

[One in a Series]

HOW MANY STUDIO EXECS DID IT TAKE TO OK SMOKING IN A “PG” MOVIE?

Feature animation requires hundreds of people, millions of dollars, terabytes of computer graphics. In PG-rated *Rango*, opening March 4, all that hard work and ingenuity is used to blow smoke in the faces of families around the world.

What was Paramount thinking? The scientific evidence is undisputed: How much smoking kids see on screen, as early as grade-school, predicts if they will start smoking as teens. The exposure *causes* kids to smoke, says the National Cancer Institute.

In 2010, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention listed the R-rating as an effective disincentive for smoking in the films kids see most. *Four years ago today*, at the MPAA’s own invitation, Harvard School of Public Health recommended that the studios “eliminate” smoking from movies accessible to children and teens.

So what’s the excuse this time? Does *Rango* show much smoking? Few PG films do. So why include it at all? It’s a bad guy who smokes? No excuse, either. The research finds that bad guys can have more influence than good guys on kids’ starting to smoke.



Sure, the MPAA gave *Rango* a fine-print “smoking” label. But Harvard warned the MPAA such labeling was “cynical,” comparing it to tobacco industry tactics.

Joe Camel meets the Marlboro Man. *Rango* isn’t the only movie with smoking. Twenty-one films nominated for Oscars® this Sunday happen to include smoking. More than 40 percent of them are rated PG or PG-13 (see table).

The good news? Movie smoking has dropped steadily in recent years, though it’s still higher than in the late 1990s. Many in the industry are making kid-rated films smokefree.

But as *Rango* suggests, only the R-rating can send the signal to *every* studio:

If you’re selling to kids, don’t sell them out.



SmokeFreeMovies.ucsf.edu

Oscar®-nominated films with smoking, 2010			In-Theater Tobacco Impressions (Top 10 Films Only)
The Kids Are All Right	Comcast (Universal)	R	
The Wolfman	Comcast (Universal)	R	30,000,000
Alice in Wonderland	Disney	PG	425,000,000
I Am Love	Magnolia	R	
The Way Back	Newmarket	PG-13	
127 Hours	News Corp. (Fox)	R	
Black Swan	News Corp. (Fox)	R	435,000,000
Winter's Bone	Roadside Attractions	R	
The Illusionist	Sony	PG	
Another Year	Sony	PG-13	
The Social Network	Sony	PG-13	280,000,000
Country Strong	Sony	PG-13	
Salt	Sony	PG-13	180,000,000
Animal Kingdom	Sony	R	
Barney's Version	Sony	R	
Hereafter	Time Warner	PG-13	10,000,000
The Town	Time Warner	R	70,000,000
True Grit	Viacom (Paramount)	PG-13	1,850,000,000
The Fighter	Viacom (Paramount)	R	685,000,000
The King's Speech	Weinstein	R	700,000,000
Blue Valentine	Weinstein	R	

TWO-THIRDS of the 31 films nominated in feature-length, English-language, non-documentary Academy Award categories include smoking. The ten highest-grossing movies on this list delivered 4.7 billion tobacco impressions to audiences. PG and PG-13 films delivered 58% of that total.