

City Beat

There are eight million stories in my albums. This is one of them...

Philip Morris launched the Marlboro brand in 1924 as a women's cigarette, based on the slogan "Mild As May". The name was taken from a street in London where Philip Morris's British factory was located. However, as early as 1885, a brand called "Marlborough" was already being marketed as a "ladies' favorite" by Philip Morris & Co. In the 1920s, advertising for the cigarette was primarily based on how ladylike the filter cigarette was, in an attempt to appeal to the mass market. To this end, the filter had a printed red band around it to hide lipstick stains, calling it "Beauty Tips to Keep the Paper from Your Lips".

After scientists published a major study linking smoking to lung cancer in the 1950s, Philip Morris repositioned Marlboro as a men's cigarette in order to fit a market niche of men who were concerned about lung cancer. At the time, filtered cigarettes were considered safer than unfiltered cigarettes, but had been until that time only marketed to women. Men at the time indicated that while they would consider switching to a filtered cigarette, they were concerned about being seen smoking a cigarette marketed to women. The proposed campaign was to present a lineup of manly figures: sea captains, weightlifters, war correspondents, construction workers, etc. The cowboy was to have been the first in this series. While Philip Morris was concerned about the campaign, they eventually gave the green light.

Marlboro's market share rose from less than one percent to the fourth best-selling brand. This convinced Philip Morris to drop the lineup of manly figures and stick with the cowboy, later known as the Marlboro Man. From 1963, the television advertisements used Elmer Bernstein's theme from *The Magnificent Seven*.

In the late 1960s, Marlboro "Longhorn 100's" were introduced. Although color-coded with gold, they were full flavor cigarettes, not lights. In 1972, Marlboro became the best-selling brand of tobacco in the world.

In order to comply with a 2006 court ruling in *United States v. Philip Morris USA, Inc., et al.*, Philip Morris (and all other cigarette companies) is now prevented from using words such as "Lights", "Ultra-Lights", "Medium", "Mild", or any similar designation that yields a false impression that they are safer than regular full flavor cigarettes.

Thus Marlboro and other cigarette companies must use only color-coding instead; for example Marlboro Lights are now called Marlboro Gold Pack. Philip Morris responded to the popularity of Pall Mall, the number three brand, by pushing Marlboro Special Blends, a lower-priced cigarette.

