

Hollywood movies push kids to smoke. *What are the directors thinking?*

While R-rated 2002 Oscar® contender *In the Bedroom* flashes Marlboros at older teens and adults, most tobacco shots in recent top-grossing movies are actually in films rated G, PG or PG13. Parents now have no way to know if a movie or video promotes a powerful addiction that captures most of its victims by age 18—and kills a third of them in adulthood.

Here's the connection. Big Tobacco kills more Americans than murder, suicide, illegal drugs, drunk driving and AIDS combined.

Yet studies controlling for all other factors, like parents and friends who smoke, find that non-smoking teens exposed to frequent smoking on screen are two-and-a-half times more likely to start smoking themselves. Good guy or bad guy doesn't matter. It's the smoking on screen that counts.

Behavior modeling and status-seeking are key to tobacco industry marketing efforts. Tobacco ads are banned on TV,



Wolfgang Petersen used Marlboros to smoke up a storm.



Kevin Lima's campy *Cruella De Vil* went video platinum.



Bryan Singer's heavy-smoking X-Men comic was rated PG13.



Brett Ratner made *Hoya de Monterrey* cigars family fare.

When legal limits on youth tobacco promotion tightened in other media, and theaters began enforcing R ratings more strictly, the share of tobacco incidents in movies rated G, PG and PG13 jumped 300%. Coincidence?

and poster and magazine tobacco promotion to youth is now restricted. That means Hollywood movies are one of the last major channels for promoting tobacco to young people in the U.S. and overseas.

Big Tobacco publicly promised to halt cash payoffs to Hollywood in 1989. But

smoking on screen has skyrocketed over the past decade. Directors portrayed tobacco in almost 80% of the top 50 films last year.

Is this corruption or stupidity?

In recent news stories, directors and studio bosses have blamed it all on spoiled stars. But nothing gets on screen in Hollywood unless the director decides to put it there.

Example? Russell Crowe didn't smoke in *Gladiator*. If he lights up in other films, it's only because the film's director invites him to smoke.

What excuse can there be to place a deadly, addictive product in kid-rated movies? In terms of public health, there is no excuse. Smoking and secondhand smoke kill 480,000 Americans each year, 4 million people globally.

And since smoking doesn't sell movie tickets (unlike violence or sex), there's no box office rationale either.

Yet Hollywood's political lobby, the MPAA, flatly refuses to warn parents that a movie or video pushes a lethal—and highly profitable—addiction.

Censorship is not the answer. If

top directors sincerely think their projects are "compromised" unless they shill for Big Tobacco (which spends as much on marketing alone as Hollywood grosses in total each year), that's show business.

But let's give children and teens a chance by exercising common sense:

1] **ROLL ON-SCREEN CREDITS** certifying that nobody on a production accepted *anything* of value from any tobacco company, its agents or fronts. It's time to restore public trust.

2] **RUN STRONG ANTI-TOBACCO ADS IN FRONT OF SMOKING MOVIES.** Put them on tapes and DVDs, too. Strong spots are proven to immunize audiences of *all* ages.

3] **QUIT IDENTIFYING TOBACCO BRANDS** in the background *or* in action. Brand names are totally unnecessary.

4] **RATE EVERY SMOKING MOVIE "R."** That will give parents the power to protect their children from the tobacco industry.

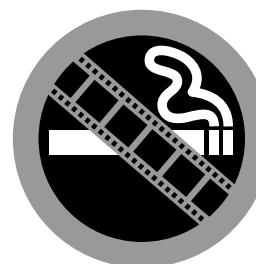
DID YOU KNOW? Two out of three tobacco shots in the Top 50 movies from April 2000-March 2001 were in G, PG and PG13 films. A sample now on video:

Shots/hr*	Film	Rating	Director	Box-office Gross
33	The Perfect Storm	PG13	Wolfgang Petersen	\$182 million
25	What Women Want	PG13	Nancy Meyers	\$182 million
23	Charlie's Angels	PG13	Joseph McGinty Nichols	\$125 million
19	The Family Man	PG13	Brett Ratner	\$76 million
19	X-Men	PG13	Bryan Singer	\$157 million
14	Vertical Limit	PG13	Martin Campbell	\$68 million
13	102 Dalmatians	G	Kevbin Lima	\$67 million
12	Save the Last Dance	PG13	Thomas Carter II	\$89 million
11	Road to El Dorado	PG	Bibo Bergeron et al.	\$51 million
10	Shanghai Noon	PG13	Tom Dey	\$57 million
8	U-571	PG13	Jonathan Mostow	\$77 million
8	Gone in 60 Seconds	PG13	Dominic Sena	\$102 million
6	Cast Away	PG	Robert Zemeckis	\$232 million
6	Meet the Parents	PG13	Jay Roach	\$166 million
4	Finding Forrester	PG13	Gus Van Sant	\$52 million

*Shots including tobacco product, use or reference / total running time. Full list on web site.

Get the whole story at SmokeFreeMovies.ucsf.edu

Smoke Free Movies aims to sharply reduce the film industry's usefulness to Big Tobacco's domestic and global marketing—a leading cause of disability and premature death. This initiative by Stanton Glantz, PhD (coauthor of *The Cigarette Papers* and *Tobacco War*), of the UCSF School of Medicine is supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund. To learn how you can help, visit our website or write to us: Smoke Free Movies, UCSF School of Medicine, Box 0130, San Francisco, CA 94143-0130.



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