

# Superman II *took \$43,000 to push Marlboros at kids. Why would Men in Black II do the same thing for free?*

**S**hould tobacco brands get a free ride in movies made for kids? Big Tobacco is barred from marketing to youth in *all* media, including product placement deals with Hollywood. Are we to believe producers and directors give away the screen time they used to sell to Big Tobacco?

Their movies are still the tobacco industry's most powerful marketing channel to kids. Which is worse—doing it for the money or doing it for free?

Big Tobacco will kill over four million people worldwide in 2002, most of them addicted through deliberate tobacco industry efforts to attract the young.

Tactics included secret product placement—like the \$43,000 Philip Morris paid the producers of *Superman II* in 1980 to feature a billboard-sized Marlboro logo in the movie's climactic fight scene. That payoff was so outrageous, it triggered a Congressional investigation.

In 1998, all major U.S. tobacco companies signed a legal agreement that bars them from marketing to young



LIKE SUPERMAN II, MEN IN BLACK II (PG13) is a comic book-based blockbuster flashing Marlboros, the #1 brand among younger smokers. The alien sidekick shown with a Marlboro carton in this studio publicity photo will be sold as a doll, recommended for "8 years and up." MIBB director Barry Sonnenfeld also featured Marlboros in Men in Black (1997). How much is this franchise worth to Philip Morris?

people in any medium or form of entertainment—including the movies.

Yet Hollywood keeps cranking out G, PG and PG13 fare that promotes smoking and specific tobacco brands. It looks just like paid product placement. Hollywood denies it.

Example? *Men in Black II* reportedly received \$35 million in "promotional support" for flashing logos on-screen including Burger King (\$15 million tied into special kid-meal deals) and Sprint, and for placing products from Ray-Ban, Mercedes-Benz and Hamilton (Swatch).

Of all products featured, we are asked to believe the world's most heavily-advertised cigarette brand, Marlboro, appeared for free: no cash, no favors of any kind.

Why would MIBB executive producer Steven Spielberg indulge a director promoting the Marlboro brand to kids?

Why would director Barry Sonnenfeld feel compelled to show his cartoon-like characters gleefully smoking up a storm?

Why would Sony Pictures and other high-profile brands risk their reputations and millions of promo-

tional dollars linking themselves to a movie that favors the most despised industry in the world—Big Tobacco?

Only twelve years ago, the tobacco industry was caught paying cash to place its brands in films. It denies payola now, just as it did to Congress in 1989.

And despite having entered binding legal agreements to halt all promotion to those under 18, no tobacco firm even pretends to protest the display of its trademarks in kid-rated movies like *Men in Black II*.

If Big Tobacco is still inducing Hollywood to get brands on film, the industry is in violation of the 1998 Master Settlement Agreement.

If Hollywood is doing it for free, then it's helping Big Tobacco to condemn yet another generation here and overseas to addiction and death.

Corrupt...or stupid? When "creative choices" look exactly like illicit product placement, Hollywood owes it to the audience to set the record straight.

Why can't *or won't* major studios take these simple, precautionary steps?

**1] ROLL ON-SCREEN CREDITS ON SMOKING FILMS** certifying that nobody on a production accepted *anything* from any tobacco company, its agents or fronts. No quid pro quo? Just certify it.

**2] RUN STRONG ANTI-TOBACCO ADS IN FRONT OF SMOKING MOVIES.** Put them on tapes and DVDs, too. Strong spots are proven to immunize audiences.

**3] QUIT IDENTIFYING TOBACCO BRANDS** in the background *or* in action. Brand names are unnecessary.

**4] RATE NEW SMOKING MOVIES "R"** to give parents real power to protect children against the tobacco industry.

IF IT'S TRUE, WHY NOT? Given Big Tobacco's well-documented history of secret payola and product placement in Hollywood—and the upsurge in smoking promotion in U.S. movies—we urge studios to restore public confidence by rolling this certification in the closing credits of any smoking movie:

NO PERSON OR ENTITY INVOLVED IN THIS MOTION PICTURE ACCEPTED ANYTHING FROM ANY TOBACCO COMPANY, ITS AGENTS OR FRONTS.

See Superman's deal at [SmokeFreeMovies.ucsf.edu](http://SmokeFreeMovies.ucsf.edu)

Smoke Free Movies aims to sharply reduce the film industry's usefulness to Big Tobacco's domestic and global marketing—a leading cause of disability and premature death. This initiative by Stanton Glantz, PhD (coauthor of *The Cigarette Papers* and *Tobacco War*), of the UCSF School of Medicine is supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund, and Preventing Tobacco Addiction. To learn how you can help, visit our website or write to us: Smoke Free Movies, UCSF School of Medicine, Box 0130, San Francisco, CA 94143-0130.



**SMOKE  
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MOVIES**