

[One in a Series]

WHY *THE KING'S SPEECH* WOULD NOT BE RATED "R" FOR SMOKING...

There are only two exceptions to the proposed R-rating for tobacco imagery, a policy backed by leading public health authorities, and others, worldwide.

(1) Does the film portray actual historical figures who actually smoked?

(2) Does the film unambiguously depict the dire health effects of tobacco use?

Albert Windsor, the Duke of York, who smokes insistently throughout *The King's Speech* (Weinstein: R), was in fact a cigarette smoker.

The movie's pointed dialogue about smoking ("Sucking smoke into your lungs will kill you") reflects the rise of research evidence, in

the 1930s, that smoking causes lung cancer.



...AND WHY A MOVIE LIKE *THE TOURIST* (SONY: PG-13) WOULD BE RATED "R". Fictional characters smoking with no health consequences get an "R". Because young audiences recruited to smoke by such imagery pay the price instead.

Tobacco companies in that era involved some doctors in downplaying the risk from cigarettes, just as they made deals with movie studios and their contract stars to advertise cigarettes as "kind to my throat."

Britain had the world's highest lung cancer rate at the time.

Fifteen years after his coronation as King George VI, Albert Windsor himself developed lung cancer. He died in 1951, at age 56.

That wasn't part of the movie's story, of course. And it need not have been. To deserve a G, PG or PG-13 rating, it's sufficient that the Albert Windsor depicted in the film was, in real life, a smoker.

That's reasonable, isn't it?



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