

# Dispatch: Smoke, Smoke, Smoke that Cigarette?

By ACSH Staff — August 27, 2010

From [sack tapping](#) [1] to [foot tanning](#) [2] to [vodka eyeballing](#) [3], you can find just about anything on YouTube — so it shouldn't be surprising to anyone that there are a lot of videos dealing with smoking. But some New Zealand researchers are shocked that there's some content they regard as pro-tobacco. Of the 163 most popular tobacco brand-related videos, 71 percent had pro-tobacco content, the authors [write](#) [4] in *Tobacco Control*.

The researchers then suggest that there's "disturbing" evidence that the tobacco companies are behind these nefarious videos. They note some contain songs and images for which the tobacco companies own the copyright, and many of them appear to be professionally produced. (To which we'd say: *Hello?* Have you [seen](#) [5] [what](#) [6] [people](#) [7] are [posting](#) [8] on YouTube these days?)

"I don't know which is worse — the so-called study, or the reporting on it," says ACSH's Jeff Stier. "To suggest that tobacco companies are reaching out to kids via YouTube? This had nothing to do with tobacco companies! Unfortunately, cigarettes are part of society, and when people make YouTube videos they include things that are in society."

Stier says he was amazed by headlines like [this one](#) [9] in the *L.A. Times*: "Tobacco companies are reaching out to kids via YouTube, study says." Says Stier: "The *L.A. Times* doesn't use any journalist standards, they don't question the study. They report it with a straight face."

[Here's one](#) [10] of our favorite cigarette YouTube videos: a 1961 TV commercial featuring Fred Flinstone and Barney Rubble smoking Winstons.

"It's funny, right? We don't want kids watching it, we don't want to glamorize cigarettes, we condemn advertising to children — but it's funny, that's why people — not tobacco companies — put it in videos," says Stier.

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## Links

- [1] [http://www.nydailynews.com/lifestyle/health/2010/05/28/2010-05-28\\_sack\\_tapping\\_boys\\_punching\\_classmates\\_in\\_the\\_groin\\_leads\\_to\\_serious\\_injury\\_sur.html](http://www.nydailynews.com/lifestyle/health/2010/05/28/2010-05-28_sack_tapping_boys_punching_classmates_in_the_groin_leads_to_serious_injury_sur.html)
- [2] [https://www.acsh.org/.../factsfears/newsID.1798/news\\_detail.asp](https://www.acsh.org/.../factsfears/newsID.1798/news_detail.asp)
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- [4] <http://tobaccocontrol.bmj.com/content/early/2010/08/12/tc.2010.035949.abstract>
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