

Ontario-Released Movies, Ratings, and On-Screen Tobacco, 2011

Ontario Film Review Board (OFRB) and Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) movie ratings of top-grossing films released in Ontario, Canada, from January through December 2011 were analyzed along with the movies' tobacco content and estimated in-theater tobacco impressions.

Results show that movies were more often youth rated in Ontario than in the USA. Research suggests that movie rating systems allowing youth access to films rated "R" in the USA expose young people to substantially more on-screen tobacco impressions.¹ The more smoking that youth see in movies the more likely they are to start smoking.² Therefore, the portion of new youth tobacco users attributable to exposure to on-screen smoking is likely to be even higher in Ontario than the 44 percent estimated for the USA.¹

Ontario youth exposure to on-screen smoking can be significantly reduced with an 18A rating for new movies with tobacco content.³ Neither the OFRB nor the MPAA currently include tobacco as a rating factor.⁴ The history of the tobacco industry's collaboration with Hollywood, including paid product placement, is well documented.⁵ In Ontario, tobacco remains the leading cause of preventable disease and death, killing 13,000 Ontarians every year.⁶

In Ontario, the majority of movies that contain tobacco are rated for children and teens (G, PG, 14A) (Table 4)

- Of the 62 movies with tobacco content, 85% (53/62) were youth-rated by the OFRB (G/PG/14A); 56% (35/62) were youth-rated by the MPAA (G/PG/PG-13).

In Ontario, more in-theatre tobacco impressions are delivered by movies rated for children and teens. (Table 5)

- 80% (509 million/632 million) of tobacco impressions were delivered in movies youth-rated by the OFRB to Ontario theatre audiences. In the USA, 67% (9.9 billion/14.7 billion) of tobacco impressions were delivered by movies youth-rated by the MPAA.

In Ontario, more top-grossing movies are rated for children and teens. (Table 2)

- 92% (123/134) of top-grossing movies in Ontario were youth-rated by the OFRB. In the USA, 72% (96/134) of the same movies were youth-rated by the MPAA.
- Two-thirds (89/134) of all top-grossing movies received a lower rating in Ontario than in the USA, making them more accessible to younger audiences.
 - 30% (27/89) of Ontario's youth-rated films were adult-rated ("R") by the MPAA (e.g., *Bridesmaids*, 14A, and *J. Edgar*, PG).
 - The OFRB never assigned an adult-rating (18A) to a movie that the MPAA youth-rated.

In 2011, nearly half of top-grossing movies include tobacco (Table 3)

- 46% (62/134) of all the top-grossing movies included tobacco content.⁷
- The OFRB noted "tobacco use" or "illustrated or verbal references to drugs, alcohol, or tobacco" in its online "detailed observations" for 76% (47/62) of the movies that contain tobacco.⁸
- The OFRB does not capture all tobacco content nor is it consistent when labeling tobacco content in the "detailed observations." For example, in *X-Men: First Class* two main characters hold cigars and other characters smoke or hold cigarettes. See Table 6 for additional examples.
- The OFRB's current practice of noting tobacco content demonstrates that it is monitoring tobacco content and has the capacity to include tobacco when it rates future films to ensure that youth-rated films are tobacco-free.

Methodology: The sample included 134 top-grossing movies in the “domestic” (USA and Canada) market, from January-December 2011 (Table 1). Top-grossing movies ranked among the top 10 in box office gross earnings in any week of their first-run theatrical release. Ontario and USA movie ratings were established from the OFRB and MPAA, respectively (Figure 1). Tobacco content of each movie was evaluated by Thumbs Up! Thumbs Down!, a project of Breathe California Sacramento-Emigrant Trails (USA). Tobacco impressions (paid admissions X tobacco incidents, per film) in the ‘domestic’ film market were calculated by the University of California, San Francisco, Center for Tobacco Control Research and Education and assigned to Ontario and the USA on a population basis.

Table 1: Movie Sample	Total
Top-grossing movies in Ontario ⁹	134

Table 2: Movie Ratings	Total	%
# of movies youth-rated (G, PG, 14A) in Ontario by OFRB	123/134	92%
# of movies youth-rated (G, PG, PG-13) in USA by MPAA	96/134	72%
# of movies that received a lower rating by OFRB than MPAA ¹⁰	89/134	66%
# of movies that received a lower rating by MPAA than OFRB	0/134	0%
# of movies with an adult rating (“R”) in USA and youth rating (PG, 14A) in Ontario	27/89	30%
# of movies that OFRB assigned an adult rating (18A)	11/134	8%
# of movies that MPAA assigned an adult rating (“R”)	38/134	28%
# of movies that OFRB assigned an 18A rating and the MPAA assigned an “R” rating	11/38	29%

Table 3: Tobacco Ratings	Total	%
# of movies with tobacco content. ¹¹	62/134	46%
# of movies with tobacco content where OFRB noted ‘tobacco use’ and/or ‘Illustrated or verbal references to drugs, alcohol, or tobacco.’ ¹²	47/62	76%
# of movies with tobacco content reported by TUTD but not by OFRB.	15/62	24%

Table 4: Youth Exposure in Ontario	Total	%
# of movies with tobacco content assigned a youth rating by the OFRB ⁸	53/62	85%
# of movies with tobacco content assigned a youth rating by the MPAA ¹³	35/62	56%
# youth-rated movies rated by OFRB with tobacco content ⁹	53/123	43%
# youth-rated movies rated by MPAA with tobacco content ⁹	35/96	36%

Table 5: In-Theatre Tobacco Impressions Delivered by OFRB & MPAA-Rated Movies, 2011				
	Youth-Rated	%	Adult-Rated	%
OFRB (Ontario share of all “domestic” tobacco impressions)	508,845,870	80%	123,606,496	20%
MPAA (USA share of all “domestic” tobacco impressions)	9,914,595,712	67%	4,846,398,971	33%

Table 6: Top-Grossing Movies, Domestic (Canada & US) release, 2011						
MOVIE TITLE ¹⁴	Lower OFRB rating	OFRB RATING ⁸	MPAA RATING ¹³	OFRB DETAIL 1 ¹⁵	OFRB DETAIL 2 ¹⁶	TUTD Tobacco Status ¹⁷
1. No Strings Attached	Y	14A	R	Y	Y	Y
2. Sanctum	Y	14A	R	No Observations by OFRB		Y
3. The Lincoln Lawyer	Y	14A	R	Y	Y	Y
4. Paul	Y	14A	R	Y	Y	Y
5. Bridesmaids	Y	14A	R		Y	Y
6. Bad Teacher	Y	14A	R	Y	Y	Y

Table 6: Top-Grossing Movies, Domestic (Canada & US) release, 2011

MOVIE TITLE¹⁴	Lower OFRB rating	OFRB RATING⁸	MPAA RATING¹³	OFRB DETAIL 1¹⁵	OFRB DETAIL 2¹⁶	TUTD Tobacco Status¹⁷
7. 30 Minutes of Less	Y	14A	R		Y	Y
8. Fright Night	Y	14A	R	Y	Y	Y
9. The Debt	Y	14A	R	Y		Y
10. Killer Elite	Y	14A	R	Y		Y
11. 50/50	Y	14A	R	Y	Y	Y
12. What's Your Number	Y	14A	R	No Observations by OFRB		Y
13. The Ides of March	Y	14A	R	Y		Y
14. The Thing	Y	14A	R	Y		Y
15. The Rum Diary	Y	14A	R	Y	Y	Y
16. The Descendants	Y	14A	R	Y		Y
17. The Sitter	Y	14A	R	Y	Y	Y
18. Hall Pass	Y	14A	R		Y	
19. Scream 4	Y	14A	R			
20. Horrible Bosses	Y	14A	R		Y	
21. Friends with Benefits	Y	14A	R		Y	
22. The Change-up ¹⁸	Y	14A	R		Y	
23. Don't Be Afraid of the Dark	Y	14A	R			
24. Our Idiot Brother	Y	14A	R		Y	
25. Paranormal Activity 3	Y	14A	R			
26. Young Adult	Y	14A	R			
27. J. Edgar	Y	PG	R	Y		Y
28. The Green Hornet 3D ¹⁹	Y	PG	PG-13		Y	Y
29. I Am Number Four	Y	PG	PG-13	No Observations by OFRB		Y
30. Hanna	Y	PG	PG-13	No Observations by OFRB		Y
31. Tyler Perry's Madea's Big Happy Family	Y	PG	PG-13		Y	Y
32. Water for Elephants	Y	PG	PG-13	Y		Y
33. Jumping The Broom	Y	PG	PG-13	Y		Y
34. X-Men First Class	Y	PG	PG-13	No Observations by OFRB		Y
35. Super 8	Y	PG	PG-13	Y	Y	Y
36. Midnight in Paris	Y	PG	PG-13	Y		Y
37. Transformers: Dark of the Moon	Y	PG	PG-13	No Observations by OFRB		Y
38. Larry Crowne	Y	PG	PG-13	Y		Y
39. The Help	Y	PG	PG-13	Y		Y
40. Moneyball	Y	PG	PG-13		Y	Y
41. The Three Musketeers	Y	PG	PG-13	No Observations by OFRB		Y
42. The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 1	Y	PG	PG-13	No Observations by OFRB		Y
43. Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows	Y	PG	PG-13	Y		Y
44. Mission Impossible: Ghost Protocol	Y	PG	PG-13	Y		Y
45. War Horse	Y	PG	PG-13	Y		Y
46. Country Strong	Y	PG	PG-13	Y	Y	Y
47. The Dilemma	Y	PG	PG-13		Y	
48. The Roommate	Y	PG	PG-13			
49. The Eagle	Y	PG	PG-13			











Table 6: Top-Grossing Movies, Domestic (Canada & US) release, 2011

MOVIE TITLE ¹⁴	Lower OFRB rating	OFRB RATING ⁸	MPAA RATING ¹³	OFRB DETAIL 1 ¹⁵	OFRB DETAIL 2 ¹⁶	TUTD Tobacco Status ¹⁷
50. Just Go With it	Y	PG	PG-13		Y	
51. Big Momma's: Like Father Like Son	Y	PG	PG-13			
52. Beasty	Y	PG	PG-13		Y	
53. The Adjustment Bureau	Y	PG	PG-13			
54. Red Riding Hood	Y	PG	PG-13			
55. Source Code	Y	PG	PG-13			
56. Arthur	Y	PG	PG-13		Y	
57. Fast Five	Y	PG	PG-13			
58. Something Borrowed	Y	PG	PG-13		Y	
59. Thor	Y	PG	PG-13			
60. Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides	Y	PG	PG-13			
61. Green Lantern	Y	PG	PG-13			
62. Harry Potter and the Deathly Hollows Part 2	Y	PG	PG-13			
63. Captain America	Y	PG	PG-13			
64. Crazy, Stupid, Love	Y	PG	PG-13			
65. Rise of the Planet of the Apes	Y	PG	PG-13			
66. One Day	Y	PG	PG-13		Y	
67. Apollo 18	Y	PG	PG-13			
68. Contagion	Y	PG	PG-13			
69. I Don't Know How She Does It	Y	PG	PG-13			
70. Abduction	Y	PG	PG-13			
71. Courageous	Y	PG	PG-13		Y	
72. Real Steel	Y	PG	PG-13			
73. Footloose ²⁰	Y	PG	PG-13	Y	Y	
74. In Time	Y	PG	PG-13			
75. Tower Heist	Y	PG	PG-13			
76. New Year's Eve	Y	PG	PG-13			
77. The Darkest Hour	Y	PG	PG-13			
78. Monte Carlo	Y	G	PG	No Observations by OFRB		Y
79. Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Rodrick Rules	Y	G	PG			
80. Hop	Y	G	PG			
81. Hoodwinked Too: Hood vs Evil	Y	G	PG			
82. Judy Moody and Not Bummer Summer	Y	G	PG			
83. Mr. Popper's Penguins	Y	G	PG			
84. Zookeeper	Y	G	PG			
85. The Smurfs	Y	G	PG			
86. Dolphin Tale	Y	G	PG			
87. Puss In Boots	Y	G	PG			
88. The Muppets	Y	G	PG			
89. Arthur Christmas	Y	G	PG			
90. The Mechanic		18A	R	Y	Y	Y
91. Drive Angry		18A	R	Y		Y
92. Your Highness		18A	R		Y	Y

Table 6: Top-Grossing Movies, Domestic (Canada & US) release, 2011

MOVIE TITLE ¹⁴	Lower OFRB rating	OFRB RATING ⁸	MPAA RATING ¹³	OFRB DETAIL 1 ¹⁵	OFRB DETAIL 2 ¹⁶	TUTD Tobacco Status ¹⁷
93. Hangover II		18A	R	Y	Y	Y
94. Conan the Barbarian		18A	R	No Observations by OFRB		Y
95. Straw Dogs		18A	R	Y		Y
96. Drive		18A	R	Y	Y	Y
97. A Very Harold and Kumar Christmas		18A	R	Y	Y	Y
98. The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo		18A	R	Y		Y
99. Final Destination 5		18A	R			
100. Immortals		18A	R			
101. Priest		14A	PG-13	No Observations by OFRB		Y
102. The Rite		14A	PG-13	No Observations by OFRB		Y
103. Unknown		14A	PG-13	Y	Y	Y
104. Limitless		14A	PG-13	Y		Y
105. Sucker Punch		14A	PG-13	Y		Y
106. Cowboys & Aliens		14A	PG-13	Y		Y
107. Colombiana		14A	PG-13	Y		Y
108. Shark Night 3D		14A	PG-13	Y		Y
109. Warrior		14A	PG-13	Y		Y
110. Dream House		14A	PG-13	No Observations by OFRB		Y
111. Battle: Los Angeles		14A	PG-13			
112. Insidious		14A	PG-13			
113. Season of the Witch		14A	PG 13			
114. Rango		PG	PG	Y		Y
115. Hugo		PG	PG	Y		Y
116. The Adventures of Tintin		PG	PG	Y		Y
117. We Bought a Zoo		PG	PG	No Observations by OFRB		Y
118. Mars Needs Moms		PG	PG			
119. Soul Surfer		PG	PG			
120. Prom		PG	PG			
121. Kung Fu Panda 2		PG	PG			
122. Spy Kids: All The Time in The World		PG	PG			
123. The Big Year		PG	PG		Y	
124. Johnny English Reborn		PG	PG			
125. Jack & Jill		PG	PG			
126. Happy Feet Two		PG	PG			
127. Justin Bieber: Never Say Never		G	G	No Observation by OFRB		Y
128. Gnomeo & Juliet		G	G			
129. Rio		G	G			
130. African Cats		G	G			
131. Cars 2		G	G			
132. Winnie the Pooh		G	G			
133. Lion King (3D)		G	G			
134. Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked		G	G			

FIGURE 1: OFRB & MPAA RATING SYSTEMS

Ontario Film Review Board rating system		Motion Picture Association of America rating system	
 Suitable for all	Suitable for viewers of all ages.	General Audiences 	Nothing that would offend parents for viewing by children.
 Parental guidance advised	Parental guidance is advised. Theme of content may not be suitable for all children.	Parental Guidance Suggested 	Parents urged to give "parental guidance." May contain some material parents might not like for their young children.
 Persons younger than 14 must be accompanied by an adult	Suitable for viewing by persons 14 years of age and older. Persons under 14 must be accompanied by an adult. May contain: violence, coarse language and/or sexually suggestive scenes.	Parents Strongly Cautioned 	Parents are urged to be cautious. Some material may be inappropriate for pre-teenagers.
 Persons younger than 18 must be accompanied by an adult	Suitable for viewing by persons 18 years of age and older. Persons under 18 may attend but must be accompanied by an adult. May contain: explicit violence, frequent coarse language, sexual activity and/or horror.	Restricted 	Contains some adult material. Parents are urged to learn about the film before taking their young children with them.
 Restricted to persons 18 or older	Admittance restricted to persons 18 years of age and over. Content not suitable for minors. May contain: frequent use of sexual activity, brutal/graphic violence, intense horror and/or	No One 17 And Under Admitted 	Patently adult. Children are not admitted.

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References & Notes:

- 1 Anderson SJ, Millett C, Polansky JR, Glantz S (2010). Exposure to smoking in movies among British adolescents 2001-2006. *Tobacco Control* doi: 10.1136/tc.2009.034991. Available at tobaccocontrol.bmj.com/content/early/2010/02/27/tc.2009.034991.full
- 2 US Institutes of Health. National Cancer Institute. Monograph 19: The role of the media in promoting and reducing tobacco use. Chapter 10: Role of entertainment media in promoting and discouraging tobacco use. June 2008. Bethesda, Maryland, USA. Available at <http://cancercontrol.cancer.gov/tcrb/monographs/19/index.html>
- 3 With the possible exception of portrayals of actual historical persons who actually smoked, as in biography-based dramas or documentaries, or unambiguous depictions of the dire health consequences of smoking and secondhand smoke.
- 4 Polansky JR, Mitchell S, Glantz SA (2010) *Film-Flam: How MPAA/NATO movie labels hide the biggest media risk to kids*. UCSF Center for Tobacco Control Research & Education
- 5 Smoke-Free Movies website <http://smokefreemovies.ucsf.edu/problem/bigtobacco.html>. Accessed June 17, 2011.
- 6 Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care <http://www.mhp.gov.on.ca/en/smoke-free/legislation/default.asp> Accessed March 5, 2012.

7 Breathe California of Sacramento-Emigrant Trails. Thumbs Up! Thumbs Down! www.scenesmoking.org. The Thumbs Up! Thumbs Down! Project tracks tobacco content in top-grossing new release movies. The project recruits and trains young people aged 14-22 to utilize a standardized form for analyzing tobacco content in movies. Reviewers are then assigned specific movies for analysis. The amount and type of tobacco use depicted, the demographics of who is using tobacco and any perceived messages about tobacco use are included in each review. All movies are reviewed by a team of 2-3 youth and adults.

8 OFRB website <http://www.ofrb.gov.on.ca>

9 These movies were released in Ontario and are top-grossing movies in the domestic (USA and Canada) market. See Table 6 for complete list of movies sampled.

10 Examples of rating reductions: *The Muppets* PG (US) lower rating to G (ON); *The Green Hornet* PG-13 (US) lower rating to PG(ON); *Bad Teacher* “R” (US) to a more accessible rating of 14A in Ontario, this movie also included tobacco.

11 According to Thumbs Up! Thumbs Down! www.scenesmoking.org review of tobacco content.

12 Movies with tobacco content are identified by Thumbs Up! Thumbs Down! www.scenesmoking.com. Comparisons were made on the OFRB ‘detailed observations’ for the same movies.

13 MPAA website www.filmratings.com

14 Animated films in italics. Movie with tobacco content in bold.

15 OFRB Detailed Observation: “Tobacco Use”

16 OFRB Detailed Observation: “Illustrated or verbal references to drugs, alcohol, or tobacco”

17 Thumbs Up! Thumbs Down! publishes tobacco content ranges. Precise counts are used to calculate tobacco impressions.

18 OFRB reconsidered classification decision, changing the rating to 18A since movie’s Ontario theatrical release.

19 OFRB noted in ‘detailed observations’: ‘tobacco use’ when rating the 2D version, but not the 3D version.

20 OFRB noted in ‘detailed observations’: ‘tobacco use’ and ‘illustrated or verbal references to drugs, alcohol, or tobacco’ and Thumbs Up! Thumbs Down! determined *Footloose* to be smoke-free.