



COMMENT

Terence Blacker
The slob who became a role model for a sporting nation
PAGE 4

TUESDAY REVIEW

COMMENT • FEATURES • THE ARTS AND THE INFORMATION DAILY



LAW

The £18m question
Is this the end for football transfers?
PAGE 9



Warning: modelling can seriously damage your lungs

**CHRISTY TURLINGTON,
NHS POSTER GIRL,
talks to
SHARON KRUM**

Ask any model to list the four major food groups, then watch their picture-perfect eyeballs run a few laps inside their sockets. Of course they know the answer - models aren't stupid, you know. The food groups are, they tell you confidently: Marlboros, Camels, Benson & Hedges and champagne.

Christy Turlington, one of the original Eighties "glamazons", the supermodel's supermodel, the face David Bailey pronounced the most beautiful in the world, isn't a devotee of the model/It Girl diet anymore. But she wants you to know she once was, and that today she considers it the biggest mistake of her life.

Really? More than being photographed in pouf taffeta skirts and blazers with shoulder pads the size of canned hams? Because as a model, she committed quite a few fashion crimes in her day. She laughs, she smiles, then shakes her head vigorously. "I grew up with images that made smoking look glamorous, so you never acknowledge the truth that smoking makes you sick. It hurts you, it hurts others."

Last week, Turlington discovered she has smoking-related, early stage emphysema. She learned of the condition after undergoing a lung scan while shooting a segment on her anti-smoking crusade for the ABC television network in the US. Her doctor has said that although she is not expected to get worse, her condition is incurable. Turlington said she was shocked to have been diagnosed at 31, but will use the news to drive home the message that smoking takes no prisoners, that even models don't get an exemption.

Unless you have been living under a rock or in solitary confinement, you do know Turlington's face. The sloe eyes, the chiselled cheekbones, the inscrutable, sexual smile, it's a self-esteem crusher just seeing her in Calvin Klein adverts. In person, it's even worse.

But Turlington, who is now 31, has nothing of the diva about her. She is polite, candid, ready to expound on any topic you throw her way. She might be worth \$23m, but you'd never know it. A practitioner of yoga, a wide reader of Eastern philosophy, there is no drama to herald her arrival, no entourage. The girl is total Zen.

Wearing jeans and a grey jumper, hair pulled back in a ponytail, Turlington has clearly cut the cord from the hype and hyperbole of being a model, let alone super. And while she still uses her looks to sell products (by Klein and Maybelline), she's drawing on her celebrity to tackle her latest project - a campaign of tough talk about smoking, cancer, dying and quitting. It's not sexy like modelling underwear, but Turlington is unapologetic.

Which is why this week you will notice her on the tube in a stark new black-and-white commercial shot for the NHS's "Don't Give Up Giving Up" campaign. In it, she talks emotionally about her father's agonising death from lung cancer in 1997, aged 63. "I do the ads [she has done them in the US as well] because I have seen that testimonials are the best way to get through to people. Talking about his death forces people to confront what lung cancer is."

Turlington's own history with smoking reads more like your classic doomed love affair. She started at 13, a combination of teen rebellion and peer pressure. She rode horses, and in that world, she explains, smoking was considered a rite of passage. By 16, already a Ford model, she was puffing a pack a day to ease stress and appear more adult. At 19 she gave up

for the first time, using hypnosis. "I felt like I was addicted and I didn't like it," she recalls. But at 21 she was back where she started. She quit the second time at 25, for good, using a nicotine patch. "The guilt was really so bad. I just hated something having so much control over me. I really wanted to quit, and I did. Soon I felt much more clear-minded. Nicotine is both a stimulant and a depressant, so it can make you feel quite imbalanced."

In the process she gained 10 pounds in weight, generating fashion-industry gossip that she may be pregnant - or, worse, had become F.A.T. It was enough to end her days on the catwalk, something she had seriously been considering anyway. "I made a conscious decision to move on, even though it was hard, because there are so many things that hold you to the life - the money, the travel. But university [she graduated from New York University in 1999] was always something I intended doing, and I knew it was just going to get scarier the longer I put it off."

So while she was breathing new life into her life and her lungs, her father, Dwain, a strapping 6ft 4in Pan Am pilot, began complaining of aches, pains and lack of stamina. A lifelong smoker who had a heart attack at 50, he had cut down, but found he couldn't quit altogether. In 1997, after numerous tests at the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota, stage-four lung cancer was diagnosed. He was given six months to one year to live. Turlington said the diagnosis was like a cricket bat over the head.

"I was appalled how cold the doctor was, giving us the news. He said, well, he smoked, what did you expect? There is definitely a stigma about lung cancer, that you brought this on yourself, you don't deserve much compassion." Ironically, Dwain Turlington had finally quit smoking one month before the diagnosis.

"I think he knew. Even though it didn't change anything, it was really important for us to see him quitting as a strong last statement about his life."

Treatment began but was unsuccessful. "You try to stay positive. You read stories about remarkable recoveries. He was coughing up blood, he was in so much pain, but only in the last week did it hit me that he was dying."

Three days before his death he slipped into a coma. Turlington, along with her mother and two sisters, made the call not to resuscitate. "God, it was a huge decision. You never think as a child of being in that position."

The family kept a vigil, and then suddenly, "his breath got longer and more laboured, there was a final exhale, and then it seemed like every limb just gave out. I felt it was a relief for him."

In her grief, Turlington swung into action. She contacted the US Anti-Cancer society and volunteered her services. In interviews she made a point of mentioning her father's death and her own battle to quit.

Three years down the track, she is now a battle veteran, more driven than ever. Her primary focus today is on the "tweens", the 10- to 13-year-olds who, research shows, are highly susceptible to pop-culture images, peer pressure and, yes, celebrities with a message. "Teenagers," she says, with some understatement, "are difficult to get through to." So you need to hit'em hard, and get'em young. But how do you make smoking "uncool" when each successive generation of adolescents uses cigarettes to rebel, to play grown up

Continued on page 7

Christy Turlington



A still from the campaign PA

Continued from page 1

like their parents and grandparents before them?

Turlington agrees that it's tough, and that there's no one solution. The key, she suggests, is peer pressure. "It can get you to start, so it can get you to stop," she says. "One way is to get the cool kids to turn off it, by explaining the health problems, by telling them guys think girls who smoke are unattractive. I know young girls worry about quitting and putting on weight, and I tell them: look around you. There are plenty of fat people who smoke."

She says the message seems to be making headway. Teens and "tweens" are writing to her about giving up. Turlington says it shocks her to realise how much power the culture accords to celebrities, how a model can make people listen when doctors and parents cannot – although in this instance, she is beyond questioning how warped things are, just thankful for it.

"I hate the idea that a public figure has more of a responsibility to set an example than others. All people have a responsibility for their actions, but when you are a public figure, you learn very quickly your behaviour does have an impact."

So out of a modelling career based on surface perfection, Turlington has carved a second act with much more depth. Not that she regrets any of Act I, which sent her around the world to exotic locations, working with creative people and wearing chic (for the most part, at least) couture clothes.

Modelling came calling on Turlington at an age when she was, she says, too young to realise what she was getting into. "The scrutiny is intense, and so you actually start building up a wall to protect yourself. Initially though the industry gave me confidence, because I was gawky and it helped me feel less awkward."

She was spotted riding her horse near her Miami home when she was 13 by a photographer who sent the photos to a local model agency. Within two years she had moved to New York, and at 16 landed a layout inside fashion's bible – *US Vogue*.

Then in 1989, Turlington's world exploded. Peter Lindbergh shot her, along with Naomi Campbell, Tatjana Patiz, Linda Evangelista and Cindy Crawford for the cover of *British Vogue*. The image of all that Amazonian beauty shook up the fashion

industry, and designers including Versace moved with lightning speed to showcase the quintet in his next show. Newly minted a "supermodel", Turlington was part of the pack Evangelista once quipped "wouldn't get out of bed for less than \$10,000."

"I loved modelling because of what it gave me – freedom, travel. The worst part was the modelling itself, to be honest. There was always too much tension at all the shows." When Turlington left the catwalk, pundits predicted she would be straight on the next plane to Hollywood – but no. "I was never interested in acting. And I wasn't going to do it just because it was available to me. I needed to feel connected to what I do."

Which proved to be university (a liberal arts degree in comparative religions) and then business. Turlington today runs two companies: Nuala, a line of yoga wear and Sundari, a range of Ayurvedic skin care which last month arrived here via Harvey Nichols' pristine counters.

Business, she says, takes up the bulk of her time, while the remainder is devoted to yoga practice, commitments to advertising clients and, she adds wistfully, making meaning out of her father's death through anti-smoking initiatives.

Turlington's love life has always been a bit of a disappointment to gossip columnists and tabloid magazines, though she certainly likes it that way. Unlike some models, famous for serial-dating millionaire playboys and dotcom Titans, Turlington, who once dated actor Christian Slater, was involved with actor Jason Patric for five years before ending the relationship earlier this year. Now she is single, but in case you are wondering, she won't date a man who smokes.

"I just can't stop doing this," she says. "And the more feedback I get that my speaking out is positive, the more passionate I become. I just don't want anyone else to have to go through what I did."