



31 May 2014 – From 1942' s black and white cigarette-holding Humphrey Bogart melancholically reflecting, “Of all the gin joints...” whist smoke swirls around his drink, to cigar-puffing Tony Soprano, smoking’s been an integral part of pop culture.

This image, related to charisma and being cool, is however changing. Today's cigarette packs all display warning labels in bold letters proclaiming the dangers. Some countries even have graphic images of the legion of diseases and health risks caused by tobacco: Cancers, heart issues, impotency, breathing problems...all brought to you by tobacco. Not smoking is the new cool, a sign of health, awareness and social status.

Now in pop culture, smoking is for the bad-guy, the anti-hero or the drug addict. The people

whom represent our worst traits, or good people battling their demons, but no longer the hero. The perception of smokers is expressed through new laws, no smoking bans, more stringent taxes and strong public information campaigns aimed at dissuading consumption. In the movies, as in real life, we're seeing a shift in attitudes as the risks and damages of smoking have become irrefutable.

This year's [World No Tobacco Day](#) this year aims at gaining further ground on tobacco use. Until now, tobacco-control activity has focused on taxation, pricing and demand reduction by providing smoking-cessation support, adding warnings on cigarette packs and reducing the number of places where tobacco can legally be used. The next step will address supply as well as demand, aiming for a fundamental denormalization of the use of tobacco.

The global tobacco epidemic kills nearly 6 million people each year, of which more than 600 000 are non-smokers dying from breathing second-hand smoke. Unless we act, the epidemic will kill more than 8 million people every year by 2030. More than 80% of these preventable deaths will be among people living in low-and middle-income countries. For World No Tobacco Day 2014, WHO and partners call on countries to raise taxes on tobacco.

The image of the cigarette smoking cowboy, or the cool kid lighting one up are falling behind us as we've seen where the cowboy and the cool kid ultimately ended up.