

Smoking related imagery absent from only one James Bond movie to date

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Credit: Vera Kratochvil/public domain

Smoking related imagery is conspicuous by its absence from only one Bond movie since 007 first graced cinema screens in 1962, finds an analysis in *Tobacco Control*.

And while Bond himself has stubbed out his last cigarette, with no smoking after 2002, he continues to be exposed to second-hand smoke, including from his [sexual partners](#), the findings show.

Given the links between smoking in movies and teens taking it up, and that the James Bond series of movies is the longest running and highest ever grossing movie franchise globally, these findings are of concern, say the researchers.

While several studies have delved into various aspects of Bond's lifestyle, there hasn't been any detailed consideration of smoking related content and its potential health impact since the spy first lit up in 1962.

The researchers therefore analysed these themes in the 24 Bond movies screened by Eon Productions, from 1962 (Dr No) up to the latest,

Spectre, in 2015.

They found that Bond's on screen smoking peaked during the 1960s, when he puffed away in 83% of the movies produced in that decade, after which it declined until he took his last puff in 2002 (*Die Another Day*).

When he was a smoker, he lit up, on average, within 20 minutes of the start of the film.

While smoking has declined among Bond's sexual partners over the decades, it is still happening, as seen most recently in 2012 in *Skyfall*.

Smoking by his sexual partners would have exposed Bond to considerable levels of second-hand cigarette smoke, although the typically brief nature of his romantic liaisons would have at least curbed some of the impact, suggest the researchers.

Smoking related spy gadgetry had a relatively short lifespan in Bond movies, peaking in the 1970s in 80% of the films produced during that decade, but never to be seen again after 1989.

And cigarette branding featured in two movies: in 1979 (Marlboro in *Moonraker*); and in 1989 (Lark in *License to Kill*), as part of a product placement deal with Philip Morris to open up the Japanese cigarette market.

Overall, smoking related imagery was absent in only one movie in 2006 (*Casino Royale*). In the most recent movie, in 2015, none of Bond's major associates smoked, but other characters still did, adding up to an estimated 261 million 'tobacco impressions' for 10-29 year olds in the USA alone.

The researchers note that there have been attempts in the Bond series to mention/depict the hazards of smoking, the first of which came in 1967 (*You Only Live Twice*), with subsequent references

made in 1974, 1979, 1997. And in 1999, Miss Money Penny hurls Bond's gift to her of a cigar into the bin in disgust (The World Is Not Enough).

But while there have been some "favourable downward smoking related trends in this movie series, the persisting smoking content remains problematic from a public health perspective, especially given the popularity of the series," write the researchers.

And they suggest that while [smoking](#) seems to be at odds with Bond's need for physical fitness and his level of educational attainment, it does fit with his disregard for other risks to his health.

After all, 007 has dodged thousands of bullets, he drinks a lot of alcohol, and often drives very fast, they point out. And that's without a goodly proportion of his sexual partners (nine out of 60) attempting to disable, capture, or kill him.....

More information: Commentary: Die Another Day, James Bond's smoking over six decades, *Tobacco Control*, tobaccocontrol.bmj.com/lookup/...ocontrol-2016-053246

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