (2004) and Thornton (1996) to "[reposition] Bourdieu to allow for 'a system of meaning and values that operates according to an alternative teen rationale.'" (2009: 69) This introduces the idea of "subcultural capital," which applies Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital to understand how social distinctions are formed within youth subculture. Distinctions in this subculture, according to this line of thinking, are not made by the assertion of cultural capital tied to education or family background, but rather to the more elusive status of being in line with the current mode of style:

"Just as Bourdieu's elites deploy cultural capital to distinguish themselves from the undifferentiated masses, youth cultural distinctions also entail acts of symbolic domination, as one social group asserts authority and superiority over another (Thornton 1997: 201). Put simply, it is through separating the cool from the 'uncool' that young people jockey for power and demonstrate their competency in particular social fields (Forman 2004)." (2009: 68)

The study found that smoking served as a "field-specific capital" within the adolescent

social circle, used to establish one's identity, as well as to assert and acquire certain distinctions in a social group. In contrast to "deviance" models of tobacco use, in which the decision to smoke is determined to be a result of a failure to resist social imperatives towards smoking (2009: 76), this study finds that smoking often represents a means by which an individual agent might accrue cultural capital within a field that places positive associations of social distinction on the practice.

Along similar lines to Haines is the study conducted by Nichter et al., entitled "Gendered Dimensions of Smoking Among College Students." This study explores the differences in gendered perception of "low-level" tobacco use. Ethnographic research and focus groups were concerned with questions of identity, social regulation, acceptability, and empathetic behavior. While this study is primarily ethnographic and does not have the strong theoretical approach that makes the Haines study so relatable to my research, it supports Haines in that it also recognizes the need to take a focused view of a smoking community in terms of field-specific interactions, rather than relating the conduct of individual smokers to their perception in the wider community. Like Haines, this study recognizes the youth smoking culture as a subculture and a field unto itself, attributing this to the liminal space in terms of social expectations occupied by college-aged students:

"College students can be characterized as emerging adults, a developmental period characterized as an age of identity exploration, instability, and of feeling in-between (Arnett, 2004). Emerging adulthood is a time of increased vulnerability to substance use—a time when youth who did not engage or engaged only minimally during early adolescence tend to escalate their use (Tucker, Ellickson, Orlando, Martino, & Klein. 2005)." (Nichter et al. n.d.: 216)

It also examines the way in which gender norms relate to how gendered communities of

smokers are perceived. Researchers found that while male smokers tended to attract positive descriptions of masculinity, female smokers were identified with the appearance of being promiscuous or unstable. For this reason, females were found to show greater concern over monitoring each other's smoking, and often smoked in groups. The defensive and regulatory nature of these behaviors explores the important avenue of gender relations and the ways in which cultural expectations can exert an external influence over otherwise field-specific behavior. Additionally, though it does not explicitly recognize the relation of these findings to Bourdieusian interaction theory, the discussion of the results makes an important point about smoking and symbolic interaction:

"In the present study, smoking plays a role in the process of self-exploration as it both conveys information about who you are and who you are not—contingent on when and where you smoke and with whom. Consumption of products has symbolic significance in the process of defining one's identity ... For example, at college parties, cigarettes function as props that signal to others that the user is not afraid to engage in risk taking and that the person is open to whatever is happening." (Nichter et al. n.d.: 216)

This echoes the assertion made by Haines that "[Bourdieu's] work on social distinctions (Bourdieu 1984) has been used to advance an understanding of the cigarette as a symbol, fashion or taste that demarcates group boundaries (Pampel 2006: 21). Similarly, Quintero and Davis (2002) view smoking as a consumption practice that 'generates symbolic capital and social position within adolescent cliques and crowds' (2002: 453)." (as cited in Haines et al., 2009: 69)

However, further complicating matters, there seems to be a significant range of variation in terms of what the symbolic capital of smoking is, depending upon such contextual matters as the form of tobacco use. In their study, "US College Students' Use of Tobacco Products," Rigotti, et al, examine the use of various tobacco products amongst college-age students, as well

as the contributing factors associated with each form of tobacco use. These products include cigarettes, cigars, pipes, and smokeless tobacco (chew/dip). The study found that college students tend to experiment with a series of different tobacco products, but that cigarettes were generally the first introduction to tobacco use. The study found significant usage of cigars, as well as a higher incidence of pipe-smoking and smokeless tobacco use amongst men.

Unfortunately, due to this study being primarily a medical survey as opposed to a sociological one, the questions of why there is a gendered division in whether or not a certain form of tobacco use is taken up, and what relation these different forms of tobacco use have to socioeconomic background are not explored. However, this does indicate that, despite cigarettes being the primary form of tobacco use, there is a significant usage of other forms of tobacco that merits further exploration in terms of who uses them and why, and what symbolic capital these products hold for smokers.

In "A Closer Look at Smoking Among Young Adults: Where Tobacco Control Should Focus Its Attention," Green et al. analyze data taken from the 2003 Tobacco Use Supplement of the US Census Current Population Survey to draw conclusions about the prevalence of tobacco use amongst college-educated young adults compared to non-college-educated young adults. Subjects ranged in age from 18-24 (college-aged), as well as 25-34 (post-college-aged). Researchers found that non-college-educated young adults smoked more than twice as much as their college-educated peers (30% compared to 14%). While this statistics-based study lacks evidence of symbolic capital that would be relevant to the present study, it does show a positive correlation between indicators of lower class (in this case, college attendance) and higher levels of smoking, controlled for age.

I have found multiple studies by the Swedish researcher Martin Lindstrom very useful in illuminating social capital among smokers and society at large. In "Social participation, social capital and daily tobacco smoking: a population-based multilevel analysis in Malmö, Sweden" (Lindstrom et al., n.d.), researchers studied the effect of individual and neighborhood-based factors on variations in daily tobacco smoking behavior. The study found a slight variation in daily smoking behavior due to neighborhood factors, but this effect was mitigated when individual factors were combined into the analysis. In these individual factors, measures such as level of education and socioeconomic status proved to be significant, whereas social capital (measured in terms of civic and social participation) did not have a significant effect. There are several aspects of this study with relevance for my project. First, there is the fact that this study uses both socioeconomic status and social capital as variables in determining daily tobacco usage. Secondly, it looks at how these take effect within a given geographical area, and if the neighborhood in which participants live can be any indicator of their smoking habits. Third, it indicates that socioeconomic status has a greater impact on smoking habits than their social capital alone, which indicates that class may play a greater role in my participants' smoking habits than their social networks do.

A similar study, "Social capital and the miniaturization of community among daily and intermittent smokers: a population-based study" (Lindstrom et al., n.d.), provides an interesting complement, as it looks at social participation and levels of community trust among daily smokers compared to intermittent smokers. The study found that while daily smokers were less socially engaged and had low trust, intermittent smokers also had low trust but had higher levels of social participation. The implication here seems to be that there is a concrete difference in

terms of the level of social engagement between daily and intermittent smokers. It will be interesting to see if this comparison is borne out in my results (i.e. casual smokers are seen as more social than daily smokers). This study also articulates the concept of "miniaturization of community" to describe a situation of low trust but high community participation. I am unsure if this is relevant to my research, but considering the applicability of the rest of the study, it bears keeping in mind.

The third study involving Lindstrom is entitled "Intermittent and daily smokers: two different socioeconomic patterns, and diverging influence of social participation" (Lindstrom et al., n.d.). In some ways, this study represents a missing link in the dialogue between the other two Lindstrom studies. This study seeks to investigate differences in socioeconomic status between intermittent and daily smokers and whether or not these two smoking behavior types have any relation to social participation. This positions these two modes of smoking behavior in a framework relevant to my investigation of smoking practices and the impact of class status versus social capital, which is tied to cultural capital in Bourdieu's theoretical framework. This study found that neither social capital nor socioeconomic status functioned as a predictor for intermittent smokers, whereas these factors could be successfully employed in predicting daily smoking behavior.

In terms of additional theoretical support, though the Haines study is my strongest justification for the use of a Bourdieusian framework in analyzing smoking culture, there is another study of smoking which uses a similar theoretical approach. "Neighborhood Social Capital as a Health Determinant: An Empirical Test of a Bourdieu-based Framework and Model" (Link and Carpiano, 2005) presents a challenge to some of Lindstrom's findings, showing that, in

an examination of the impacts of neighborhood social support and social capital on public health, social capital was tied to more healthful behaviors, whereas higher levels of social interaction were positively correlated with binge drinking and smoking. This suggests that social interaction could be a direct causal agent in encouraging certain smoking behaviors, whereas Lindstrom seems to be looking at social interaction as a function of smoking habits.

## **Theory**

Similar to Haines et al., this study finds its theoretical orientation in Bourdieusian theory. This study examines smoking cultures with the perspective of tobacco use as a marker of social distinction, and a source of symbolic capital. This makes use of several key elements of Bourdieu's social theory, including habitus, symbolic capital, and the objective field. These concepts, along with Bourdieu's theory of class distinction and "taste," are central to my frame of analysis for this project. Habitus constitutes an individual's internalized set of initial tastes and dispositions, which are inherited from the individual's socio-biographic background. This concept is instructive in describing and understanding how individuals' differences in smoking habits and cultural association are influenced by their background. Symbolic capital refers to the social recognition or prestige that confers greater access to resources due to one's alignment with cultural values. This suggests evidence of symbolic capital both within and outside communities of smokers, conferring status or recognition based on such conventions as smoking practices. Taste is also critical to this project, as is its foundational concept: cultural capital, which refers to the non-financial knowledge or skills that give individuals an advantage or higher status in society.

In terms of application, Bourdieu tells us that differences in cultural capital mark the

differences in the classes. This is an explicit and direct link in his theoretical framework. Thus, rather than asking participants to identify themselves in terms of class (often a problematic tactic), I will proceed from this assumption, seeking differences in cultural capital between the two colleges. Having determined a clear picture of the major trends and themes in cultural capital between participants, I will then compare the results according to the two colleges to establish a better picture of how smoking cultures and the role played by cultural capital differ between classes.

## **Data and Methods**

Data were collected through a mixed-methods approach of observation and open-ended interviews. As I was primarily concerned with thick description of a specific culture and its conventions, surveying was not deemed to be necessary. The locations for research are on the campuses of Kenyon College and the Knox County campus of the Central Ohio Technical College. These locations were selected for their proximity and accessibility, as well as evidence of difference in culture and class between students of these colleges. Observation was conducted in locations on and around campus where smokers congregate, such as outside academic buildings, outside dorms, outside party locations, and in designated smoking areas outside buildings. Since the activity of smoking is largely public in the wake of the indoor smoking ban, observation was largely conducted outside, examining public behavior. More direct participation was employed in instances where the opportunity to collect more in-depth data was available (for example, an individual using a more uncommon method of tobacco consumption, such as a pipe). In these cases, the researcher made use of his status as a casual smoker to initiate

conversation about smoking. At this point, the researcher's role as observer was disclosed and the project described before continuing conversation. My script for verbal consent is included in the appendix.

In the course of this project, I conducted nine interviews – five at Kenyon and four at Knox County COTC. Participants were selected based on contacts established during participant observation. Ideal interviewees were smokers who were articulate and not reluctant to speak about their smoking habits. Use of or familiarity with forms of tobacco use other than cigarettes (pipes, cigars cigarillos, dip/chew, etc.) were preferred. Interviews were conducted in whatever neutral space the interviewee found most comfortable, selected for proximity to the interviewee. This ranged from a coffee shop to the participant's room, based on the preference of the interviewee. Introductory questions primarily explored participants' self-identity, smoking habits, and associations with tobacco use. Specific biographical questions attempted to identify such details about the participant as occupation and income, level of education, age, ethnicity, family background, and possibly political identity. These questions were intended to establish the participant's social and economic background. The next set of questions focused on cultural capital and aesthetic distinctions, examining habits and cultural associations with smoking. This included investigation into preferred brands, attitudes towards smoking, attitudes of family and friends, attitudes towards different tobacco products (filtered and unfiltered cigarettes, hand-rolled cigarettes, menthol cigarettes, cigars, cigarillos, pipes, and chew/dip) and a deeper examination of personal smoking history. The resulting transcripts were then analyzed through descriptive coding to identify the major recurring themes articulated by the interviewees. A coding table, as well as my interview schedule, are attached in the appendix.

## **Major Themes**

### *Influence of Campus Structure*

The impact of campus structure on how students live and interact is a broad and complex subject, so I determined a systematic interpretation of the structures of both campuses to be far beyond the scope of this project. However, between my participant observation and my interviewing, I managed to uncover some interesting implications about the way in which students, particularly smokers, are affected by their surroundings. Kenyon College is a residential campus, and so has a wide variety of locations where smokers can be found. In my observations, I tried to focus these observations on several of the most common locations for smoking. My principal observations were conducted in or near smoking areas which were situated close to buildings where most students worked and studied. At Kenyon, this was outside the Olin Library, the main library on campus. There is only one building making up the Knox COTC campus, so I did my observations in the smoking area outside that building. At Kenyon, there are two smoking areas outside either door, yet in the course of my two-hour observation, I recorded two people on the right side and seventeen on the left. According to the people I talked to, the left side was favored because it had benches and more light than the right side. This definitely did seem to make a difference in the way that people interacted, with the left side tending to foster discussions and socializing between smokers as a result of its "outdoor lounge" setup, with the stone benches arranged in an open rectangle beside the ashcan and the lamp that provides light at night, whereas the only people I saw on the right side stood awkwardly or talked on the phone, since there was no where to sit. Several of my interviewees at COTC lamented the lack of benches in

the smoking area, although there was a municipal bench right across the sidewalk from it. The smoking area at COTC consisted of the space beneath a large overhang from the building's second floor, supported by pillars, and open on the side that faced the street corner, around which people would come from the school's parking lot. The building's front door was located to the left of this area. Similarly to Kenyon, I noted that the left side of the smoking area, the one farthest away from the open corner, seemed to be favored by smokers. A quick check of the ashcans that were located on either side of the area confirmed this, with the can on the left side full of cigarette butts, and the one on the right nearly empty. I was unsure as to why this would be, until standing in the area and smoking made me realize that in the cold, windy weather (these observations were conducted in November and December), standing closer to the walled side of the area provided some shelter. In fact, I noticed that most people approaching the school, instead of walking along the sidewalk, moved under the overhang and walked through the smoking area for the brief respite from the wind that it provided.

There seemed to be an ongoing narrative concerning the effect of the campus environment on the subject's smoking habits. Bill, a Kenyon student, identified his cravings solely with being on-campus, whereas Bernard, a COTC student, insisted that the college had no effect on his smoking habits. I believe that these distinctions are tied to the differences between the colleges themselves, which I will examine further in the discussion of my results.

### *Learning to Smoke*

One narrative that emerged from my interviews was the process of learning the skills associated with being a smoker. These skills are developed by repetition and often vary with the individual. New smokers learn these skills from example, as there seems to be no instruction

provided to them from more experienced smokers. Thus, imperfect imitation or a lack of competency with these skills may reveal one as an inexperienced smoker. There are several recognizable skills that are frequently cited: packing, holding, ashing, flicking, and inhalation.

Packing is slapping the top of a fresh pack of cigarettes against the palm or another flat surface in order to condense the tobacco inside the cigarette towards the filter, resulting in a thicker and more consistent smoke. An example given of a packing *faux pas* was to pack the "wrong way" (Dave, a student at Kenyon), that is, away from the filter.

"Holding" refers to the posture of how the cigarette is held. This is often cited by subjects as one of the main things they notice about other smokers. Bill, a senior at Kenyon, reported:

I have memories of... my friend being like, 'you know, it's funny, you can really tell people, when they are, like, a casual smoker compared to *us*.' ... Once you have smoked for a couple months, it is just, like, your hand, like, now when I [eat] stick pretzels, I hold them like a cigarette... you're not thinking about it. Your hand's just like 'boom.'

A reverse case of this muscle memory reflected in posture was related by Lester, a student at COTC, who noted that users of cocaine hold their cigarettes differently. He was unable to expand upon this, but felt that, like Bill's friend, it was something he could tell on a visual level.

Ashing is the movement of tapping or otherwise moving the cigarette in such a way as to dislodge a buildup of ash on the tip as it burns down. Bill notes that people develop their own ways of ashing, himself favoring a rotate-and-tap method that maximizes the amount of movement in his hands.

Flicking is the action of flinging the butt of a finished cigarette away by a flicking motion of the fingers. This is neither an essential nor a functional skill, and would best be considered a "trick." However, the ability to flick a cigarette does seem to give an individual a level of distinction. Bill describes a friendly contest between he and his friends where they have developed this skill to the point where they compete for distance or accuracy in their flicking, the former being how far they can send a single butt, and the latter being targeting an ashtray and attempting to land the butt in it or as near as possible. He identifies the development of such games and traditions amongst other smokers as a key trait of a serious or habitual smoker. This behavior amongst friends was also reported by Bernard, a 28-year-old student at COTC, who described a similar flicking contest that he and his friends practiced when he was a young teenager in high school. This functioned as a skills-building exercise for Bernard and his friends as they first began to smoke habitually.

Inhalation differs from the other skills in that it is an act of physically consuming the cigarette, as opposed to an action upon it. Inhalation refers to the drawing of smoke into the lungs before exhaling. This allows for the nicotine to penetrate the membrane of the lungs and enter into the bloodstream with greater speed. Many new smokers begin smoking without consciously pulling the smoke into their lungs, instead holding the smoke in their mouth before exhaling. Smoke hitting the back of the throat during inhalation can cause coughing fits or nausea, especially for first-time smokers, so these reactions are often associated with inexperience as a smoker. Bill expressed annoyance with people who bummed (borrowed) cigarettes from him and did not visibly inhale the smoke, as he felt they were wasting the tobacco and not appreciating it. Paul, a senior at Kenyon, also associated inhalation with

appreciation, saying that it took him a while to realize he was not smoking the "right" way, and that it was when he figured out how to inhale that he first appreciated the effects of nicotine. The other side of this narrative is that direct inhalation of nicotine speeds the addiction process. Dave, a senior at Kenyon, believes that "mouth-smoking" (not inhaling the smoke) was the reason he avoided forming a habit during his high school years. Bernard once again emphasized the role of tutoring in his acquisition of smoking skills, noting that a friend first pointed out to him that he was not inhaling and then showed him by example how to do it. This, Bernard said, was a revelation for him, and the new appreciation of the effects of nicotine he received as a result of inhaling the smoke renewed his interest in smoking. Although he first began smoking at age ten, he identifies learning how to inhale at age fourteen as the point at which he "really started" smoking, or in other words, became a "serious" smoker.

### *Serious versus Casual Smoking*

A major distinction drawn in the interviews I conducted was between habitual "serious" smokers and occasional "casual" smokers. What defined a serious smoker, as opposed to a casual one, was a focal point. One key quality that arose in nearly every interview<sup>1</sup> was the "need" for a cigarette, as opposed to recreational use. Status as a serious smoker seems to be defined in a large part by addiction or dependence. Bernard described the ways in which his dependence on cigarettes dictated his daily routine:

I guess sometimes it even decides what I'm going to do that day. Like, thinking 'I

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<sup>1</sup> There was one exception: Sami initially identified "smoking alone" as the mark of a serious smoker, but then retracted that statement due to the fact that she primarily smokes alone but does not consider herself a "serious" smoker.

might stop and see so-and-so... aw, but we gotta smoke outside there. Maybe I'll go to somebody else's... where I can smoke on his couch right there.' Yeah, I had never really thought about it, but I guess the majority of the energy in my social life goes with being able to smoke.

Possession of a pack of cigarettes on one's person at all times was named as another signifier of a serious smoker by students at both Kenyon and COTC. Casual smokers were seen as being more likely to smoke solely for social reasons, since they were not smoking to satisfy an addiction, and therefore had no reason to smoke alone.

Frequency was also a factor, with daily smoking marking a serious smoker, and weekend smoking marking a casual one. Along the same lines, casual smoking was often associated with smoking while consuming alcohol, in the context of both being used as recreational drugs. Drunk smokers were seen as more spontaneous in their desire to smoke, deciding while drunk to bum cigarettes off of serious smokers (who would have a pack of their own). Paul noted that, in these cases, the casual smoker would defer to him as the authority on smoking, and treat their own smoking as an event, whereas for him having a cigarette is a common enough occurrence that it is not noteworthy. Edward, a junior at Kenyon, believed that the regularity of smoking practiced by "serious" smokers leads to a level of poise and comfort with the process that is discernable when watching them smoke. Drunk smokers, on the other hand, were generally characterized as less competent due to their inexperience, as in when Dave told an anecdote about an intoxicated woman who bummed a cigarette from him and lit the filtered end by mistake.

## *Women and Smoking*

Interestingly, women were identified by several subjects as being more likely to be casual smokers, or to smoke only while intoxicated. When asked about female smokers, Lester, a COTC student, described them as more likely to be "party girls." In casual references, gendered language was often used to describe less serious smokers (Dave: "he smokes like a woman"). Women were sometimes seen as being more social and therefore more likely to engage in social smoking, as opposed to smoking alone. Paul reported that he generally felt more surprised to see a female smoker whom he did not suspect of being a smoker than he was to see a male smoker whom he also did not suspect. Male interviewees often used sexualized language or terms emphasizing gender roles in their discussions of female smokers, statements which they often recognized and sometimes contradicted or attempted to disown in other questions. Jane, a student at COTC, felt that people do not like to see women smoking as it does not conform to social expectations of gendered conduct<sup>2</sup>. Many participants, both male and female, did feel that there was a stigma attached to female smokers. Sami, a female Kenyon student, seemed especially self-conscious about being judged on account of her smoking. She felt most strongly criticized by her sorority sisters and the other members of her sports team, as well as by casual acquaintances. While these do not constitute direct reprimands on the basis of gender, with the primary articulated concern of her sorority sisters being her health and the primary concern of her team being her performance, she did feel that a double-standard existed for women in that she perceives that her male counterparts in fraternities and on men's sports teams do not receive

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<sup>2</sup> It may be telling that I had difficulty finding a female smoker at Kenyon who was willing to be interviewed, forcing me to directly ask a female friend to be interviewed as a personal favor. As for COTC, two of my interviewees were female, but there also seems to be a larger proportion of female students at COTC.

the same level of criticism that she does. Sami also brought up gendered perceptions of smoking in discussing different forms of tobacco product:

I tend to associate chewing tobacco with, like, varsity sports teams in particular, just because it's, like, only varsity sports players that I've ever seen doing it.. and it also just came along with this air of bravado and just, kind of, like, masculinity.

### *Other Tobacco Products*

Different types of tobacco product also carried associations with different levels of "seriousness." These consist of forms of tobacco usage other than cigarettes, including cigars, cigarillos, pipes, and chewing tobacco (also called "chew" or "dip"). While most subjects did not consume other tobacco products aside from cigarettes, their perceptions of these products may inform our understanding of the hierarchy of taste. Dave described his uncle practicing smoking cessation via moving to different "stages" of tobacco use, which began with cigarettes and moved to cigarillos, followed by cigars, and finally pipe smoking. Though few subjects identified casual smokers by use of non-cigarette tobacco products, the above anecdote was seen as an accurate reflection of how people perceive the "scale" of seriousness when it comes to tobacco products. Chewing tobacco is excepted from this scale, as most subjects found it too disgusting to even discuss in great detail<sup>3</sup>. Sami's first experience with chewing tobacco was a varsity sports player coming over to her dorm freshman year, who left a Coke bottle full of the spit from chewing in their common room. This caused her to form an association with use of

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<sup>3</sup> In an interesting side note, however, Paul mentioned having spoken to members of a fraternity who did use chew, and he perceived from speaking to them that it may serve as an alternative for people who want to avoid the stigma of being seen smoking cigarettes. However, chew itself seems to be even more strongly stigmatized, so this may not be accurate.

chewing tobacco as "reveling in the disgusting," as well as with masculinity and bravado, as previously noted.

Most subjects, from Kenyon and COTC alike, associated pipe smoking with men of an older generation, and some felt that they would have trouble taking a young person smoking a pipe seriously as a smoker. Jane, who at 48 years old is of the generation that came before most current students, specifically associated the smell of pipe tobacco with a friend of her father's, a positive connotation. Lester, another COTC contact, was 43, and he also associated pipe smoking with his parents' generation. To me, this suggests that pipe smoking is either removed from the current young student population by two generations, or that it, having fallen out of modern use, is simply bound to be relegated vaguely to "the past." This image was borne out by my interview with Edward, a Kenyon student who habitually smoked a pipe, who repeatedly referred to himself as wanting to project an image of being "reminiscent of a different time." Edward also spoke of pipe-smoking in terms of appreciation, noting:

I think of [someone smoking a pipe] as someone who enjoys the whole process of smoking... there's the packing, the lighting, and the tamping... it's about the process as well as the feeling you get from it... that's something you can enjoy a lot more. I find that I am relaxed by the entirety of it... I enjoy smoking for more than the smoke in and out of my lungs.

Edward also told me that he preferred to pair his pipe smoking with a glass of brandy to enhance the flavor. Bernard at COTC also saw pipe-smoking in terms of appreciation and flavor over utility, likening it to "dessert." What surprised me with regards to pipe-smoking was how the people I interviewed who had practiced pipe-smoking corroborated its identification with

"casual" smoking. Sami referred to her use of a pipe as part of the process of experimenting with different forms of tobacco, which ultimately led her to cigarettes. Edward had the opposite experience, noting that he began smoking a pipe due to the fact that he was not a frequent smoker of cigarettes, so he felt that he could afford to invest his time in a more involved and appreciation-based form of tobacco use. In this case, it was his lack of a dependency or regular habit that facilitated his exploration of less "serious" forms of tobacco usage. Due to the non-habitual nature of his tobacco usage, Edward did not, in fact, identify with the label of "smoker."

Cigars also carried somewhat of an anachronistic element, but were also loosely associated with people of wealth and higher social standing, including celebrities. Cigars were also likened to pipe-smoking in terms of appreciation. Cigar-smoking was seen as an occasional practice, usually being saved for purposes of celebration. I also asked participants about cigarillos, which are smaller, cheaply-made versions of cigars, often flavored. Despite being similar to cigars in terms of production, cigarillos had much different associations for interviewees at both colleges. Several respondents ascribed racial associations to cigarillos, specifically with African-Americans. Paul acquired this association as a result of working at a convenience store in a "bad neighborhood," having frequently seen young black men coming in to purchase Swisher Sweets or Black and Milds, the two major brands of cigarillos. Dave recalled that a friend of his from high school often referred to these products as "niggerillos," denoting a strong negative racial connotation. This perception was also present at COTC, with Bernard talking about how he and his friends had, as young teenagers, seen black hip hop artists on television smoking cigarillos and associated them positively with the glamor and style of that genre and lifestyle. Cigarillos were also perceived by several respondents as occupying a

position in-between cigarettes and cigars in terms of serious forms of tobacco usage, reinforcing the previously-mentioned model of tobacco products as falling on a scale of "seriousness." Sami likened the use of cigarillos to "flirting with the idea of smoking," and that this served as a kind of transition between the casual form of tobacco usage characterized by cigars and pipes and the serious usage of cigarettes. This assertion was echoed by Bernard, who said that he and his friends stopped smoking cigarillos as part of a conscious choice between the stylish image of cigarillos and the more substantive form of nicotine consumption provided by cigarettes. Along similar lines as Sami, Edward saw people smoking cigarillos as wanting to smoke *something*, but not wanting the commitment or negative associations that come with smoking cigarettes. Cigarillos, then, were seen as an "excuse" for tobacco use (Edward).

#### *Identification with Type, Brand*

The type or brand of cigarette smoked carried connotations of one's status as a smoker. By "type," I mean such varieties of cigarettes as filtered, unfiltered, hand-rolled, menthol, lights, and so on, whereas "brand" refers to the specific name given to a line of cigarettes, such as Marlboro or Camel, and which often have strong cultural and symbolic associations with their use. Dave described unfiltered cigarettes as being more typical of "hard-core" smokers. This reaction was fairly common, as when I would tell interviewees and individuals I was observing that I was smoking unfiltered cigarettes, they would react with surprise or wonder, saying that unfiltered cigarettes were too strong or intense for them. Ultra lights and menthols, on the other hand, Dave deemed more appropriate for a woman and an "old lady," respectively, continuing the trend of femininity being used as representational of casual smoking, as noted above. Sami noted that she enjoyed menthol cigarettes, but generally did not smoke them at Kenyon because

other smokers generally saw them as being more unhealthy than regular cigarettes. Bill said that he associated Parliaments (which are generally sold as lights or menthols) with casual drunk smokers.

Hand-rolled cigarettes, which are cigarettes that come in the form of a pouch of loose tobacco that must be rolled by the smoker into a piece of cigarette paper, carried two principal associations: looking cool and being inexpensive<sup>4</sup>. Both Bill and Bernard associated hand-rolling cigarettes with an image of cool characterized by such classic film icons as James Dean and John Wayne. The ability to roll cigarettes (a difficult process to perform well) was seen as conferring a significant degree of esteem amongst smokers. Bernard and Dave both noted that hand-rolling was also a frequent option for poorer people, as loose tobacco and papers are much cheaper than pre-made cigarettes. "Rollies" were also associated with hipsters and art students, which may have some connection to them being simultaneously cool and cheap. For Sami, the ability to hand-roll cigarettes well denoted the ability to effectively roll marijuana joints, as well.

There seems to be a strong association for many people between a person's identity and their choice of brand. There is a strong dichotomy between the brands of Camel and Marlboro, specifically Marlboro Reds. Several respondents described characteristics that were distinctive to smokers of each brand. Camels were associated with hip men, artistic and musical kids, and occasionally being a better value without sacrificing taste. Marlboros were seen as more of an "equalizer" in terms of class appeal, specifically, with associated groups including women from

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<sup>4</sup> While I was abroad in England last year, I noticed that hand-rolling cigarettes was a much more common practice than it is here in the United States. The reason for this that I was given by most of my friends was that pre-rolled cigarettes were often prohibitively expensive in the UK, whereas loose tobacco could produce several times as many cigarettes for the same price.

New York City, maintenance workers, deli workers, and so on. However, Lester from COTC noted that he used to smoke Marlboros until they raised their price, and now considered them a "waste of money." Bernard echoed this sentiment, noting that he saw Marlboros as "his brand," since they were the first cigarette he ever smoked, but that in practice he tended to buy whichever brand was "cheap and full-flavored." The third brand to emerge as a backdrop to the Camel/Marlboro rivalry was Natural American Spirit, which are additive-free and also are one of the few brands that are commonly sold in an unfiltered variety. American Spirits did not have as strong associations with personality types or group memberships, but they were cited as a third option frequently enough that it bears mentioning<sup>5</sup>.

### *Personal Utility versus Social Utility of Smoking*

Regardless of one's status as a serious or casual smoker, smoking seems to serve a direct purpose in organizing one's work or social life. In terms of personal usage, by which I mean smoking cigarettes on one's own and not with others, the purposes served were mostly work- and study-related. Personal utility of smoking included taking a "mental break," especially from work, as well as representing a form of stress management for students. It was also cited as an excuse to go outside and take time out for introspection. There is also its function as a socially-acceptable way to kill short periods of time, as in when one is waiting outside a building for another person to arrive, as it gives the appearance of some apparent purpose to being there. As for social uses, these, predictably, are more concerned with interpersonal relations. Social uses of

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<sup>5</sup> One interesting association with American Spirits came from Dave, who associated them not just with "hard-core" smokers (as previously mentioned), but also with people conscious of environmental conservation, the logic being that cigarette filters constitute a form of non-biodegradable litter and therefore unfiltered cigarettes are more "eco-friendly" in terms of disposal. However, this association was not reported by any other interviewee, and so might not be accurate.

smoking include meeting new friends, acting as an "icebreaker" to free up lines of communication, a bonding activity, removing oneself from an uncomfortable environment (Dave), providing a sympathetic gesture for someone in distress (Dave, Paul), and participating in a common group activity. The first observation I conducted was in the smoking area outside the bar located just off the Kenyon campus. The smoking area consisted of a patio formed by three walls of picket fencing closing off an area of approximately forty square feet outside the front entrance, with three sets of tables and benches, and two ashcans for disposing of cigarette butts at the entrance to this area. Patrons were allowed to bring their drinks onto this patio, meaning that people did not have to choose between smoking and drinking, but could combine the two. Again, we see the pairing of alcohol with casual or spontaneous smoking. This area would periodically flood with people as groups of drinkers decided to take smoke breaks together. I noted a significant amount of socializing between students and local residents as they smoked together. Social smoking seemed to dominate this area, being as it was as social setting and not an academic one. In terms of group interaction, I also noticed a significant amount of people swapping their drinks and cigarettes with each other, perhaps trying out each other's choices, as well as many people being introduced to each other over cigarettes and requests to borrow lighters.

In general, personal usage was seen more as a marker of "serious smoker" status than social usage. However, this is not a mutually exclusive relationship, as several serious smokers also described social situations as having a strong influence over how much they smoked in a given night. What surprised me about the responses to the issue of personal versus social utility was how similar the responses were from all participants. All interviewees gave answers from

the general lists in the previous paragraph, though they identified to varying degrees with different levels of social or personal usage. For example, Sami had a high level of personal usage but a low level of social usage, due to her self-consciousness of how others perceived her as a smoker, while Bill smoked almost exclusively in a social context with more incidental occurrences of personal usage. Interestingly, students at COTC were inclined to make a distinction between being sociable while smoking and social smoking. That is to say, they were not adverse to interacting with other smokers while they smoked, but these social interactions did not have a significant effect on their smoking, which still fell under the domain of usage for personal utility. I will examine this further in the discussion of my results.

### *Identity as a Smoker*

One of the more striking trends I noticed in my research was the tendency for smokers to identify collectively in response to outside antagonism, much like an oppressed social group. This sense of societal rejection was most palpable as the subjects described how they thought nonsmokers saw them, which frequently included uses of the adjective "stupid," as well as describing nonsmokers as being "appalled" at their behavior and fearing that smokers "want[ed] to do them damage" (Lester). Moral judgements, such as being labeled a "horrible person," were not uncommon (Jane). No one questioned the idea that smoking, as an activity, has been rejected by larger society.

Sometimes, this antagonism was returned, as in cases where subjects felt the need to define themselves in opposition to nonsmokers. In these cases, the disgust and rejection subjects perceived themselves as experiencing was taken as an affirmation of their own identity as smokers. Dave described a fondness for smoking American Spirits (which have a strong odor)

before class, and then purposefully sitting next to a nonsmoker in order to get a reaction out of them. When asked about how he felt he was viewed by nonsmokers, Dave introduced the matter of class unprompted, saying he was not sure if class played a major part, but then added that he thought the same people who were likely to reject you for smoking were "the same people who would turn their nose up at you for driving, say, uh... a Kia or a Honda." This perceived classism, he said, was simply "all the more reason to fuck with them," indicating a sense of justified and ongoing antagonism.

Smokers found support in their friends who smoked, as well as in strangers who smoked. The commonality of their participation in a socially-rejected activity created a sense of fellowship among students, at least those at Kenyon. Bill identified with the sentiment expressed by author David Sedaris that fellow smokers were part of his "team." By contrast, it seemed that most of my contacts at COTC did not have as strong a sense of fellowship with other smokers, though Bernard did note that complaining about smoking laws and taxes did create an inherent bond between smokers that could serve as the basis for interaction<sup>6</sup>. It is important to note that most of the subjects at COTC were older (ages 28-48) than those at Kenyon (ages 20-22) and may not have the same relationship with smoking as they did when they were younger. This also may be a result of their aging out of smoking's "subcultural capital," a premise that I will investigate further in the discussion of my results.

Smokers found themselves curbed by both external pressures from friends and family, as

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<sup>6</sup> In an interesting comment, Bernard noted that he saw the potential for the commonality of their experience to encourage "solidarity" amongst smokers in the face of exploitation by tobacco companies. However, he did not foresee this happening due to the fact that, as addicts, smokers are willing to put up with exploitation to get their fix.

well as by their own self-identities. Oftentimes, smokers would limit themselves when they found that their habits were proceeding to a point that they were not comfortable with, or due to a desire to prove to themselves that they had control over themselves and their habits. These were often short-term periods of cessation or abstinence, rather than total quitting, though Kenyon students often expressed the conviction that they would not continue to smoke long after college<sup>7</sup>. This leads into the theme of the college environment's impact on smoking, which I will explore further in my discussion. Jane at COTC was also in the process of quitting, but was unsure how long this attempt would last. In a sobering moment as part of an otherwise lighthearted interview, Dave recounted the story of a friend who quit smoking because, in his words, he had "found something to live for."

### *Family and Relationships*

Another theme in which the differences between Kenyon and COTC became more apparent was that of the influence of family and relationships on smoking habits. For Kenyon students, family was defined primarily by parents, and occasionally by siblings. The disapproval of parents served as a significant deterrent to smoking, especially during breaks when Kenyon students returned home. In terms of other close personal relationships, Bill mentioned his girlfriend's dislike for the smell of cigarettes as another factor which curbed his smoking at home. In a comparable situation, Sami saw the disapproval of her sorority sisters and teammates as the primary cause for hiding her smoking from others. A notable exception to this trend was Edward, whose father and grandfather smoked and who began smoking a pipe instead of cigarettes as the result of a suggestion from his father, who had smoked a pipe for a brief period

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<sup>7</sup> Many of my COTC contacts scoffed when they heard this assertion, seeing it as naive and unrealistic.

as well before giving it up due to stronger cravings for nicotine. Sami also described seeing her sisters smoking as the primary thing deterring her from smoking, before she became more open to the idea of smoking while in college.

At COTC, on the other hand, many students' families were defined not just by parents and siblings, but by ex-spouses and children of their own. Being older, among other factors, students at COTC had had time to marry, have children, and sometimes divorce by the time they enrolled at this particular college. In contrast to most accounts from Kenyon students, COTC students cited their parents as a positive influence on their smoking. Both Jane and Bernard stated that a person's identification with or preference for a certain brand often came from what brand their parents smoked. According to Sasha, another COTC student, her mother was very much against smoking, but her introduction to smoking came from her sister's boyfriend, who gave her a pack when she was younger. Sasha described learning to smoke from watching her sister and her boyfriend. The stress of child-rearing was cited by several COTC students as a contributing factor to their smoking. Some participants cited their child's perception of them as a reason to quit or cut back on smoking, but this did not seem to be a very strong motivational factor. Significant others also contributed to participants' smoking habits with their own habits. Jane identified smoking at home primarily as something she did with her husband, and Bernard described how his girlfriend had quit smoking two years prior to dating him, but had started again because the smell and taste of cigarettes on him had given her cravings again.

## **Discussion: Drawing Comparisons**

One of the major differences that I found between respondents from Kenyon and those from COTC was in their attitude towards their smoking habits. Kenyon students seemed to be less concerned with the long-term implications of smoking, probably due to the fact that most of the students I spoke to said that they planned to stop smoking once they were out of college. For them, smoking was a temporary thing limited to their time spent at Kenyon. However, at COTC, most of the students have been smoking from a very young age and have reached a point of addiction where it becomes increasingly difficult for them to quit. While students at Kenyon would often describe themselves as addicted, their smoking habits did not reach anything near the level of usage that I saw in the people I interviewed at COTC. Interviewees at COTC frequently referred to themselves as feeling utterly dependent on smoking, with feeling of helplessness and being "slaves" to smoking (Bernard). Bernard offered this description of the situation he was caught in: "I don't want to smoke, but I don't want to be miserable either." There was a sense of regret in these interviews that I did not experience at Kenyon. These students are older than those at Kenyon, and as such have had more time to appreciate the negative consequences of smoking. Bernard, for example, had suffered from a collapsed lung on two separate occasions, and described to me the disturbing details of the surgery he had to undergo in order to reinflate it. There seemed to be a difference at COTC between how interviewees felt about smoking when they were younger and how they felt about it now. As younger people, they had enjoyed the image of smoking and the social aspects that came along with it, as well as the personal utility of helping them focus and giving them an excuse for a mental break from work. Now, however, the principal benefits of nicotine has worn off for them and they are stuck with a

dependency on the drug. I suspect that this may offer some understanding as to why social smoking seemed to be absent at COTC, and why my interviewees seemed intent on distinguishing "being social while smoking" from the act of "smoking socially." The personal utility of smoking has overtaken the social utility in this context. In hearing these accounts, I began to understand why students at COTC had scoffed when I told them of my Kenyon participants' plans to quit after college. A comment made by Edward – that managing one's cigarette habit could serve as a good exercise in self-control, and that "cigarettes can be your friend sometimes" – showed the stark difference in attitudes between these two communities. At Kenyon, by contrast, smoking still serves as a positive mechanism of social distinction and identity-building, recalling the earlier concept from Haines (2009) of smoking as a way of gaining status as part of "subcultural capital" – the concept that smoking amongst young adults serves as a "field-specific capital," and is used to establish identity and acquire certain distinctions within a social group. However, the participants at COTC can be seen as having "aged out" of the field in which smoking serves as positive social capital, hence the distinction between then and now and the regret that they currently have.

An elementary difference in these two communities that became apparent in the course of my analysis is the nature of the colleges themselves. One aspect of this difference is found in the presence of a campus. Whereas Kenyon is a residential campus, the Knox County branch of COTC does not have the same luxury of space. As a commuter school without a campus, COTC has a fundamentally different sense of "community" than Kenyon does. This may also help account for the lack of purely social smoking at COTC and the prevalence of personal utility as the dominant mode of tobacco usage. Subjects at COTC were familiar with the other students in

their classes, but for most, their primary social circles existed outside the school. This may explain why Kenyon students like Bill were so adamant that something about being on-campus made him want to smoke, whereas COTC students like Bernard insisted that the school had no impact on his smoking habits. Additionally, recalling the point made in the previous paragraph, this lack of a community also means that there is little impetus for the accrual of social capital by such means as smoking. Another fundamental difference between the two colleges is the nature of the education being offered. It was only after I completed all my research at Kenyon that I realized all my subjects were drawn from the schools of the Humanities and the Social Sciences. COTC, on the other hand, is a technical college, whose education program is geared towards professional careers in such fields as nursing and engineering. This difference in educational approaches may play a role in shaping the smoking cultures, though it remains to be determined if there is a causal relationship between academic major and smoking behavior.

As for Bourdieu's theory of distinction and cultural capital (1984), this was beneficial to my research in that it helped me to understand the social mechanisms within these smoking communities that established one's status as a smoker. The cigarette skills described in the "Learning to Smoke" section may be understood as a form of embodied cultural capital, a series of actions acquired by repetition and informed by the individual's habitus. The level of comfort one shows in holding or ashing one's cigarette is a physical indicator of how experienced a smoker someone is, and the development of such tricks as flicking denote a level of habitual smoking that allows for the practice of these skills. Similarly, the practice of inhalation has connotations of both appreciation for the cigarette and a higher level of nicotine addiction, which also serve as important examples of cultural capital within smoking communities. If we were

inclined to arrange the classifications of serious and casual smoking in a hierarchical structure (and I feel that there is an argument to be made based on the responses regarding these two classifications that this is how casual and serious smoking are viewed in smoking communities), then the recognition and esteem conferred on smokers who have mastered these skills serves as capital accrued to put one into the class of "serious smokers." Objectified cultural capital, on the other hand, can be understood in such markers as having cigarettes on one's person at all times, as well as the brand choice and type of tobacco product used. The distinctions in capital conferred by these factors reflect the distinctions in taste that demarcate class in Bourdieu's view. It is important, then, that students at Kenyon seemed very concerned with the associations tied to brand identity, whereas students at COTC were more likely to disregard brand in favor of economy. This, to me, represents an example of how taste and distinction are tied to class. From the viewpoint of cultural capital within the collective smoking community represented by these two colleges, Kenyon students are more aware of how their brand choice and the type of tobacco product they use (cigarettes, cigarillos, pipes, etc.) are seen as reflecting their identity and membership in social groups, whereas COTC students, who are generally more working-class, have a more limited choice of brands due to their economic standing. If we think of the combined smoking communities in terms of a smoking "culture," then COTC students would likely have difficulty in keeping with the hierarchy of taste as Kenyon students might understand it, much like how someone who has not had the resources to obtain a cultural education that would allow them to articulate an "appreciation" of classical music would have difficulty fitting in with a group of opera aficionados.

## Conclusion

With this project, I have endeavored to create an in-depth ethnography of the smoking communities at Kenyon and Knox County COTC. By incorporating the theories of Bourdieu concerning cultural capital and distinction, I have attempted to elucidate the social mechanisms by which status as a smoker is conferred and understood. I believe that this snapshot of smoking cultures at Kenyon and Knox County COTC is reasonably accurate in terms of how they function and what the associated values and meaning are. I did encounter many problems and limitations in gathering my data, however. The most notable of these was the difficulty in making contacts at COTC, which I attribute largely to the busy schedules of those attending the college (most of the people I interviewed had children and jobs in addition to attending classes), as well as to the inability to form a snowball sample due to the relative unfamiliarity between fellow students. Another unexpected factor at COTC was the age range, which was much wider than that at Kenyon. My interviewees at COTC ranged from 28 to 48, making it extremely difficult to control for age in my sampling. Additionally, if I were to examine the connections between class and smoking again, I would like to find a more reliable and demonstrable mechanism for distinguishing class than attendance of a private liberal-arts college versus a technical college. While this does imply a difference in class, it is hard to pinpoint exactly where along the economic spectrum participants fell, and almost certainly left out members of the chronic poor entirely. I also would have liked to have more diversity in my sampling, so as to more completely examine the racial and gendered associations that emerged in the interview data.

In the course of this project, my findings have raised other questions for me in terms of

this field of smoking research. While I feel that I have positively identified class as a contributing factor in the differences between these communities, other possible contributing factors include the type of education these colleges provide, residential versus commuter campus, the level of education held by smokers (i.e. what of non-college-educated working-class smokers?), and the differences in age and the duration of one's tobacco usage. I would also be interested in seeing an examination of these two communities individually, so that one might determine if there is a marked difference in smoking behavior between majors or depending on class year.

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## Appendix – Coding Table

### Structural factors

- location
  - North campus vs South campus (Kenyon)
  - town
- smoking areas
  - college provides
  - weather concerns
- effect of college environment
  - experimentation
  - away from family
  - friends who smoke
  - parties --> assoc w/ alcohol
  - temporary timeframe
- indoor smoking ban
  - without ban = smoke more
  - novelty of smoking indoors

### Learning to smoke

- skills
  - holding
  - ashing
  - flicking
  - packing
  - inhalation
- tutoring
- limiting

### Serious smoking

- cravings / need to smoke
- addiction/dependency
- carrying a pack
- difficulty in quitting
- brand choice
- appreciation
- skills --> competency
- self-identification (addict, regular, etc)

### Casual smoking

- association w/ alcohol
- gender
- parties

### ID in opposition to nonsmokers

- sense of fellowship
- social norms of acceptability
- flaunt smoking to antagonize

### Social utility

- make friends
- remove self from uncomfortable environment
- bonding / opening up communication
- occupy hands / something to do
- sympathetic gesture
- common group activity

### Personal utility

- go outside
- mental break / study break
- introspection
- stress management
- kill time
- project image/style

### Smokers distinguished by brands

- inconsistent
- opposition of Camel and Marlboro

### Brands

- American Spirits
  - wealth
  - serious
  - environmentalist
  - occasional
- Camels
  - cheap
  - decent
  - hip/cool
  - male
- Marlboros
  - cross-class
  - female
  - stylish
  - working class
  - Reds = equalizer, safe bet

### Cigs as normative form of consumption

- unremarkable
- other products aberrant
  - not serious
  - diff social group
  - diff race
  - diff generation
  - seen along "scale" of serious use
- ID w/ self and own group
  - group membership
    - sports
    - musicians
    - artists

### Family and friends

- family discourage
- friends discourage
- family encourage
- friends encourage

### Experience of youth versus now

- Changing attitude towards smoking
- Regret

## Appendix – Verbal Consent Form

### **Script for Verbal Consent**

My name is Brendan Dieffenbach, and I am a major in the sociology department at Kenyon College. I am conducting a study of the differences between smokers on college campuses. I am conducting research as an observer of smoking activity. I was wondering if I could talk to you about yourself and your smoking habits?

If my observation and talking to you while you are smoking makes you uncomfortable or is excessively distracting to you, simply say so and I will immediately leave you alone and stop observing you, no questions asked.

It is important to note that you may not directly benefit from this study. However, the aim of this project is to establish an understanding of how social interaction occurs while smoking. Results will hopefully yield an interesting comparison of the underlying assumptions and perceptions initiating and supporting tobacco use among different groups residing in the same area. This may, for outsiders, help to clarify how and why people smoke, in addition to dispelling some of the more common stereotypes and assumptions about young smokers.

Any information obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential. Field notes taken during observation and from interviews will be kept in my personal notebook, which is always on my person or within my sight. To maintain confidentiality, you will be referred to by a pseudonym so as to conceal your identity as a participant.

You can choose whether to participate in this study or not. If you volunteer to participate, you may withdraw at any time without penalty. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer and still remain in the study.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact me at 518-396-6675 or by e-mail at [dieffenbachb@kenyon.edu](mailto:dieffenbachb@kenyon.edu). You may also contact my professor, Jennifer Johnson, at 740-427-5596 or [johnsonj@kenyon.edu](mailto:johnsonj@kenyon.edu). If you have other concerns or complaints, you may contact the Institutional Review Board at Kenyon College, located in Edelstein House. Their phone number is 740-427-5748.

## CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

### INTRODUCTION

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Brendan Dieffenbach, a student in the sociology department at Kenyon College. The results of this study will contribute to completion of a research project for the course SOCY 489: Senior Seminar. You were identified as a possible volunteer in the study because of your participation in the smoking culture at your college/university institution.

**PURPOSE OF THE STUDY:** To study the differences between smokers on different college campuses.

**PROCEDURES AND ACTIVITIES:** Interview questions will primarily explore participants' smoking habits and associations with tobacco use.

**POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS:** If you are selected for a personal interview, but are not comfortable speaking one-on-one or in-depth about your smoking habits, you may choose to end or refuse participation at any time with no consequences.

**POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY:** It is important to note that you may not directly benefit from this study. However, the aim of this project is to establish an understanding of how social interaction occurs within smoking communities. Results will hopefully yield an interesting comparison of the underlying assumptions and perceptions initiating and supporting tobacco use among different groups residing in the same area. This may, for outsiders, help to clarify how and why people smoke, in addition to dispelling some of the more common stereotypes and assumptions about young smokers.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** Any information obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential. Field notes taken during observation and from interviews will be kept in the researcher's personal notebook, which is always on his person or within his sight. For this reason, to maintain confidentiality, you will be referred to by a pseudonym so as to conceal your identity as a participant.

**PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL:** You can choose whether to participate in this study or not. If you volunteer to participate, you may withdraw at any time without penalty. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer and still remain in the study.

### IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS AND REVIEW BOARD

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact:

Principal Researcher: Brendan Dieffenbach  
Phone: 518-396-6675  
Address: Watson 008, 205 Chase Avenue, Gambier, OH, 43022. PO Box 1258.  
E-mail: dieffenbachb@kenyon.edu

Faculty Supervisor: Prof. Jennifer Johnson  
Phone: 740-427-5596  
Address: Ralston House 202  
E-mail: johnsonj@kenyon.edu

If you have other concerns or complaints, contact the Institutional Review Board at Kenyon College, Edelstein House, College Drive, Gambier, OH 43022. (740) 427-5748.

**SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT**

I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been provided a copy of this form.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Participant (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR**

In my judgment the participant is voluntarily and knowingly providing informed consent and possesses the legal capacity to give informed consent to participate in this research study

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Investigator or Designee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Investigator or Designee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**IRB APPROVAL STAMP**

## Appendix – Interview Schedule

### Interview Script

I want to thank you for agreeing to be interviewed as part of my effort to establish a clearer picture of the smoking culture on campus. I want to ask you a few questions about your experiences as a smoker and your associations with tobacco use. This interview should take no more than an hour. [Collect consent, if not already completed.] I want to ask you if I may record this conversation in order to help me take notes on your answers. I won't share this tape with anyone, and I will destroy it after this project is completed. Is that okay with you? Okay. Are you ready to begin?

1. Tell me about yourself. (Year, age, major, interests, clubs/sports)
  - Where are you from? What do your family do?
2. Tell me about the smoking culture on campus.
  - How prevalent is smoking, in your view?
  - Who smokes? Individuals, groups, clubs, sports, etc.
  - How accepted is smoking? How do non-smokers treat smokers?
  - Where do people smoke on campus?
  - Do you feel the college provides adequately for the needs of smokers?
3. How do you identify in terms of smoking?
  - How characterize freq of smoking? – low-level, casual, social, regular, addict
  - What is your current status? – habitual, addicted, quitting, cutting back
  - How much do (did) you smoke? Approx how much spend per month?
4. Why do you smoke?
  - How did you get started? Did someone teach you, or was it independent?
    - What behaviors/skills did you learn? (Inhalation, holding, ashing, etc)
  - Did any of your friends or family smoke?
  - Why do (did) you continue? Who or what supports you? Who/what discourages?
  - Social reasons or for utility / practical reasons?
  - Does being allowed to smoke inside (home, diff state) change your smoking habits?
5. How do you interact with other smokers?
  - People you don't know? Do you talk to them? Feel fellowship with them?
  - What role do cigs have in your social life? How are they used in a social context?
  - What do you notice about other people when they are smoking?
  - How do you determine circumstances? When, where, who, how much, how fast?
  - How would it affect your relationship/interactions with a friend if they quit?
  - How diff from smoking alone? How is smoking with one person diff from with a group?
6. Does taste or experience play a role in being a smoker or interacting with others?
  - What distinguishes someone as a smoker?

- Experience? (Age began, time smoking)
- Kind of cig or brand smoked? (Unfiltered, cheapies, flavors, etc)
- Skills? (Ashing, flicking, inhalation, tricks, abilities?)
- Lighting device (plastic lighter, matches, Zippo)
- Status gained or lost by becoming a smoker?
- What do you think when you see a person using the following:
  - a cigarette
  - a cigar
  - a cigarillo
  - a pipe
  - chewing tobacco
  - hookah (?)
- What characterizes a "real" smoker, in your view?

7. How do you think other people see you as a smoker?

- What does it tell them about you?

8. How do you view female smokers as compared to male smokers?

- How do you think people on campus view female smokers?

9. Is there anything else you'd like to add about your experience as a smoker?

Thank you so much for your time and your willingness to participate in this study. If you have any questions or concerns, you can contact me or the people whose contact information is on your consent form.