

Pipe Smoking

BY LEX GALLION



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The Originals: Lakotas

ONE OF THE FIRST HISTORICAL EXAMPLES WE HAVE OF PIPE SMOKING AS A PRACTICE CAN BE FOUND IN THE LAKOTA TRIBE OF NORTH AMERICA. FOR THEM, PIPE SMOKING WASN'T A HOBBY OR HABIT, BUT A DEEPLY SPIRITUAL PRACTICE. PRACTICALLY EVERY RITUAL OR SPIRITUAL ACT INVOLVED PIPE SMOKING. IN GENERAL, THE LAKOTAS SMOKED AS A COMMUNITY, AND IN THE CASES WHERE INDIVIDUALS SMOKED ALONE, AN OFFERING WAS MADE TO THE LAKOTA GODS AND SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY.



A Gift from God?



THE LAKOTAS BELIEVED THAT THE ORIGINS OF THE PIPE WERE DIVINE, A GIFT FROM THE GODS THAT SHOULD BE BOTH RESPECTED AND ENJOYED. ACROSS THE ATLANTIC, DUTCH CALVINISTS WOULD END THEIR MEALS IN SILENT PRAYER AND CONTEMPLATION WHILE PUFFING ON THEIR PIPES. NO MATTER THE REGION OR RELIGION, PEOPLE HAVE USED PIPE SMOKING AS A WAY TO MEDITATE, CONTEMPLATE, PRAY, AND DEEPEN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD AND THEIR RESPECTIVE FAITH.

Smokers: Jean-Paul Sartre

JEAN-PAUL SARTRE WAS A FRENCH PHILOSOPHER. HE WAS A MAJOR FIGURE IN EXISTENTIALISM, DEVELOPING THE PHILOSOPHY SIGNIFICANTLY AFTER ITS FOUNDATION BY SØREN KIERKEGAARD (WHO PREFERRED CIGARS). SARTRE'S FAMOUS WORKS INCLUDE **NAUSEA**, **BEING AND NOTHINGNESS**, AND **EXISTENTIALISM IS HUMANISM**.



SARTRE WAS NOT A MAN OF MANY POSSESSIONS; HOWEVER, HIS PIPE COLLECTION WAS ONE OF THE FEW EXCEPTIONS TO HIS RELATIVELY SIMPLE MATERIAL LIFE. IN HIS WORKS, ESPECIALLY IN HIS DISCUSSION OF OBJECTS, HIS PIPE WAS OFTEN USED AS AN EXAMPLE OBJECT, PARTICULARLY WHEN DISCUSSING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PIPE, TOBACCO, AND SMOKER, WHICH ALL INTERACTED WITH EACH OTHER IN COMPLEX WAYS. SARTRE WAS ALSO KNOWN TO CONSUME "TWO PACKS OF CIGARETTES AND SEVERAL PIPES STUFFED WITH BLACK TOBACCO, MORE THAN A QUART OF ALCOHOL — WINE, BEER, VODKA, WHISKY, AND SO ON — TWO HUNDRED MILLIGRAMS OF AMPHETAMINES, FIFTEEN GRAMS OF ASPIRIN, SEVERAL GRAMS OF BARBITURATES, PLUS COFFEE, TEA, RICH MEALS" EVERY DAY (COHEN 1987). IN HIS LATER LIFE, HE TONED DOWN HIS RATHER UNHEALTHY DRUG HABITS, BUT HIS PIPE REMAINED.

Smoke Over the Water

THE COLONIZATION OF THE AMERICAS AND THE ATLANTIC TRADE POPULARIZED PIPE TOBACCO OUTSIDE OF ITS TRADITIONAL INDIGENOUS USERS AND PRACTICES. EUROPEANS ALSO FOUND USE FOR TOBACCO AS A SPIRITUAL PRODUCT, USING IT TO GLORIFY THEIR NEWFOUND GOD: PROFIT. EUROPEAN INVOLVEMENT IN THE “COMMODITIZED TOBACCO BEGAN IN THE CARIBBEAN IN THE EARLY SIXTEENTH CENTURY, AND LOCAL COLONISTS SOON UNDERSTOOD THE POTENTIAL MARKETS AND PROFITS TO BE HAD” (LEMIRE, 2021). THROUGH THESE NEWLY ESTABLISHED ATLANTIC TRADE ROUTES, PIPE SMOKING SPREAD ALL OVER THE WORLD, BUT FOUND ITS LARGEST POPULARITY IN EUROPE, WHERE “COMMON PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT RANKS AND ETHNICITIES, GENDER AND AGE, INNOVATED WITHIN THIS SYSTEM, RESISTING AND REVISING, DEVISING SYMBOLIC AND SPIRITUAL MEANINGS THROUGH PIPE PRACTICE” (LEMIRE, 2021).

Types of Pipes



BRIAR PIPES ARE MADE OF BRIAR WOOD, WHICH, WHEN TREATED, IS ABLE TO HANDLE THE HEAT OF BURNING TOBACCO. BRIAR PIPES ARE USUALLY THE MOST EXPENSIVE, BUT ALSO THE LONGEST-LASTING, RESULTING IN MANY BRIAR PIPES BEING PASSED DOWN THROUGH MULTIPLE GENERATIONS OF A FAMILY.

CORN COB PIPES ARE MADE BY TREATING THE CORN COB TO WITHSTAND THE HEAT OF THE TOBACCO. THEY ARE GENERALLY INEXPENSIVE, AND ARE COMMONLY USED BY TRAVELERS OR PEOPLE INTERESTED IN TRYING PIPE SMOKING FOR THE FIRST TIME.



CLAY PIPES ARE THE LEAST COMMON TYPE OF PIPE. THEY ARE QUITE FRAGILE AND NEED TO BE SMOKED WITH MUCH MORE CARE THAN OTHER PIPES. IT IS ARGUED THAT CLAY PIPES ARE THE MOST “PURE” PIPE TO SMOKE FROM, AS THEY DO VERY LITTLE TO ALTER THE TASTE OF THE TOBACCO.

Timeline

European Colonists arrive in the Americas, discovering tobacco and learning about it's usage in Native American Society.

Cigarettes grown in popularity, meanwhile tobacco consumption decreases around the globe, especially in the United States. Pipe smoking loses it's prominence in tradition and culture.

LAKOTA TRIBE AND OTHER NATIVE AMERICAN GROUPS BEGIN TO SMOKE THE TOBACCO PLANT IN A PIPE FOR THEIR RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES.

Tobacco becomes as major cash crop in the Americas.
Pipe smoking spreads through trade to become a global phenomena.



Types of Tobacco

ENGLISH

A MIXTURE OF TOBACCO, WITH SMOKY, SPICY, AND EARTHY NOTES

BURLEY

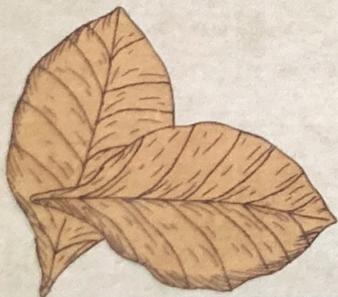
NUTTY, WOODY, MOLASSES-LIKE FLAVOR.

VIRGINA

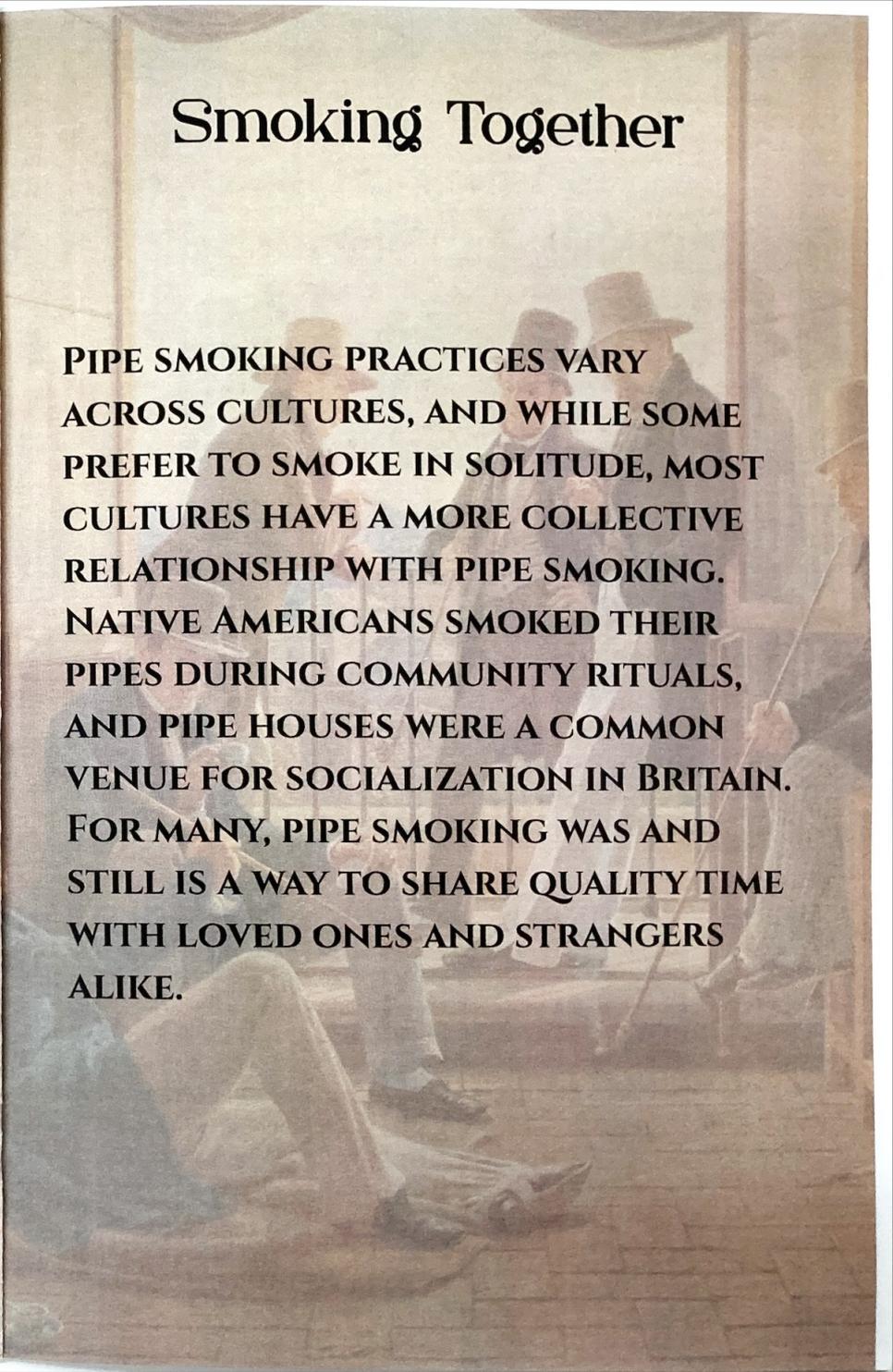
SUBTLE, TRADITIONAL TOBACCO FLAVOR, NOTES OF SWEETNESS, AND HAY

AROMATICS

PIPE TOBACCO WITH ADDED FLAVORING. FLAVORS AND SCENTS RANGE FROM VANILLA CUSTARD TO CHOCOLATE CHERRY. ADDED FLAVORS MAKE AROMATICS SOMEWHAT HARDER TO SMOKE AND KEEP LIT



Smoking Together



PIPE SMOKING PRACTICES VARY ACROSS CULTURES, AND WHILE SOME PREFER TO SMOKE IN SOLITUDE, MOST CULTURES HAVE A MORE COLLECTIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH PIPE SMOKING. NATIVE AMERICANS SMOKED THEIR PIPES DURING COMMUNITY RITUALS, AND PIPE HOUSES WERE A COMMON VENUE FOR SOCIALIZATION IN BRITAIN. FOR MANY, PIPE SMOKING WAS AND STILL IS A WAY TO SHARE QUALITY TIME WITH LOVED ONES AND STRANGERS ALIKE.

Smokers: Millicent Fenwick

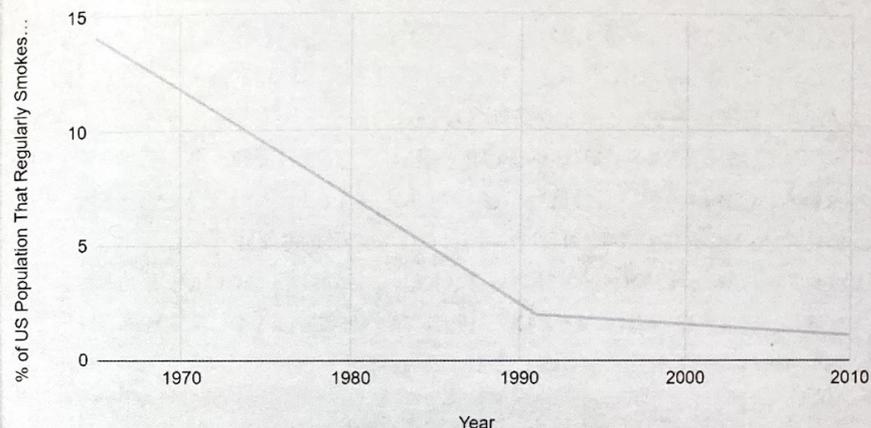


MILlicent FENwick WAS A FOUR-TERM CONGRESSWOMAN FROM NEW JERSEY. AS PART OF THE THIRD GENERATION OF CONGRESSWOMEN, SHE WORKED TO FIGHT FOR VARIOUS CAUSES, FROM THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT TO CAMPAIGN REFORM. WHILE SHE WAS A MEMBER OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY, SHE WASN'T AFRAID TO GO AGAINST THE GRAIN, VOTING AGAINST HER OWN PARTY 48% OF THE TIME. FENwick's NICKNAME WAS "THE PIPE SMOKING GRANDMA", A NAME THAT SHE DESPISED. WHILE SHE DID SMOKE A PIPE,

SO DID MANY OF HER MALE COLLEAGUES, SO SHE PREFERRED THE NAME "HARDWORKING GRANDMA", AS IT HAD THE SAME NUMBER OF SYLLABLES AND WAS MORE ALIGNED WITH WHAT SHE WANTED TO BE REMEMBERED AS. HER PIPE SMOKING WAS NOT A WAY TO GENERATE AN APPEARANCE, IT WAS SIMPLY A HOBBY SHE ENJOYED. IT IS REPORTED THAT SHE OFTEN GIFTED HER PIPES TO FRIENDS AND COWORKERS, AND WHILE SHE HAD INHERITED MILLIONS FROM HER WEALTHY FAMILY, SHE PREFERRED TO LIVE HUMBLY AND, IN TURN, HAD A RELATIVELY SMALL PIPE COLLECTION.

Where is the Pipe?

% of US Population That Regularly Smokes Pipe Tobacco vs. Year

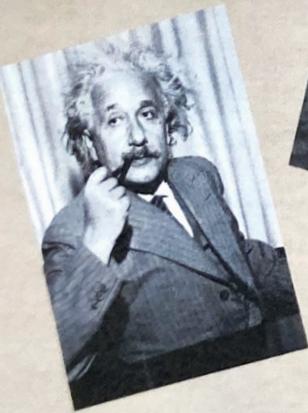
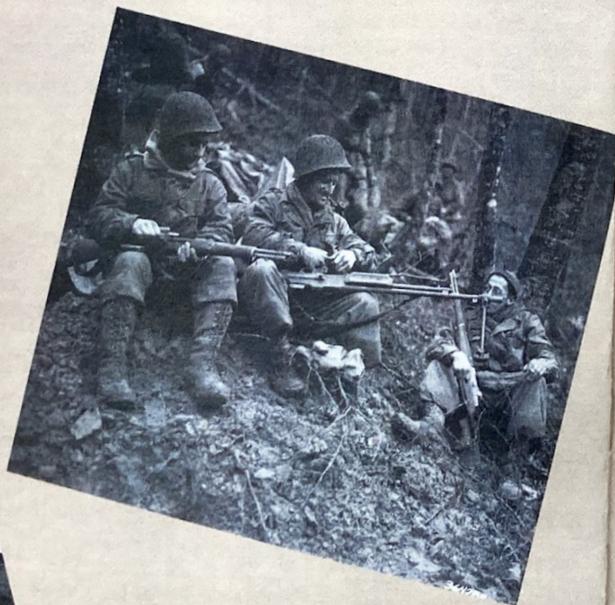


IN MODERN TIMES, PIPE SMOKING HAS SEEN A MASSIVE DECLINE IN POPULARITY. FROM 1965-1991, PIPE SMOKING RATES AMONG MEN IN THE UNITED STATES DECREASED FROM 14.1% TO 2% (NELSON, 1996). AND BY 2010, ONLY ABOUT 1.1% OF AMERICAN MEN WERE PIPE SMOKERS (KING, 2012). THESE STATISTICS DEMONSTRATE THAT PIPE SMOKING IS QUITE UNCOMMON IN THE MODERN ERA, AND WHILE TOBACCO USE HAS DECLINED IN GENERAL, PIPE SMOKING HAS BECOME THE LEAST COMMON FORM OF TOBACCO AND NICOTINE CONSUMPTION IN THE UNITED STATES.

THE REASONS FOR THIS DECLINE VARY. OUTSIDE OF THE GENERAL DECLINE OF TOBACCO SMOKING, THERE ARE ALSO AESTHETIC ASSOCIATIONS AND SHIFTS IN CULTURE THAT COULD HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE DECLINE.

Comeback?

WHILE IT IS TRUE THAT PIPE SMOKING HAS HAD A MASSIVE DECLINE IN POPULARITY IN RECENT YEARS, IT MOST CERTAINLY HASN'T DISAPPEARED. NOWADAYS, PIPE SMOKING IS LESS OF A STAPLE AND MORE OF A HOBBY. IN TODAY'S FAST-PACED WORLD, IT'S NO SURPRISE THAT PEOPLE ARE SEARCHING FOR SOMETHING THAT LETS THEM SLOW DOWN AND THINK ABOUT WHAT REALLY MATTERS. FOR MANY, PIPE SMOKING FULFILLS THAT DESIRE. AS OTHERS CONTINUE THEIR SEARCH, ONE CAN ONLY WONDER IF IT WILL LEAD THEM TO BRING BACK THIS ANCIENT BUT RELEVANT PRACTICE.



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