

If Hollywood studios are doing Big Tobacco's dirty work for free, shareholders should sue them for stupidity.

Smoking in the movies is worth millions to Big Tobacco. Yet Big Tobacco says it doesn't pay Hollywood studios a dime to promote smoking on screen. Are the studios betraying their shareholders...*and* our kids?

Tobacco companies used to pay the studios cash to get their smokes into films. \$350,000 to place Larks in a James Bond movie, for example.

Under Congressional scrutiny, Big Tobacco claims it stopped making these payoffs in 1989. Yet smoking promotion in the movies has skyrocketed since then.

More stars have been lighting up on screen over the past ten years. And America's most advertised brands get the most screen time.

How much is the big-screen worth to global tobacco firms? They're barred from advertising on TV and increasingly restricted in their efforts to addict new, young smokers in the U.S. Big Tobacco needs the movies to repeatedly, indelibly impress young viewers in theaters, on home video and by satellite worldwide.

Outside of the U.S., Charlie Sheen and Antonio Banderas have advertised Parliament cigarettes for Philip Morris.

So imagine what top-tier stars like Julia Roberts, Gwyneth Paltrow, Brad Pitt and Leonardo DiCaprio are worth when they smoke on screen, as if they personally endorse smoking.

In *Titanic* (PG-13, from Viacom's Paramount Pictures), DiCaprio and costar



Studios controlled by Steve Case, Sumner Redstone, Michael Eisner and Rupert Murdoch have all promoted smoking in their movies. Shareholders should ask...why?

Kate Winslet both lit up, equating cigarettes with romance and rebellion for 75 million ticket buyers in the U.S and tens of millions more overseas.

Based on comparable TV advertising rates, *Titanic* was worth at least \$5 million to the tobacco industry. Multiply that by all the other top-grossing movies which have promoted smoking over the last ten years.

Either the studios and their parent corporations benefit, in which case they're corrupt. Or else they're doing it for nothing, in which case they're stupid. And, arguably, in breach of their fiduciary duty to shareholders.

Just follow the money. News Corp (Fox) and Philip Morris CEOs sit on each other's boards. AOL TimeWarner (Warner Bros.), Viacom (Paramount), Vivendi (Universal) and Disney (Touchstone, Hollywood Pictures, Miramax) all have print and broadcast properties hungry for the hundreds of millions of dollars tobacco conglomerates spend on ads for everything from tobacco to beer to cookies worldwide.

Even Sony (Columbia Tristar) risks its reputation by glamorizing tobacco.

After all, smoking doesn't sell movie tickets. But movies do sell cigarettes.

Remember Big Tobacco's history of payoffs. Today's sanctions against marketing tobacco to teenagers and the sensitivity among institutional investors in these media giants suggest top management should take the following steps:

1] ROLL ON-SCREEN CREDITS certifying that nobody on the 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 ANY SMOKING MOVIE "R." While this may identify smoking with maturity, it should give producers pause.



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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 94145-0130.