7. A device in accordance with any preceding claim, further comprising a microcontroller, the microcontroller configured to control the supply of electrical power to the heating element and configured to activate the positioning mechanism following the supply of predetermined amount or duration of electrical power to the heating element.

8. A device in accordance with any preceding claim, wherein the positioning mechanism is configured to conduct electricity to the heating element.

9. An aerosol generating device, comprising:

a housing configured to receive an aerosol-forming substrate;

a heating element configured to heat a portion of the aerosol-forming substrate, and

a positioning mechanism configured to move the heating element from a first position next to a first portion of the aerosol-forming substrate, to a second position spaced apart ~~away~~ from the aerosol-forming substrate and then to a third position next to a second portion of the aerosol-forming substrate.

10. A device according to claim 9, wherein the housing is configured to receive a aerosol-forming substrate that is substantially tubular or cylindrical and defines a longitudinal axis, and wherein third position is longitudinally removed from the first position.

11. A device according to claim 9 or 10, wherein the heating element is positioned externally of the aerosol-forming substrate in the first, second or third positions.

12. A device according to claim 9 or 10, wherein the device is configured to receive a aerosol-forming substrate that comprises a tubular portion, and the heating element is configured to be positioned internally of the tubular portion in the first and third positions.