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Com/Hist 368
11/18/08

Speech on Pipe Smoking

I am not here today to tell every single one of you, you need to stop smoking tobacco today or you will die. I am not here today to tell every single one of you to start smoking tobacco today and you will be happy until the day that you do die. I am here today in hope that I may strike a match amidst the smoke to enlighten at least one of you about an unjust assumption, an inexperienced understanding, and a moderately innocent bystander. The pipe is a means of experiencing tobacco that is a different, separate and often a foreign act to many people that is something in and of itself enlightening and was originally a sign of peace in the culture by which it originated, Native Americans.

I am sure you have all said or have heard, "smoking a pipe or cigar, inhaling or not, is no different than smoking cigarettes." This statement is preposterous. Cigarettes as you may know, contain over 4,000 chemicals that are additives to tobacco to make cigarettes more addicting, 44 of which are known to be harmful. Some of these are: acetone, ammonia, mercury, lead, carbon monoxide, and my favorite arsenic, the common chemical used throughout history to poison and kill people that was a resource for a movie in the early 1900's called "Arsenic and Old Lace". This movie was about two sweet old ladies who would poison lonely old gentlemen to put them to peace. As comical as the movie was, arsenic is a known killer. Back to carbon monoxide, buying a pack of cigarettes could be compared to buying a pack of 1970 Chevy Camero muscle car exhaust pipes with a filter of fiber glass housing insulation. There is a man that I know who has smoked cigarettes for years and has been trying to switch to just smoking his pipe. People always say that pipe tobacco isn't healthier it is just as addictive. Most of the times I see this Englishman he pulls a cigarette out and laughingly sniffs and says, "I know, but I need the chemicals." Pipe tobacco is simply natural tobacco leaves that are often soaked in wine or things like cherry juice to give it a hint of natural flavoring. It does not contain any of these additives. However, it does contain the natural tobacco chemical labeled as dangerous, nicotine.

"Nicotine, ah ha you said it, nicotine. That is the real demon that is to be discussed here." Agreed. Did you know that if you drank a sip of pure nicotine you would probably drop dead on the spot, also if you had a sip of pure caffeine it would give you the same conclusion. Health, which in this generation is often just a pre-cancerous condition anyways, is not a legitimate argument for at least those of you who have java in the morning or the night before a test. As caffeine wakes you up and aids you to be active in the diligent duties of the domestic day to do what you need to do, nicotine aids in relaxing you to enjoy the times that God gives you to remember that we need not be anxious, but be still. Like many people use incense or candles or a glass of wine or sitting on a couch watching a movie. Smoking a pipe is an elegant and intellectual way of relaxing and socializing with friends. As Albert Einstein said, "I believe that pipe smoking contributes to a somewhat calm and objective judgment in all human affairs."

Another concern of tobacco is tar, though pipe tobacco does produce some amount of tar it is nothing compared to a cigar, which can have up to 70 times as much tar. Like smoking a ten-foot long 2x4 versus a hand full of pine needles. You may say that all of this is still a chemical reaction to your body. Yes it is, but most of everything that we do in life is a chemical reaction to something. Using chemical reaction as a reason to damn tobacco would be like shunning ingestion of sugar because you will get diabetes, eliminating light because staring at the sun too long can make you blind, stop existing because you may get a cold. I know this is a little bit of an exaggeration. But still tobacco has been blown a little bit out of proportion because of what some bad people did to cigarettes to make them extremely dangerous and addictive. I am not saying that those of you here who smoke cigarettes should stop smoking or switch to a pipe. I am not saying that smoking a pipe is healthy and everyone should do it but it is very different to cigarettes or cigars and not as harmful as you may think. The Surgeon General says that smoking any tobacco has been proven that it can lead to cancer and heart disease, but so has eating too many Hotpockets. But in a report by the Surgeon General in the Public Health Service publication number 1103, page number 92 in a study of the different tobacco forms they came to this conclusion, "Pipe smokers who inhale live just as long as nonsmokers. Pipe smokers who don't inhale live longer than nonsmokers. [Death rate 20% less than nonsmokers]," this is often linked to a decrease in one's stress level. As unbelievable as it may seem, the real argument I would like to make in the defense of pipe smoking is as Aristotle put it, "everything in moderation."

"There is a time for war, a time for peace, a time to embrace, a time to refrain from embracing," there is a time to smoke and a time to not. It seems to me that everyone is trying to bottle immortality, I say embrace and enjoy the time of mortality that we have. There is a time to live and a time to die. We can never get around that. By all means pursue a healthy life, but never forget a healthy life will still pursue you. Jesus himself sat and enjoyed wine with his friends in his life here on earth. Jesus, I wouldn't put it past you to sit down and smoke a pipe with some sailor or common fisherman. If you live high strung and stressed out you will die at the end of a strenuous life. If you do nothing but smoke your entire life, you will have wasted it. Take into consideration not so much what you do as to in what ratio you do it. Pipe smoking can be a resource of enriching the time you do have before your inevitable expiration date. I am not asking you to do anything specific, such as start or stop smoking. I just desire that you may see tobacco in its natural form, particularly pipe tobacco in a different light and that we, pipe smokers, cigar smokers, cigarette smokers, non smokers can understand each other's similarities and differences. That we may not look at each other and see an enemy, but friends who are just trying to live their life the best they can in life liberty and the pursuit of happiness. So let us come and partake in sharing the 'peace pipe' of this new world.