

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

While 2002 Oscar® contender *In the Bedroom* flashes Marlboros at older teens and adults, most screen smoking in recent top-grossing films has taken place in G, PG and PG13-rated movies. How can parents know if a movie or video sells a powerful addiction that captures most victims by age 18—and kills a third of them in adulthood?

Carefully controlled studies find that non-smoking teens exposed to frequent smoking on screen are two-and-a-half times more likely to start smoking themselves. And it makes no difference if it's the good guys or bad guys who smoke.

With tobacco ads banned on TV and billboards, and magazine promotion to youth restricted, Hollywood movies have become one of the last major channels for promoting tobacco to young people both in the U.S. and overseas.



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.

While legal limits on tobacco promos to the young got tougher in other media, tobacco incidents in kid-rated movies jumped 300% last year. Coincidence?

Big Tobacco publicly promised to halt payoffs to Hollywood in 1989. But movie smoking has skyrocketed since then.

Film 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 wants 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 public health terms, there is no excuse. Smoking and secondhand smoke kill 480,000 Americans every year, 4 million globally.

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

Yet the MPAA, Hollywood's political lobby, flatly refuses to give parents warning that a movie or video pushes a lethal addiction.

Censorship isn't the answer. If directors think projects are "compromised" unless they shill for Big Tobacco, that's show business.

But let's give our kids 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.

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.

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

4] RATE EVERY SMOKING MOVIE "R" to give parents the power to protect children against the tobacco industry.

Two out of three tobacco shots in the Top 50 movies from April 2000-March 2001 were in kid-rated films.

Shots/hr*	Film	Rating	Director
33	The Perfect Storm	PG13	Wolfgang Petersen
25	What Women Want	PG13	Nancy Meyers
23	Charlie's Angels	PG13	Joseph McGinty Nichols
19	The Family Man	PG13	Brett Ratner
19	X-Men	PG13	Bryan Singer
14	Vertical Limit	PG13	Martin Campbell
13	102 Dalmatians	G	Kevin Lima
12	Save the Last Dance	PG13	Thomas Carter II
11	Road to El Dorado	PG	Bibo Bergeron et al.
10	Shanghai Noon	PG13	Tom Dey

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

Full list of directors 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 0150, San Francisco, CA 94143-0150.



**SMOKE
FREE
MOVIES**