



# Preface

**T***obacco in History and Culture: An Encyclopedia* is a unique resource. It is a single authoritative encyclopedia on every aspect of tobacco, one of the world's most pervasive substances. We expect this encyclopedia to be used by a wide variety of groups. While it is a useful resource for high school and college curricula in courses on history, business, health, and political science, it is also a scholarly resource for those doing research related to tobacco and its history.

There are over 130 entries in this encyclopedia, each written by an expert in his or her field. The editorial team has assembled the best contributors from all the fields in which tobacco exists—historians, anthropologists, sociologists, economists, botanists, chemists, pharmacologists, physicians, epidemiologists, biostatisticians, lawyers, activists, policy makers and analysts, and collectors. Many of our authors fit more than one of these descriptors. We have endeavored to cover the entire history of tobacco, from its prehistory in Mesoamerica to the most recent developments. Because tobacco knows no political boundaries, the scope of this encyclopedia is international.

In the pages that follow the reader will find a vast array of information, historical and contemporary, from throughout the world. Entries cover the scientific aspects of tobacco, its botany, chemistry, and pharmacology. Here the reader will find out what the tobacco plant is, how it grows, and the chemicals it makes. Special attention is given to nicotine, the plant's psychoactive ingredient. Some chemicals are present in the plant but others are produced when tobacco is burned. These, too, are discussed in the encyclopedia, with the most up-to-date information available.

The tobacco plant requires special cultivation and processing in order to bring it to the point at which it can be consumed. There are specialized entries on all the aspects of bringing tobacco leaf to market. Slave plantations, sharecropping, peasant and tenant farming, and other methods of organizing tobacco cultivation and the labor associated with it are fully considered; as are the methods of growing, harvesting, and curing the leaves and getting them to the manufacturers. The reader will learn in these pages of the diverse types of tobacco leaf and the different ways tobacco is consumed. "Virginia," "Burley," "flue-cured"—words that are often used when talking about tobacco—are given clear definitions.

Tobacco leaves have been consumed in many ways, all of which, with the exception of the modern cigarette, were known in the Americas before the arrival of Christopher Columbus at the end of the fifteenth century. The pipe, the cigar, and the cigarette are the most common forms of consuming the smoke from burning tobacco, but there are many other, more local, forms of smoking that are less common. While we are now accustomed to think of burning the leaf as the most common way of consuming

tobacco, it has not always been so. Tobacco has been consumed as a drink, in the form of an infusion; it has been chewed; and it has been taken in powder form in the mouth and as a nasal preparation. While we generally think of tobacco as a recreational substance it has not always been that way. For many centuries, and up to quite recently in the west, tobacco was used for medical needs, in the form of poultices for abrasions and infections and enemas for ailments of the gut. The reader will find a wealth of fascinating material about these methods of consumption in the encyclopedia.

The cigarette—shredded tobacco leaf in a paper wrapper with or without a filter—is a recent addition to the myriad ways of consuming tobacco. It is the icon of the modern tobacco industry. In the encyclopedia, the reader will find entries on all aspects of the cigarette, from its first appearance in the early nineteenth century to its industrialization with mass-production machinery in the late nineteenth century and to its contemporary dominance over all other methods of consuming tobacco throughout the world. Entries on the business side of cigarette production discuss big players, both companies and individuals, in the history of this singular object; the role of advertising; globalization; and competition.

Tobacco has always been a regulated substance, whether in pre-Columbian America or early twenty-first century New York City. The history of regulation forms an important part of the encyclopedia. Select entries deal with local, national, and international regulation; with anti- and pro-smoking organizations; with advertising and sponsorship bans; and with age and gender proscriptions.

Consuming tobacco has its own varied and highly fascinating history. Whether we think about it as a sacred and highly ritualized substance in native America or as a recreational substance in a secular setting, tobacco has cultural meanings in all the societies in which it has had a place. The means of consuming tobacco, as well as the practices associated with that consumption—the technologies, the artifacts (cigarette papers and packs, cigar boxes, snuff bottles and boxes), the paraphernalia (cigarette cases and holders, tobacco containers, lighters, ashtrays, and clothing), even the gestures—are culturally active. These are discussed in the pages that follow.

Smoking, in particular, has spawned a substantial cultural industry. Whether through literature, art and photography, film, or music, both popular and classical, tobacco has been the object of cultural comment. The representations of tobacco and its consumers have been a powerful element of the history of the substance and entries on its cultural manifestation abound in the encyclopedia.

Tobacco has been a powerful agent of European settlement overseas and European colonialism. The economic development of Spanish America, Brazil, the Chesapeake colonies of Virginia and Maryland, the Caribbean islands, French and Dutch possessions in the Americas, Africa, and Southeast Asia has been, to a greater or lesser extent, affected by tobacco cultivation and its culture. Almost as soon as they realized that taxing tobacco was a lucrative business, whether by imposts or by regulating manufacture and sales through monopolies, European governments have recognized the value of growing tobacco in their distant possessions. This has been true from the sixteenth to the twenty-first century, and users of the encyclopedia will be rewarded with full discussions of tobacco's role in extending European power worldwide over this long period of time.

The second half of the twentieth century witnessed a remarkable change in our relationship with this remarkable plant. Tobacco has been implicated as a major cause of some of the deadliest of diseases and has been blamed for millions of premature deaths worldwide. Attacks on the use of tobacco have come from a wide variety of directions, from the health sector, from environmental groups, from nutritionists and fitness experts, from workers exposed to secondhand smoke, from human rights groups, not to mention government agencies themselves, often using scientific evidence

to make their case. In response, other groups have sought to argue against these findings, appealing to the importance of tobacco growing and sales to local economies and the right of the individual to choose to use tobacco. Both sides have wrangled over issues of risk, addiction, economics, and politics. The encyclopedia has entries on all of these conflicts. Other entries discuss several high-profile legal cases, which have led to extraordinary settlements, between individuals and governments, on the one hand, and tobacco companies on the other. The release of sensitive and highly secret documents from the tobacco industry, an outcome of the lawsuits, is also covered in the pages that follow.

It is well, however, to remember that conflicts over and around tobacco are not new. The encyclopedia covers the historic relationship between tobacco and religion, tobacco and the state, and tobacco and medicine, and brings out the nature of our complex association with the plant over the many centuries and in virtually every society.

We believe that this encyclopedia is unique in that it brings together, in one place, the extensive connections between tobacco and human life. We hope that our approach to tobacco will stimulate readers to appreciate the powerful ways in which this plant has made history.

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I wish to thank Sarah Turner, and the development team—Nathalie Duval, Frank Menchaca, and John Fitzpatrick—for initiating this project. I also want to thank the entire editorial team—especially Cindy Clendenon and Ken Wachsberger—for bringing the project to completion.

To the authors of the many entries, I wish to acknowledge my gratitude for their support and contributions. Finally, I would like to express my warmest and deepest thanks to my outstanding editorial colleagues, Marcy Norton and Mark Parascandola, for their unstinting efforts in giving this encyclopedia its ultimate shape and contents.

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