

# Recency Versus Repetition Priming Effects of Cigarette Warnings on Nonsmoking Teenagers: The Moderating Effects of Cigarette-Brand Familiarity

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This study focuses on the interactive effects of antismoking warnings and cigarette-brand familiarity on teenagers' smoking intent, attitudes toward the website, and sponsoring brand when exposed to entertainment websites sponsored by cigarette brands. Findings from a 3 (Warning Type)  $\times$  2 (Level of Cigarette-Brand Familiarity) factorial design experiment with nonsmoking teenagers demonstrated that text and picture warnings significantly reduced attitudes toward cigarette brands, compared to text-only or no warning. Warnings had assimilation effects on attitudes (toward brand and website) and on smoking intent in the case of familiar brands; and marginally significant contrast effects in the case of unfamiliar brands, which better reflects the repetition priming paradigm than the recency priming paradigm, and calls for attention to cigarette brands' familiarity.

The tobacco industry implicitly targets teenagers as an important source of revenue (e.g., \$330 million in total annual sales in Canada; Health Canada, 2004). According to the Canadian Council on Tobacco Control (2006), 250,000 teenagers purchase cigarettes. Smoking prevalence at an early age is a grave concern since smoking tobacco is the second most popular drug behavior among youth (Durkin, 1995). Moreover, nearly 90% of adult smokers have had their first cigarette by the end of their teenage years (Health Canada, 2003).

In an effort to curb tobacco consumption, most Western governments have imposed health warning labels on cigarette packages. These warning labels are intended to communicate smoking risks, to dissuade tobacco consumption within risky populations (Gunby, 1988, as cited in DeCarlo, Parrott, Rody, & Winsor, 1997), and to counterbalance the effects of advertising on tobacco-product consumption (e.g., Pechmann & Knight, 2002). Such health warnings have been shown to possibly inhibit smoking among

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