

“Being Smokers” – Working Script Revised Outline

[HINTERLAND WHO’S WHO MUSIC, FADE TO COUGHING, STREET SOUNDS?]

The “Yukon Smoker” can be found in many parts of the territory, but its preferred habitat is in warm smoky restaurants, bars, bingos and other enclosed spaces. You’ll more frequently spot an indoor smoker in winter, when hibernation is a key to survival.

But the smoker’s habitat is shrinking, threatened by human development.

[normal voice, music drops]

I’m talking development of new social norms and public health regulations.

First, habitat loss came when the Whitehorse smoking bylaw forced ~~them-smokers~~ out of restaurants and bars into the streets. Next came doorways. And now there is even talk of banning public smoking territory wide.

At this time of year, you can probably recall a recent cold snap - and how hard it was to do things outside. And you probably wondered, as Mark and I did, how are those lightly clad, shivering smokers adapting to ~~their habitat~~ loss their new environment?:-

We ~~imagined-feared~~ they must be dying off in huge numbers—or at least sustaining some pretty serious injuries.

To find out more, we went to the ER at Whitehorse General Hospital ~~to investigate the effects of cold snaps and habitat loss on Yukon smokers.~~

[doors opening at hospital]

[KATE BROWN]

We were pretty surprised by what we heard from Kate Brown, the doctor on call. I mean, I can't even plug a parking meter at 30 below without crying frozen tears. So the question is then, how do those smokers survive?

To seek-find the answers ~~to these pressing questions~~, we did what any good researcher would do. At the tail end of a pretty bad cold snap, we conducted a field study of the Yukon smoker—albeit a study kind_of constrained by our own wimpiness.

[Jackets zipping up, Velcro, walking outside, closing door]

We tracked our first group at the front entrance to a building. It was about -25 with a stiff wind—and it was *exposed*. One guy, who's "smoking jacket" was a short sleeve t-shirt, darted inside before we had a chance to interview him. But two other horribly underdressed smokers remained.

[CLIP: "How many times have you had Smoker's Frosbite?" "None whatsoever....I grew up here, so I'm used to it..." Track 11: 1:00]

[CLIP: "Taste is a problem....It's not the same." Track 11: 0:45]

Mark and I learned that genetics may have something to do with their survival ability. But we also discovered these smokers are wily. They know their environment. And they can seek out a makeshift "den" when required - especially when using tools, like fire.

[CLIP: "Anywhere out of the wind... Bus shelter...." [Track 11: 2:05]

These smokers scampered inside, but we located another couple of specimens ~~in~~at a back entrance. Once again, no sign of gloves. Miraculously, ~~neither of them~~they too had ~~suffered from~~escaped the ravages of Smoker's Frostbite ~~either~~. And like the other smokers, they knew how to locate good habitat....

[CLIP: "The best spots are where smoker's congregate...." Track 12: 1:26]

At this point, we'd been standing outside for a good 5 minutes or so and my hand on the microphone was starting to freeze. We couldn't believe that these smokers didn't cover their ~~hands~~fingers while puffing in the cold. ~~More accurately, we just couldn't stop asking these smokers about the glove issue.~~

[CLIP: "Snowmobile gloves?" "Only with BBQ tongs...." Track 12: 2:59]

Ok, maybe these interviews weren't giving us the crack scientific data we wanted. The smokers were telling us all sorts of things, but we were too cold to understand them.

We also started to think that only people who were crazier than smokers standing around ~~out~~ in the cold were a couple of non-smokers asking them dumb questions.

At that point we ~~thought~~ decided the only way to really ~~figure it out, to~~ understand, ~~was~~ to *become* our subject. You know, like that guy who became a caribou.

Our first stop was a grocery store by the river.

[CLIP: "Is there a good brand for smoking in really cold weather? How's the wind resistance?"]

Next, we decided it might be smart to gear up. We paid a visit to Andrea FowlerRodger, owner of Sportees custom active wear.

[CLIP: "Our main line is specialized fleece... head to toe... The nice thing about fleece is.... We don't have a specialized line for smokers.... with a facehole..." Track 15: 0:11, 0:40, 1:00]

Although the specialized protective gear was tempting, we decided not to go for the high-tech smoker's outfit. If we were being smokers, we had to live and dress they do.

For our experiment we decided that I would smoke barehanded, while Mark would sacrifice a pair of cross country ski gloves whose odour could quite honestly be *improved* by the sweet aroma of tobacco smoke.

[IT WOULD BE GOOD TO HAVE A CLIP HERE OF MARK SELECTING HIS GLOVES – IF NOT, REMOVE THIS PART]

We just needed to choose our moment. And one night, after two hours in the non-smoking environment of a movie theatre, we pretended to be dying for a puff.

[walking in snow, doors closing?]

Remembering everything we'd learned, we went to a nice little ~~patch of habitat we'd had our eye on~~ spot where we'd often seen smokers ~~here~~ in the past.

It wasn't a full-on government building – the prime habitat for smokers in Whitehorse, but it was a crown corporation – a safe choice for us beginners.

[CLIP: Jesse and Mark smoking.]

Wrap it all up somehow.....

Outtakes

1. Track 12: 2:37 (Brenda Barnes smoking gloves)
2. Track 14: :08 (Taku interview, first guy)
3. Track 15: 2:22 (Cliff Clavin)

There's a clip of the ballcap dude talking about how he DID get frostbite, from running or something. I think it might be cool to have one outtake of him on the site, too. Great voice.