

that it is sometimes a mistake to move to a low nicotine cigarette immediately. Some patients become so dissatisfied with the new brand that they soon abandon the effort. Especially dangerous are compensation attempts such as smoking more of the low nicotine cigarette or smoking further down. This can increase the carbon monoxide level alarmingly.

Editor: *What group is the least receptive to the physician's anti-smoking indoctrination?*

Dr. Fredrickson: Teenagers and those under 30 years old. Unlike middle-aged patients, this group is less concerned with physical deterioration and its implications and therefore difficult to reach on most health-related issues. Hopefully, this attitude will change as the smoking habit is regarded less as a joke and more as a form of true drug addiction. As teenagers turn away from hard drugs, perhaps they will choose not to "get hooked" on cigarettes as well. It is also worth mentioning to parents who smoke that the incidence of teenage smoking is dramatically higher among children of smokers. The successful elimination of smoking could prove valuable to their children's health, as well as their own.

Editor: *Thank you, Dr. Fredrickson.* ©

Responsible Scientists

The debate on most matters at the intersection of science and society is largely conducted in the public, not the scientific forum. When scientists express opinions on scientific matters in the public forum they are not subject to the sanctions that regulate opinions expressed in the usual channels of scientific communication. Because these traditional sanctions do not operate, the extra-scientific debate often tends to be irresponsible scientifically: lower standards of proof are demanded in the public than in the professional debate, and half-truths are too often perpetrated on the public by scientists.—Alvin M. Weinberg, Director, Institute for Energy Analysis, Tennessee. *Science* 191:341, 1976.