

# The Tobacco Connection

3/20/97

## Cultural Indicators data

All of the relevant information about tobacco-related content (programs, characters, scenes of smoking, the characters' actions, etc.) in the following media:

- Television programs (Prime time; daytime soaps; Nik at nite)
- Music videos (MTV and BET)
- Movies (top 20 movies of 1994 and 1995 each)
- Commercials (a representative random sample of over 1,000 commercials)

We know the producers and distributors of each of the above programs, videos and movies.

In addition, we have access (on our videotapes) to all of the 5,800 commercials aired during the above mentioned television fare. This would allow us to locate on a program-by-program basis all of the commercial spots placed by the tobacco conglomerates.

## Needed

### **Information on the tobacco industry's ownership of media production and distribution companies:**

A full list of the *producers and distributors of media* products owned by the tobacco interests. This will allow us to examine the effect of ownership by tobacco interests on the content of TV programs and movies.

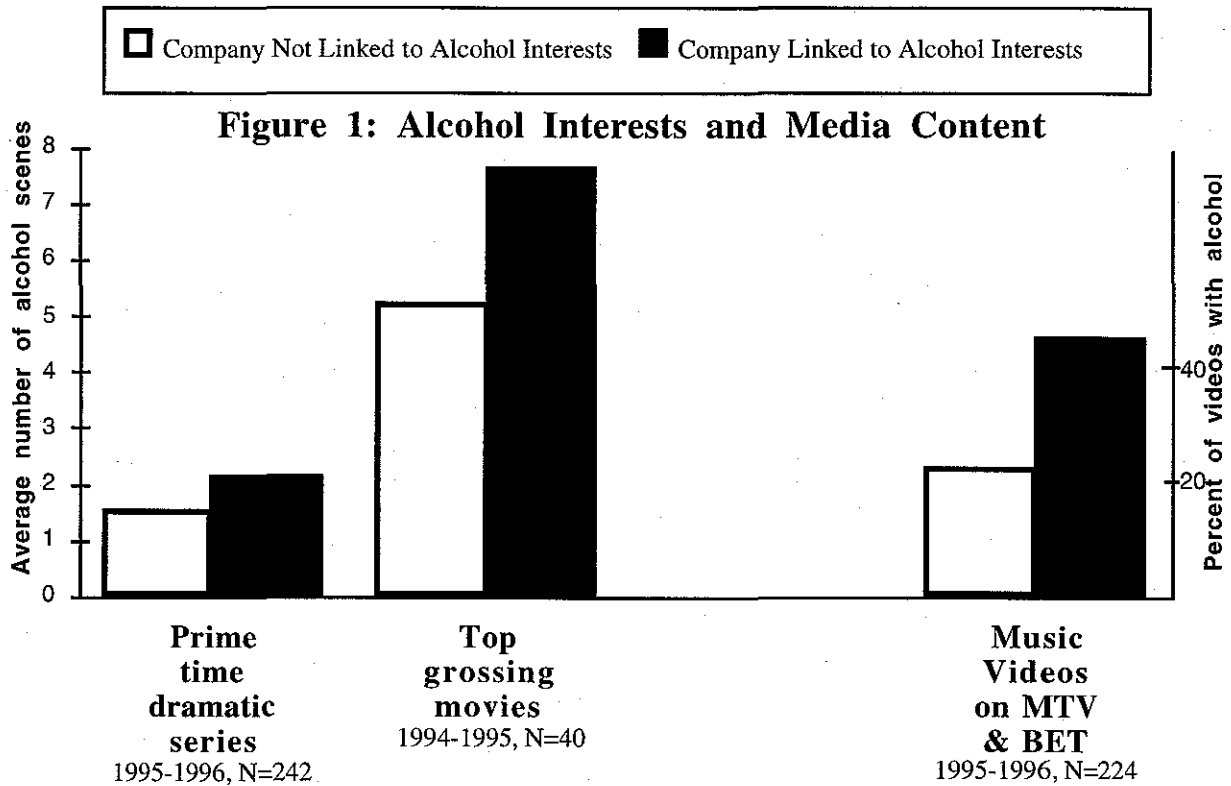
### **Information on all the other companies (and their products) owned by the tobacco industry:**

A full list of *all companies owned by the tobacco interests*. This will allow us to examine the effects of sponsorship on the content of TV programs and movies.

**1. The effect of ownership upon programming content**

Since we have no information about the ownership of media companies by the tobacco interests, we can not make any direct prediction. Our preliminary findings about the alcohol connection suggest that we can expect to find a similar result for the tobacco industry's effect on the programming content. Figure below illustrates our preliminary finding on the relationship between the alcohol interests and the media content. Media companies linked to alcohol interests are those owned by an alcohol company (MCA, owned by Seagram), those that collaborated with alcohol companies on special campaigns, and those that have revenues from alcohol advertising in print.

Television programs, movies, and the music videos produced and/or distributed by the companies that are linked to alcohol interests in the above mentioned ways had a substantially higher number of scenes that showed drinking.



We have reason to expect a parallel finding for the tobacco connection.

**2. The effect of sponsorship upon programming content**

We have preliminary findings about the sponsorship of television programs by the tobacco industry. We conducted a small pilot study using prime time programs. We identified the brands that are owned by Philip Morris and RJ Reynolds Nabisco (e.g. Kraft, Jello, Maxwell House, etc.). The following figure shows a significant association between sponsorship of programs and positive representation of smoking.

**FIGURE 2: Sponsorship of Television Shows by the Tobacco Interests**

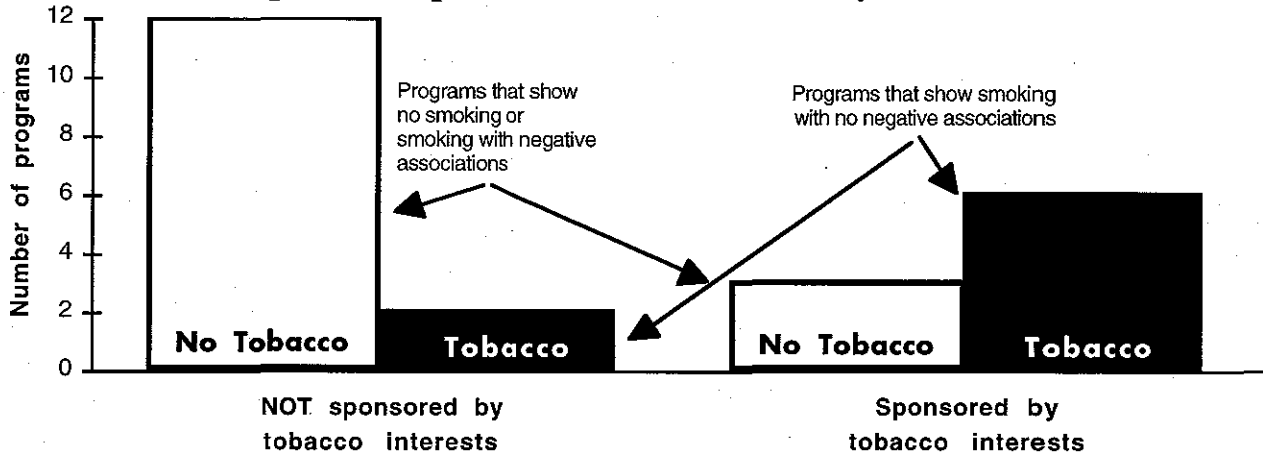


Figure 2 shows that the tobacco companies place the advertisements of the non-tobacco products they own into programs that show smoking with no negative associations.

We expect to continue this line of research once we obtain a full list of the products advertised by the companies owned by tobacco interests.

**Budget estimate**

Assuming that we get all of the ownership data from other sources at no cost to us, here is the cost of our part of the work that will result in a full analysis of the impact of ownership and sponsorship on the tobacco content of television programs. This cost will be incremented depending on the further work that may be required by a funder.

Locating the commercials	5,000
Additional analysis of tobacco scenes	2,000
Supervision of coders	5,000
Analysis and report	10,000
Overhead, equipment maintenance, travel, communication	5,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 27,000</b>