THE INFLUENCE OF MOVIE GENRE ON AUDIENCE

REACTION TO PRODUCT PLACEMENT

by

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ABSTRACT

The use of brand placements is quite evident in movies today. The success of some brands reporting a phenomenal sales increase may be partly dependant on the type of movie in which the brand is placed. Employing 200 university students, this initial experimental study examined the effects of movie genre on brand placement. Students completed a questionnaire after watching and evaluating one 30-minute movie clip categorized by genre—comedy, drama, and science fiction. The study compared the effects of genre on brand recall, brand liking, and consumer's reactions toward brand placement. Central to the practice of using brand placement in movies is the belief that the humor found in a comedy movie would help create a favorable response toward brand placement. It did not. The comedy genre did not outrank the other genres on brand recall/recognition, brand liking, and attitude toward brand placement. However, this research did confirm the findings of previous research that prominent brand placements promote a significantly higher level of brand awareness than subtle brand placements.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Storytelling was used in many early cultures as part of religious

rituals (Bywater & Sobchack, 1989). The purpose of storytelling was seen

as pure and good, and its effects on the participants uplifting and noble.

But somewhere along the way, storytelling entered secular life.

Storytelling became entertainment, and its power to affect emotions and

motivate was socially utilized. Today, stories told in movies according to

Bywater and Sobchack (1989), are a more powerful stimulus than those

told in other media. They said,

> almost from the beginning, society at large expressed its concern
> about how the medium may affect a person's behavior for good or
> for ill. By the end of the first decade of the 20th century everyone
> was aware of the motion picture as part of the social fabric of even
> the smallest community, catering to the public's desire for action,
> adventure, romance, comedy, and spectacle. (p. 109)

One of the first community concerns regarding media came from

Christian moralists during the earliest days of the nickelodeon's depiction

of immoral behavior (Bywater & Sobchack, 1989). By the late 1920s, the

moral majority of the community called out for action, and a massive

investigation of the movies by social scientists was funded to find out

just how "bad" (p. 109) the effects of movie viewing could be on innocent minds (Bywater & Sobchack, 1989). According to Jowett and Linton (1989), during this period, movies received more attention and were the subject of more research than any other form of mass media. The investigation into movies accelerated the most significant milestone in the development of mass communication as a scientific field of study—the Payne Fund study.

The Payne Fund Study

In 1928, Reverend William H. Short, executive director of the Motion Picture Research Council, received a $200,000 grant from a private charitable organization called the Payne Fund to support an investigation of what effects motion pictures had on children (Jowett & Linton, 1989). To lead the investigation, Short organized a group of prominent educators, university sociologists, and psychologists into the Committee on Educational Research of the Payne Fund. The effort, which extended from 1929 until 1935, produced a series of 12 studies. These 12 studies considered variables, such as: film attendance; content; the relation of behavior in films to normal social behavior; the effect of films on sleep and health; the emotional effect of film viewer ship; the

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relationship between film attendance and delinquency; and the method of teaching children to distinguish between good and bad films. The results of this investigation were not as convincing as many of the medium's critics had hoped. Instead, the study fell short of admitting any evidence of strong effects. The researchers concluded that factors other than going to a movie influenced an individual's life (Jowett & Linton, 1989).

One of the more controversial of these studies, *Movies and Conduct* (1933) by sociologist Herbert Blumer, investigated the influences of motion pictures on general day-to-day behavior. Blumer used the autobiographical method, in which respondents (college students, high school youths, factory workers, and office personnel) recalled earlier influences of movies on their lives and on specific activities such as modes of dress, hairstyles, and forms of communication. The results indicated that the content of movies served as a substantial influence on young students. The research participants reported that they had imitated the movie characters openly in beautification, mannerisms, and attempts at lovemaking.

According to Lowery and DeFleur (1995), the Payne Study findings were correct—for that time. They said,

America was not a media society except in a limited sense during the 1920s. The only mature medium was the newspaper. Radio was only a toy. The movies came with a rush—almost overnight—to delight, frighten, thrill and fascinate an audience of millions of children who had never seen anything like them. The idea that this new medium, suddenly thrust upon a society just emerging from the Victorian era, could have profound and visible effects upon such an audience does not seem far-fetched. (p. 41)

The study of movies and specific research aimed at understanding the nature and extent of movies' effects declined almost completely after the introduction of television in the mid-1940s (Bywater & Sobchack, 1989). The direction focused more on television and its effect on audience behavior. However, studies conducted by Glucksmann (1972), Howitt (1977) and Cline (1974) acknowledged that the researchers findings could be inferred to film.

Even with the controversy over the social influence of motion pictures, a commercial phenomenon evolved. Today, the motion picture is being used as a mass communication medium attracting marketers and advertisers for its enormous promotional possibilities. These advertisers and marketers pay to place brands within the plot of movies for the purpose of promotional exposure. This practice is referred to as product placement or brand placement.

CHAPTER II

BRAND PLACEMENT IN MOVIES

Brand placement is the promotional technique of placing consumer brand products or services in motion pictures in return for money or promotional exposure of the films in a marketer's advertisement (Clark, 1991). The promotional technique of brand placement was used as early as 1945 when Joan Crawford noticeably drank Jack Daniel's bourbon whiskey in *Mildred Pierce* (Reed, 1989). Yet, it was not until the tremendous success of Steven Spielberg's *E.T.* in 1982, where sales of Reese's Pieces' soared 66% in the three months following the movies release—reportedly as a result of the candy's exposure in the film—that brand placement in feature releases became an important element of consumer marketing programs (Reed, 1989). A more recent example of this form of promotion is seen in the film, *Men in Black*, where actors Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones wear Ray-Ban Predator 2 sunglasses. According to Ray-Ban, sales of the sunglasses tripled to almost $5 million after the release of the movie in 1997 (Basset, 2000).

This promotional technique, now an advertising/marketing industry staple, continues to grow, as does academic research to understand it.

Gillen (1995) stated that brand placements are now seen in many types of entertainment vehicles other than film or TV. Timex has agreed to pay $1.3 million to have their products intertwined into the plot of a Tom Clancy novel, a CD-ROM, Internet game, and a movie (Benezra & Ebenkamp, 1997). Product placement has even reached the video game industry (Nelson, 2000).

Nelson's (2000) study was the first to examine the effectiveness of product placements in a computer or video game. The video game used was, *Gran Turismo 2* on a Playstation One, which contained background ads (billboards, sideboards) with products such as motor oil (e.g., Pennzoil), cars (e.g., Audi), and tires (e.g., Goodyear). The study was conducted in a comfortable carpeted room, with couches, low lighting, and refreshments in attempt to emulate a game-player's living room. A total of 20 self-selected game-players (either casual or hard-core) participated in the study having responded to flyers and ads. These participants completed a survey after 15-20 minutes of playing the game. The survey measured their attitude toward the brand and attitude toward brand placement. Recall was measured using free and aided recall

questions. The participants were able to recall about 25-30% of the brands displayed in the video game.

Today the practice is growing at an extraordinary rate including placement opportunities in the television market. Brand placements in television should become more prevalent and necessary with the mergence of new technology, such as personal video recorders (PVR-also known as TiVo or Replay TV). This technology finds and digitally records television shows in real time, allowing viewers to watch what they want, whenever they want. This technology also allows viewers to easily zip through commercials or eliminate them altogether. As a result, broadcasters are expected to lose $5.5 billion in television ad expenditures in 2007 (Curry, 2003). A Yankee Group study estimates that 19.1 million households, nearly 20% of the U.S. total, will have personal video recorders by the end of 2006. Currently, 3.8 million U.S. homes own a PVR, and the study predicts that figure will climb to 19.1 million by 2006. The study estimates that 80% of viewed prime-time programming currently is time-shifted in PVR households, and 65 to 70 percent of advertising is fast-forwarded during that programming (Curry,

2003). Undoubtedly, placing products in the context of programming will become even more prevalent as ownership of PVRs climbs.

Broadcasters and advertisers will need to develop progressive advertising techniques to hold or influence viewer's attitudes and attention. They will "need to be planning now for the day when PVRs have a penetration in households," said the Association of National Advertisers President-CEO Bob Liodice, "Product placement is one avenue. Program sponsorship is another opportunity" (Curry, 2003).

Now, more than a dozen companies have been organized to expedite the placement of brands in Hollywood films (McGill, 1989). Similar to an actor's booking agent, these brand placement companies find and review scripts to locate possible roles for their clients' products. Spillman (1985) said, "Coke and Pepsi each have their own full-time employees who search scripts for potential placement opportunities" (p. 55).

These placement opportunities, according to Oliver (1986), come in two types of brand placements in movies: *creative* and *on-set placement.* Creative placement involves developing ingenious ways to embed the brand in the film. An example of this type of placement is the

use of the Zale's logo on a park bench in *Back to the Future.* The other type of placement, on-set placement, occurs when the product on the set is seen in its natural environment, such as the Tide detergent by the washing machine in *Mr. Mom.* However, the advertising industry categorizes placements into one of three types. The first category includes a brand, logo, or brand name being clearly seen within the background of the action or a character holding the brand. In the second category, a character is seen using a product while the brand name is clearly visible. And in the third category, a character, either with or without the actual brand being visible is depicted voicing the brand's name (Kinsley, 1990).

Eddington's (1991) study on effectiveness tested the advertising industry's belief that the closer the product is in proximity to the celebrity in a movie the higher amount of brand awareness and brand liking elicited in viewers. She concluded that the audience's feelings toward the movie in general and the audience's feelings toward the movie star contribute to enhanced brand attitude but not brand awareness and recall, as the advertising industry believes.

However, a study by Gupta and Lord (1998) supported the industry's standard by examining the impact of placement type on brand awareness. In this study of 274 undergraduate students, brand recall was assessed by asking the participants to list each product or company they recalled having seen or heard referenced in the movies, *Big* (products: Pepsi, Pizza Hut), *Project X* (products/company: Pepsi, United Way) and *Ferris Bueller* (product: Ferrari). In each of the 30-minute movie clips, the brand was prominently (placements that are highly visible due to their size, positioning or centrality to the action in the scene) and subtlety placed (placements that serve as background props). For example, in the clip they used of the movie *Big,* a Pepsi machine becomes part of the action when Tom Hanks throws an object at it and then retrieves the can of Pepsi from the machine. When the camera zoomed in and filled the screen with the Pepsi Machine/can, this illustrated a prominent placement. Later in the movie, a subtle placement was used when a Pizza Hut box and two slices of pizza on a plate were seen. The subtleness refers to the fact the pizza was not mentioned and/or consumed. The researchers found that prominent brand placements promote a significantly higher level of brand awareness than subtle brand

placements. These findings support the film studio and advertising industries practice of charging higher prices for on-set prominent placements (Darlin, 1995).

The cost of such a placement typically ranges from $25,000 to $225,000, or even higher if the sponsor desires a highly visible placement (Gupta & Lord, 1998). The costs "depend on the prominence of the placement, who the producer is, expected distribution, and other factors," said Carla Denham, senior account executive who is also credited for the placement of Hershey's Reese's Pieces in *E.T.* (Higgins, 1985, p. 6).

<u>The Marketability of Tie-Ins</u>

A successful movie can deliver millions of dollars of publicity for brands placed within them (Higgins, 1985). Big screen placements, say agents, provide more bang for the buck, than television," according to Reed (1989, p. 103). Higgins (1985) stated that with international distribution, pay-TV, and videocassette rentals, the typical movie reaches more than 100 million consumers. However, with the emergence of new technologies and services such as the Internet, DVDs and the low cost of VHS tapes, distribution and exposure more than likely exceeds billions of

consumers. While placement will generate millions of viewers' impressions nationwide, the goal of the advertiser is to generate sales. Therefore, advertisers build promotions around the movie's brand placement, referred to as tie-in promotions. It is estimated that corporate America paid about $200 million in the form of tie-ins to Hollywood for its 1995 summer movies (Bush, 1994). Denham said, "If you don't bring the product tie-in into the store level, you're not getting what you should get from placement" (Higgins, 1985, p. 6). *Tomorrow Never Dies*, the last James Bond action film, garnered the largest product placement deal in history. An agreement worth more than $100 million dollars included Pierce Brosnan (James Bond) in a series of TV and magazine ads prior to the films release promoting products that are displayed in the movie—BMW roadsters and motorcycles, Heineken beer, Smirnoff vodka, Omega watches, Ericsson cellular phones, Brioni suits and Visa credit cards (Bassett, 2000). Denham concluded, "The first step is to pick the right movie. Then you've got to get maximum exposure in the film and convert that exposure into store traffic" (Cited in Higgins, 1985).

But before a placement company or corporation can pick the right movie, there are many factors to consider: the producers; the expected

distribution; the prominence of the placement; the script itself; and/or possibly the movie's genre. With all these factors to consider picking the right movie for a brand placement becomes complicated. One factor placement companies and corporations regard as an inarguable truth is product placements are effective and recent research suggests the placement industry is built on solid ground.

Brand Placement Research

The practice may be established, but the literature and research relating to brand placement is still in its infancy. In fact, much of the academic research on brand placement began within the last two decades. Many of the first studies shed light on consumers' attitudes toward brand placements in films (Nebenzahl & Secunda, 1993; Ong & Meri, 1994; Babin & Carder, 1996; Gupta & Gould, 1997). Nebenzahl and Secunda (1993) concluded: (1) Overall, consumers do not object to brand placement; (2) consumers view it as an effective marketing communication medium which should be allowed; and (3) consumers are tired of traditional commercials and would rather be exposed to less obtrusive forms of marketing communications.

Another study addressed whether audience attitudes toward brand placement was consistent across other nations and cultures. Building upon prior research done by Gupta and Gould (1997), a study done by Karrh, Frith and Callison (2001) compared consumer attitudes of Western and Eastern cultures with regard to brand placement. A total of 194 college students participated in the survey—97 participants from universities in the USA and 97 participants from a university in Singapore. The study questioned whether American students were more attentive to brand placements, and if they were more likely to assume that a brand's appearance in a film is the result of a paid advertisement than their Singaporean counterparts. The study also sought to determine whether ethical concerns about brand placement were greater among audiences in Singapore, a traditionally more conservative culture. The researchers found that the American participants were more likely to perceive brand placements as paid advertisements. The Singaporean participants had a greater concern for the ethics of brand placements. However, both American and Singaporean participants were equally attentive to brand placements in films and were likely to admit that their purchasing patterns were affected by the brands they saw in films. The researchers

found that building a brand image across cultural boundaries might not be successful in some cultures that have a less positive view of brand placement.

Although, these studies concentrated on the consumers' attitudes toward brand placement, acceptability, and ethics, they failed to assess brand placement's effectiveness.

Efficacy of Brand Placements in Movies

The effectiveness of brand placement depends on whether or not the movie viewer notices and recalls the brand placed in the film. There have been several empirical examinations of recall effects and brand placement (Vollmers & Mizerski, 1994; Karrh 1994; Babin & Carder, 1995, 1996; Gupta & Lord, 1998). Vollmers and Mizerski (1994) tested effectiveness through recall in which 71 college students recalled brands placed within movie clips. They found that 96% of the participants specified that they were aware of a brand placement, and 93% of the participants correctly identified brands that had appeared in movie scenes they had viewed.

In a recent study by Brennan and Dubas (1999), 90 research participants were asked to list all of the brands they recalled after they

watched the movies *Rocky III* and *Rocky V*. These movies contained

various types of brand placements (e.g., audio brand name plus visual,

subtle visual, or blatant visual). The study was done to determine the

extent to which brand placement type and exposure time explained the

rate at which participants recognized brand names affiliated with brand

placements in films. They found that audio cues were more effective than

subtle visuals without audio, but blatant visuals had the most effective

means of instilling brand recall among viewers. Their finding suggests that

the greater use of sensory cues may increase effectiveness of brand

recall. Their findings also support the industry practice of classifying

brand placements into creative and on-set, as product placement type

has a significant effect on viewer recognition, even when the measure of

viewer recognition was adjusted for the impacts of false recognition.

Brand Attitude Change

Karrh (1998b) suggested that brand placements are effective

through positive positioning and/or linking with an attractive character.

Changing brand attitude is the goal of placement companies. It is finding

a scene or event in a movie, which will connect a positive emotional

experience to the brand. According to Mizerski and White (1986),

marketers will opt to use the positive emotion stimulated by a particular

scene to produce an affected-based attitude toward the brand. They said

> by pairing an emotional cue, such as a warm or positive scene in
> the movie, with a brand, the marketer can stimulate an affective
> response toward the brand. The association of emotional
> responses, such as happiness, with brand-related cues, should
> result in a positive image for the product. It is thought that this
> positive attitude would be later accessed by the consumer and lead
> to the purchase and consumption of the product. (p. 68)

Texas Instruments, for example, reported increased profits on its

"Speak and Spell" after *E.T.* 's emotional scene to "phone home"

(Bronson, 1984).

However, sometimes viewers are exposed to negative emotional

scenes in a movie. Many image-conscious corporations feel these negative

experiences can transfer over to the brand. It is believed that many

placement agencies and their clients have been known to avoid

placements in violent or horror themes, "R-rated" movies, and scenes

which depict the brand in a negative light (King 1991; Mork, 1993). Bush

(1994) said, "a perception as anything less than squeaky clean is

considered a serious problem" (p. 7). For example, when M&M/Mars

turned down participation in *E.T.*, it rushed to supply the makers of

Gremlins with their products before reading the script. An M&M/Mars

official reacted with bitter disappointment to the movie's violence: "We made a mistake, *Gremlins* can't do anything positive for our image" (Bronson, 1984, p. 44). In another example, Coca-Cola executives were upset over the use of their polar bear campaign, which was intercut, with images of violence, including a headless, bloody body, in Oliver Stone's violent drama *Natural Born Killers* (Bush, 1994). Although these charges made by corporations and advertising agencies may seem sound, there has been no research to confirm that negative cinema experiences can transfer to the brand.

With brand placements in movies, there is an opportunity for transformational advertising to occur. Transformational advertising involves the association of "the experience of using/consuming the advertised brand with a unique set of psychological characteristics" (Puto & Wells, 1984, p. 638). Transformational advertisement makes the experience of using the brand more enjoyable by connecting the experience of the ad with that of using the brand in such an intimate fashion that "consumers cannot remember the brand without recalling the experience generated by the advertisement" (Puto & Wells, 1984, p. 638). Russell (1998) believes that transformational and affect transfer

procedures are in play in the formation of linkages between a movie and the brand placement. He suggested that these findings of linkages could be important for buying behavior because the decision to purchase a product is likely to be the result of such linkages. In a two-part study done by Edell and Burke (1987), the role of feelings-based responses to ads was explored. A total of 61 students were recruited from a university campus to participate in both studies. The first study used 29 participants to measure attitude toward brands prior to viewing 10-video taped commercials. These participants were asked how they felt about the brand and the ad after viewing the commercials. The second study group watched six 30-second commercials embedded within the movies *The African Queen* and *Casablanca*. These participants were asked for their overall evaluation of the ads, the extent to which the ads had elicited a list of 56 feelings, their judgments of the ads on a list of 26 different characteristics, their beliefs about the brands' attributes, and their evaluation of these attributes. From both studies researchers found that positive and negative feelings contributed to an ad's effectiveness and that feelings influence attitudes toward the brand, attitudes toward the ad, and beliefs about a brand's attributes. They also found that

transformational advertising connects the experience of the advertisement with the experience of using the brand. They said, "The emotions experienced during consumption should be the same emotions stimulated by use of the brand in the movies" (p. 430). Therefore, it can be interpreted that brand placements can help the consumer expect certain effects or emotions a brand can provide following purchase and use.

As mentioned earlier, the goal of placement companies is to find a scene or event in a movie, which will connect a positive emotional experience to the brand. Achieving that goal of tying a product or brand to a positive emotional experience has never been specific to just one type of movie genre. In fact, brand placements have never been specific to just one type of movie genre. For instance, Dr Pepper was creatively scripted in the drama, *Forrest Gump*; Starbucks in the successful comedy, *Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me*; Jiffy Pop in the horror, *Scream*; and Taco Bell in the science fiction, *Demolition Man*. There has yet to be a study done on whether a specific genre is more effective for brand placement. However, there has been research done on the successful

marketability of the comedy genre–a genre that carries positive emotional experiences.

The Marketability of the Comedy Genre

The top 10 grossing movies of each year in the US are listed on the InternetMovieDatabase website (http://us.imdb.com/Top/). This website also labels each movie by genre. By averaging the top 10 grossing movies of each year from 1990 to 2001, the comedy genre averaged 32.5% of the total top grossing movies of the past 11 years. In television, comedy accounts for 38% of the primetime programming on America's four major networks 2001-2002 schedule. Dramas followed at 36%, reality shows at 15%, news, sports at 7%, and finally movies/other at 4% (Pedder, 2002).

The success of comedies in attracting an audience to television is best revealed in Brooks and Marsh's chronological examination of prime time shows from 1950 to 1979 and Nielsen Media Research (1990) of the 1980s. In the 1950s, television programming with comedic skits, such as *The Red Skelton Show* and *The Jack Benny Show* and the emergence of the situation comedy, such as *I Love Lucy* and *The Aldrich Family* accounted for 33% of the top rated programs (Zillmann & Bryant,

1991). But by the 1960s, 55% of the top rated shows were comedies. Sitcoms were the most popular, but comedy-variety shows such as, *Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In* and *The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour* according to Zillmann and Bryant (1991) "added diversity to the comedy fare that Americans had come to love" (p. 264). With situational comedies like *All In the Family*, *Happy Days*, and *Three's Company*, comedies in the 1970s accounted for 46% of the highest rated programs. During the 1980s, comedies claimed 49% of the top television shows. The family comedy format in the 1980s dominated ratings as well with shows like, *Family Ties* and *The Cosby Show* (Zillmann & Bryant, 1991).

In 1989, Weiner classified Variety magazine's "Top 100 All-Time Film Rental Champs" (1990) into specific genres. He found that 40 of the top 100 films were comedies. In a list created by Brooks and Marsh (1988) of the top 100 television shows of all time, 46% were comedies.

Comedy has become and remains a very important film genre today. Its ability to draw large audiences and garner a profitable share of the market illustrates why the comedy genre could prove to be an effective vehicle for brand placement, but academic research on comedy

movies specifically is limited, if nonexistent. However, parallels of a comedy's effectiveness can be made using advertising research done on humor.

Humor Advertising Research

"Humor is big business," remarks Marney (1995, p. 38), a media consultant in Toronto, Canada. Marney cited a 1992 study that found a definite increase in the use of humor in advertising, representing an investment of billions of dollars each year in campaigns. The study also reported that humor was used in over 30% of radio commercials, 24% of television commercials and 10% of magazine advertisements (Marney, 1995).

Advertising agencies, writers and many practitioners believe that humor possesses unique communicative powers. So much in fact that a study conducted among advertising research and creative executives in the top 150 U.S. advertising agencies found that 94% of the practitioners see humor as an effective way to attract attention (Weinberger, Spotts, Campbell, & Parsons, 1995). A majority of the executives (88%) felt that humor worked best when it was related to a product. This survey also found that these executives felt radio (88%)

and television (84%) were best suited to the use of humor, followed by outdoor (40%), magazines (39%), newspapers (29%), and direct mail (22%) (Weinberger, Spotts, Campbell, & Parsons, 1995). The popularity of using humor is quite certain; however, the success of its effect on advertising is still uncertain. Researchers Spotts, Weinberger, and Parsons (1997) summarized their reasons why understanding humor is so difficult.

> Because of the many influences from the humorous message, the nature of the product, audience factors, communication goals, humor relatedness, humor style and humor placement, generalizations about the effects of humor have been rare. (p. 17)

The fact is humor is a complex topic that has found support for and against its effectiveness as a selling tool. It is a diverse concept that is affected by a wide variety of factors and finding a consistent result is difficult. A humor research review, as it applies to product placement and advertising research goals, necessarily examines the effects of humor in its ability to attract attention, be persuasive, increase liking to the brand and/or achieve greater success with a specific medium or placement.

Humor and Attention

There is no doubt that humor has been found to attract attention. As mentioned earlier, 94% of advertising practitioners believe humor has

a positive effect on attention and research has supported this conclusion (Madden & Weinberger, 1982; Speck, 1987; Stewart & Furse, 1986; Weinberger & Campbell, 1991). In Stewart and Furse's (1986), data-based study of 1059 pre-tested ads for 356 brands, 115 product categories, and 63 firms, humor was found to be effective in increasing attention. In 1987, Speck used 182 undergraduates from Texas Tech University and compared humorous ads with non-humorous controls. He used four attention measures: initial attention, sustained attention, projected attention, and overall attention. He found that humorous ads outperformed non-humorous ads on each of the attention measures. And finally, in another data-based study using magazine ads, Madden and Weinberger (1982) found that there is a positive humor-attention relationship. The study used Starch's aided recall technique to establish scores indicating the amount of attention readers remember giving to a particular ad. The researchers compared the scores from each of the advertisements to reveal whether or not the humorous advertisement was effective in capturing and holding the reader's attention. The study found a total of 148 recall scores of humorous ads and in each recall category the humorous ads outperformed the normal, non-humorous ads.

Most studies within the past 25 years have found that humor does affect attention positively (Weinberger & Gulas, 1992). A few studies like Gruner (1970), Duncan (1979), and Madden (1982) found mixed results. For instance, Gruner (1970) found that humor was not effective in gaining attention when the topic in a public speech was not interesting (Weinberger & Gulas, 1992). Unlike the overwhelming support for humor's ability to gain attention the research on humor to persuade has had mixed results.

<center>Humor and Persuasion</center>

Research to enhance understanding of humor's ability to persuade has had mixed results. Several studies have found strong support for humor's ability to persuade (Chattopadhyay & Basu, 1989; Madden, 1982; McCollum & Speilman, 1982; and Scott, Klein, & Bryant, 1990).

For instance, in McCollum and Spielman's (1982) study, 31% of humorous commercials exhibited above average scores on persuasiveness. In Chattopadhyay and Basu's (1989) study, participants with a prior positive brand attitude were persuaded more by humorous ads than participants with pre-existing negative brand attitudes. And lastly, Scott, Klein, and Bryant (1990) in a series of field studies

measured humor's effectiveness to promote a social and/or business event. This study also sought to provide insight on humor's ability to affect behavior. In each of the three field site studies, a social and business event was promoted, using humorous, non-humorous, and control fliers that were placed unfolded into residential mailboxes. The study found that attendance results were greater in all field sites of the social event by people who received a humorous promotional flier than those who received a non-humorous promotion. However, differences in frequency of attendance were not significant across promotion types at any of the business events (Scott, Klein, & Bryant, 1990).

This mixed result in Scott, Klein, and Bryant's (1990) study is also shared by a majority of the research on humor's effectiveness to persuade. In fact, Weinberger and Gulas (1992) concluded that of the 14 studies on the effects of humor on persuasion, five were positive, eight were neutral or mixed, and one (Bryant, Brown, Silberberg, & Elliott, 1981) was negative; therefore a precise conclusion could not be made. Unlike the mixed results for humor's ability to persuade, research on humor's ability to increase ad and product liking, was overwhelmingly positive.

Humor and Liking

As early as 1967, Gruner measured research on humor's ability to increase liking. Gruner's experiment of 128 male undergraduates measured whether a public speaker that incorporates humor could damage their perceived authoritativeness. Although, the humorous speech failed to produce greater or less retention of information, including a no higher rating in interestingness than a serious speech, it did find that teachers who used humor in the classroom rated significantly higher on character scales. In another study, Bryant and Zillmann (1980) found that the use of humor by teachers positively influenced student attitudes toward educational programs.

In regards to advertising and marketing research, humor has been shown to increase both liking of the ad and liking of the brand. With regards to the goals of product placement particularly in increasing liking of the brand, various studies (Duncan & Nelson, 1985; Gelb & Zinkhan, 1986; Zhang & Zinkhan, 1991) have shown that humor increases brand liking.

In one study, Zhang and Zinkhan (1991) used 216 undergraduate business majors from the University of Houston to test whether

humorous ads increase ad information recall and positively affected brand attitude. Their study also sought to determine whether audience size influenced the degree of perceived humor. The three variables manipulated in their study were as follows: the humor in the ads, the number of ad exposures, and the size of the audience exposed to the ads. In their experiment, half of the participants were exposed to a humorous ad and the remaining half were exposed to a non-humorous ad. As part of the guise, the participants were asked to indicate their musical preference after they watched a series of music videos. Embedded within these videos were humorous or non-humorous ads. After watching the videos, the students were then asked to complete a questionnaire that measured brand attitude, perceived humor, and recall. Brand attitude and perceived humor was measured using a six-point Likert-type scale. Recall was measured by calculating the sum of correct answers to questions about information contained in the ad. The study's findings indicated that humor does have a positive effect on brand attitude and recall. The study also found that social setting (audience size) positively influences perceived humor. Zhang and Zinkhan's findings suggest that humorous ads tend to

produce higher levels of perceived humor, positive brand attitude, and brand information recall.

Duncan and Nelson's (1985) study, sought to determine whether humor affected attention, increased buying intention as well as attitude towards the ad and the product. A sample of 157 male undergraduate students participated in the radio programming experiment. For 75% of the participants, the transmitted program contained a humorous 60-second radio commercial for a new men's hair care product. The remaining 25% listened to a serious version of the commercial. After the participants listened to the programs, they completed a two-part survey. The first-half of the survey measured the incidence of counter-arguing-behavior associated with the commercial. The second-half measured perceived humor of the ad and dependant variables such as: attention to the ad; liking the ad; positive beliefs about the product; liking the product; irritation (effects of a failed attempt at humor) instigated by the ad; distractions (effects of humor to disrupt counter argumentation of the discrepant message) solicited by the ad; intention to buy; and recall. The researchers found that humor is a critical factor in influencing radio advertising effectiveness especially when the objective of the ad is to

generate awareness of the product. According to the study's findings, participants attended to and appreciated the advertisement more and were less likely to be irritated by the ad if it was humorous. However, the researchers found no differences for recall based on the presence or absence of humor.

Gelb and Zinkman's (1986) study tested the relationship between humor and brand attitude and/or between humor and purchase intention. In their study 96 participants listened to six newscast excerpts and completed a questionnaire after each one. Every newscast contained one commercial of each product (fictional brands—Van Dean's Cola and Coronado Corn Chips) at the beginning and at the end. Their study found that humor was positively related to brand attitude but failed to show any significant relationship between humor and purchase probability and/or between humor and choice behavior. Their study suggested that advertisers tracking the effects of humorous advertising are well advised to monitor changes in brand attitude rather than changes in purchase behavior.

In the 12 advertising studies conducted between 1970 and 1991, 10 studies reported a positive effect of humor on liking, while only two

studies reported neutral or mixed findings (Weinberger & Gulas, 1992).

Based on these conclusions it can be inferred that humor positively

effects liking and brand attitude.

Humor and Placement

As mentioned earlier, in the survey conducted by Madden and

Weinberger (1984) advertising executives felt that radio (88%) and

television (84%) were best suited to the use of humor. These types of

placement or medium by which an ad appears has been proven to some

degree in research to be true. For instance, in Weinberger and Spotts

(1992) study of U.S. ads and their humorous intent in each medium,

30.6% was in radio, 24.4% in television, and 9.9% in print ads. As

research would indicate, the medium most favored and employed for the

use of humor is broadcast-television or radio. However, there is no

comparative study to determine whether humor in broadcast media is

more effective than humor used in print to cement this belief.

Overall, humor has been found to be effective in brand or product

recall (Zhang & Zinkhan, 1991). Humor has been found to generate

awareness for a product (Duncan & Nelson, 1985). And humor, like

product placement, has been found to call attention to and increase liking

of a brand (Gelb & Zinkman's, 1986). However, it is important to note that even though humor was found to be quite effective in brand recall, awareness, attention, and likeability, there has not been research done in which a brand (or product placement) incurred the same successful results when placed in a humorous movie. Research is needed to determine whether humor through a comedy movie directly affects the recall, awareness, attention and or likeability of a brand placed within the humorous movie.

<u>Recap</u>

From the start movies were shown to strongly influence, affect, and motivate society. With this power came enormous promotional possibilities. Advertisers and marketers utilize the motion picture as a mass communication medium by placing brands within the plots of movies in return for money and/or exposure. The effectiveness of product placement through its ability to promote recall, increase brand awareness and brand likeability garnered an unprecedented ability to deliver millions of dollars of publicity for brands placed within a successful movie. Now as this promotional technique continues to grow and product placements are used in many other types of entertainment vehicles other than film and

television, the key is finding a vehicle to deliver the most successful and effective exposure through product placement.

Advertising and humor research suggest that the comedy genre may be the best genre/vehicle for a successful brand placement. Research has shown that the comedy genre has the ability to draw large audiences and garner a profitable share of the market. And, by its very nature, the comedy genre carries positive emotional experiences, which work with the goal of placement companies, which is to find a scene or event in a movie that will connect a positive emotional experience to the brand. Research conducted on the effects of humor on advertising suggests the comedy genre may be the most fertile ground for product placement, but no evidence exists that can verify the assumption that comedy outranks other genres. Ultimately, research is needed to determine the best vehicles for eliciting positive reactions to product placement.

Hypotheses and Research Question

With the marketability of the comedy genre and the effectiveness of humorous advertising on increasing brand attitude and recall established, the question becomes whether or not movie genre affects

the efficacy of brand placement in movies. The success of some brands reporting phenomenal sales increase (such as Reese's Pieces) may be partly dependent on the genre of movie in which the brand is placed. Based on the research indicating the value of humor in advertising, this study examines the comedy movie genre specifically and attempts to determine whether it promotes a higher recognition or stronger influence of brand placement as compared to the drama and science fiction genres. Because research seems to suggest that the comedy genre will serve as a better vehicle for product placement than either the drama genre or the science fiction genre, the following hypothesis will guide the research:

H1: Brand recall and/or recognition in the comedy genre will be greater than brand recall and /or recognition in the drama or science fiction genres.

With regards to the goals of product placement, particularly in increasing liking of the brand, studies have shown that humor increases consumers' affinity toward brands (Zhang & Zinkhan, 1991; Gelb & Zinkhan, 1986; Duncan & Nelson, 1985). Research seems to suggest that promotion through product placement in a comedy movie will increase

liking of the brand. As such, the following hypothesis will guide the research:

H2:   Product placement within the comedy genre will favorably increase viewers' perceptions of the brand.

In a study done by Mackenzie and Lutz (1989), attitudes toward advertising in general are thought to influence both attitude toward the ad and attitude toward the brand. Because product placement has advertising properties, it is likely that consumers who have a more favorable attitude toward product placement in general will have a more favorable attitude toward the product being promoted. This study also examines whether movie genre has an impact on consumers' reactions toward brand placement. For instance, a placement within the context of a drama may lead to negative reactions because viewers expect this genre to contain heavy emotional information, whereas brand placement in the context of a comedy movie may lead to positive reactions because viewers expect this type of genre to contain lighter fare. Zillmann's (1994) mood management theory states that humor and comedy appear to play a special role for people who seek to change their mood for the better (i.e., terminate bad moods, change to good moods, or facilitate

and extend good moods). It could then be posited that because comedies tend to elicit good moods, that moviegoers would react more positively to products/brands placed within the comedy genre. The following hypothesis guided the research:

H3:   A comedy movie will lead to a more positive viewer reaction toward brand placement in general than a drama or science fiction movie.

Gupta and Lord's (1998) study revealed the impact of placement type on brand awareness. They found that prominent brand placements promote a significantly higher level of brand awareness than subtle brand placements. The study by Brennan and Dubas (1999), found that audio cues were more effective than were subtle visuals without audio but that prominent visuals had the most effective means of instilling brand recall among viewers. Their finding suggests that the greater use of sensory cues may increase effectiveness of brand recall. With research supporting the effectiveness of prominent placement and the use of humor in increasing recall and/or recognition, the following research question will guide the research:

RQ1: Does prominence of brand placement influence brand recall and/or recognition independent of movie genre?

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Overview

Undergraduate research participants watched and evaluated movie clips from feature films released to video and DVD. These movie clips were categorized by genre—comedy, drama and science fiction. Each genre contained two movie clips. Each of these clips contained product placement. Hypotheses and research question were tested using a 20-item questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted primarily of Likert-type items using a five-point response scale, which allowed for the expression of an opinion toward the movie clip, genre classification, product recall, and attitude toward the use of brand placement in each movie. Additionally the instrument measured demographic characteristics—age, gender, and academic classification

Research Participants

Two hundred students from a large southwestern university were recruited for the experiment. These participants were students of mass communication, history, English, biology, and mathematics. Students of

different classifications and majors provided a cross section of students for the study. The students received extra credit as an incentive for participating. College students served as a relatively representative sample because approximately one-third of all moviegoers are between the ages of 16 and 24 (Monush, 1991). Of the 200 participants, 129 were female, and 71 were male. The average age of the participants was 21. The typical classification was junior.

The 200 students were divided into three mixed-gender experimental groups–comedy, drama, and science fiction. Each genre group contained a minimum of 60 participants, with participants divided between the two clips employed to represent each genre. For example in the comedy genre, 32 participants watched *Me, Myself, and Irene* while another 34 watched *There's Something About Mary*. For drama, 34 participants watched *The Usual Suspects* while 34 watched *Monster's Ball*. Finally, groups of 33 participants watched *The Philadelphia Experiment* or *Mission to Mars* for the science fiction genre.

Procedure

When participants in each experimental group entered the research room, the study administrator read a consent form, which the participants

were then asked to sign. The administrator then briefed the participants on the experiment and how the experiment would be conducted. To disguise the purpose of the study, participants were told the experiment dealt with common movie production practices as well as mass communication. After the participants viewed the movie clip, they were asked to complete the questionnaire. Upon completing the questionnaire and its collection, students were thanked for participating and dismissed.

Measures

Within the 20-item questionnaire, product placement was defined as, "the practice of placing consumer brand products or services by a placement agency or company in a motion picture." This was done so that participants had a precise idea as to the operational definition of the term and so that any confusion could be avoided.

The questionnaire was designed first to gauge the participants recall ability of the product placed in the movie clip. The questionnaire asked whether participants saw any product placement in the movie clip. If the participants answered "yes" they were then asked to write the name of the product they saw (i.e., unaided recall). These questions were chosen using previous research as a guideline (Vollmers & Mizerski, 1994)

and used to test the first hypothesis—brand recall and/or recognition in a comedy movie will be higher than brand recall and/or recognition in a drama or science fiction movie. A sample of the questionnaire is provided in the appendix.

The second step was to assess the research participants' attitude toward product placement. Audience acceptability of product placement may be in part tied to general ethical concerns about the practice and/or ethical concerns about the specific product (Nebenzahl & Secunda, 1993). As stated earlier, researchers found that consumers felt that product placement was acceptable, but those who objected tended to do so for ethical reasons. The questions used in this study, similar to those asked by Nebenzahl and Secunda (1993), asked whether the participants minded if brand-name products appeared in movies and whether seeing the brand-name product in a movie makes the experience more realistic (Gupta, Gould, & Grabner-Krauter, 2000). Attitudinal questions on a five-point scale with poles of strongly agree (1) and strongly disagree (5) regarding the ethical use of product placements by movie producers were also asked based on previous research done by Gupta and Gould (1997). For instance, participants were asked whether they minded if movie

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producers received money or other compensation from advertisers for placing their brands in movies. They were also asked whether they thought it was unethical for movie producers to attempt to influence the audience by including brand name products in movies. These questions were used to test the third hypothesis—a comedy movie will lead to a more positive viewer reaction toward brand placement in general than a drama or science fiction movie.

The third step in the design of the questionnaire was to gauge the research participant's recognition of the actual product placed in the move clip. From a list of 20 popular products, participants were asked to circle the one product they saw in the movie clip. This question followed the study done by Babin and Carder (1995), in which they exposed a treatment group to a film and measured recall of brands by giving respondents product category cues (i.e. aided recall). This question was used to again test the first hypothesis.

In the final phase of the questionnaire, research participants were asked attitudinal questions about the product they saw in the movie clip. The questions were employed to gauge the effects of humor on brand liking as stated by Duncan and Nelson (1985). Similar to the attitudinal

questions posed in their study to indicate product opinion, these questions asked if participants first liked the product; whether the appearance of the product in the movie was great and/or realistic; and finally if the product's appearance in the movie increased their liking of the product itself. These questions were used to support the second hypothesis—a comedy movie will favorably increase the viewer's perception of the product placed in the movie.

Stimulus Material

There are many potential limitations to the generalization of a product placement study's findings. First, product placement's impact is likely to vary from movie to movie. The product placement's impact may be in part due to its manner and extent of an audience's exposure to the brand and/or audience familiarity to the brand itself; liking for the movie; a specific frame or scene in which the brand appeared; the timing of the placement (i.e., towards the beginning or end of movie); and or the setting in which an audience watched the movie (i.e., theater viewing versus home viewing on cable, television, or video).

In order to maintain some level of ecological validity, this study used as stimulus material previously released film clips. The stimulus

material or films used for this experiment could not be independently created professionally due to monetary costs, time, and lack of expertise. However, every product placement experimental research study to date has employed actual movie clips or full-length movies. Therefore, an intensive search of actual, released films in each gene was made with several goals in mind for this experiment.

First, the films chosen did not have any promotional tie-ins or announced sponsorships during the time of their release. Any previous memorable marketing of the product or tie-in would have deliberately drawn participants' attention to the brand placed in the film (Ong & Meri, 1994).

Second, the film needed to show a national brand, which is widely distributed and advertised, and intent ally placed in the movie. The brand placements in the movie clips were predominantly beverages. Product categories such as beer, liquor, and soft drinks were expected to represent familiar consumption experiences among students.

Third, due to constraints on time and the availability of the students, the movies could not be seen in their entirety. Films were selected so that brand placements were contained within an

uninterrupted segment of the movie (midpoint of the clip) that was comprehensive on its own. The goal was to have research participants engaged in some part of the segment's story line. The time before and after the brand placement served as a buffer. This was done to reduce primacy and recency effects. According to Wixted and McDowell (1989), when an individual is confronted with numerous stimuli in a short amount of time, the first and last items viewed will have the greatest memory trace.

It is also important to note that the films chosen were categorized by genre by the website, http://internetmoviedatabase.com. Because there are many types of comedy, drama, and/or science fiction movies, two films were used to represent each of the genres in the experiment. This was done to alleviate any movie-specific effects regarding any individual film labeled to represent a specific genre.

Also, each movie clip within a genre contained a different type of placement. One movie contained a prominent placement where the product was voiced, seen and used by the character. The other movie contained a subtle placement where the product was only seen in the background. According to Gupta and Lord (1998), prominent brand

placements—placements that are highly visible due to their size, positioning, or centrality to the action in the scene—promote a significantly higher level of brand awareness than subtle brand placements—placements which serve as background props. Every effort was taken to ensure consistent placement patterns across genres. Ultimately, no one genre was represented with more prominent placement episodes than another. All shared seemingly consistent levels of placement.

Finally, the total exposure time for the products in each genre needed to be consistent. Total exposure time was calculated from the total amount of time in each movie clip that the product was used, voiced or visible. For instance, the exposure time for the product in *Me, Myself, and Irene* was 15 seconds and 19 seconds in *There's Something About Mary*. The product was exposed for 15 seconds in *The Usual Suspects* and 18 seconds in *Monster's Ball*. In the science fiction genre, the exposure time was 18 seconds in *The Philadelphia Experiment* and 16 seconds in *Mission to Mars*. The films used for this study, their classifications and brand placements are outlined in Table 1.

Measurement

Data was analyzed using Analysis of Variance comparisons (ANOVA) for each dependant variable. Frequencies were run in order to determine the percent of research participants who correctly identified the branded product they saw. Descriptive statistics were calculated to provide an overview of results. In cases where both independent variables and dependent variables were nominal, cross tabulations analyses were employed.

Table 1

Movie, Classification and Brand Placement List

Genre	Movie	Brand Placement & Time
Comedy	*There's Something About Mary*	Pepsi (19 sec.)
Comedy	*Me, Myself, and Irene*	Coca Cola (15 sec.)
Drama	*The Usual Suspects*	Budweiser (15 sec.)
Drama	*Monster's Ball*	Jack Daniel's (18 sec.)
Science Fiction	*Mission to Mars*	Dr Pepper (16 sec.)
Science Fiction	*The Philadelphia Experiment*	Coca Cola (18 sec.)

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Preliminary Analysis

Although the films chosen were categorized into genres by the website InternetMovieDatabase.com, this experiment used a 5-point response scale in which 1 equaled strongly agree and 5 equaled strongly disagree to test whether participants percieved the movie clips differently than the website's categorization. An ANOVA revealed that participants percieved the comedy clips (M = 1.33, SD = .75) used in the experiment to be more representative of the comedy genre than those who saw the drama clips (M = 4.54, SD = .72) or science fiction clips (M = 4.70, SD = .70), $F(2, 197)$ = 455.29, p < .05 as suggested by Student-Neuman Keuls post hoc tests.

An ANOVA also revealed that participants who watched the drama clips (M = 1.66, SD = .13) percieved these clips to be more representative of the drama genre than those who saw the comedy clips (M = 4.11, SD = .13) or science fiction clips (M = 2.71, SD = .13), $F(2, 197)$ = 93.90, p < .05 as suggested by Student-Neuman Keuls post hoc tests.

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Finally, participants percieved the science fiction clips (M = 2.21, SD = 1.06) to be more representative of the science fiction genre than those who saw the comedy (M = 4.70, SD = .76) or drama clips (M = 4.66, SD = .77), $F(2, 197)$ = 176.53, p < .05 as suggested by Student-Neuman Keuls post hoc tests.

Mean results for demographic questions are illustrated in Table 2.

Brand Recall and Recognition Hypothesis

H1, which stated brand recall and/or recognition in a comedy genre would be higher than brand recall and/or recognition in a drama or science fiction genres, was not supported. When participants were asked if product placement was used, participants viewing different genres responded differently, $\chi^2(2, N = 200)$ = 67.74, p < .05. A cross tabs analysis revealed that 63.6% of the participants watching comedy clips said they saw product placement while only 35.3% of the respondents watching drama clips said the same. However, 100% of the participants watching science fiction clips reported seeing product placement.

In order to test unaided recall, participants were asked to actually write in the name of the product placed in the movie clip. Again participants viewing different genres responded differently, $\chi^2(2, N =$

200) = 86.02, $p < .05$. A cross tabs analysis revealed that 45.5% of the participants watching comedy clips correctly wrote down the name of the product placed in the clips while only 16.2% of the respondents watching drama clips did the same. However, 95.5% of the participants watching science fiction clips correctly supplied the name of the product placed in the movies.

When testing for recognition, participants were asked to circle the one product they saw in the movie clip from a list of 20 popular products, participants viewing different genres responded with varying levels of success, $\chi^2(2, N = 200) = 86.02$, $p < .05$. A cross tabs analysis revealed that 57.6% of the participants watching comedy clips correctly circled the name of the product placed in the clip while a higher 63.2% of the respondents watching drama clips did the same. However, 98.5% of the participants watching science fiction clips correctly circled the name of the product.

Mean results for recall and recognition are illustrated in Table 3.

Attitude Toward the Brand Hypothesis

H2, which stated product placement within the comedy genre will favorably increase viewers' perceptions of the brand, was not supported.

H2 was tested using five questions. These five questions targeted participants' attitude toward the brand, its use as a brand placement, and if its appearance was great, realistic and/or influencial in improving their liking of the product. Each question used a Likert-based scale in which (1) equaled strongly agree and (5) equaled strongly disagree. A conglomerate score of these five questions was created to provide one overall conclusive score of the results. An ANOVA revealed there was no significant difference between genres. Although no statistical significant difference emerged, the mean score of the science fiction ($M = 2.55$, $SD = .63$) genre was more favorable than the scores of comedy ($M = 2.69$, $SD = .62$) and the drama ($M = 2.71$, $SD = .58$) genres, $F(2, 197) = 1.53$, $p = .22$.

Examining the questions individually that composed the conglomerate score, the first question asked participants if they minded if featured product was a product placement in the movie. An ANOVA revealed there was no significant difference among genres. Although no statistical significant difference emerged, the mean score of the science fiction ($M = 1.62$, $SD = 1.05$) genre was more favorable than those of

comedy (M = 1.70, SD = 1.01) and the drama (M = 1.71, SD = 1.01) genres, F(2, 197) = .138, p = .87.

Through the second question, participants were asked if they agreed that the appearance of the featured product in the movie was great. An ANOVA revealed that participants viewing the science fiction genre (M = 2.53, SD = .98) agreed more than did participants watching the drama genre (M = 2.94, SD = .93). The comedy genre (M = 2.82, SD = .80) was in the middle and not significantly different from either of the others, F(2, 197) = 3.61, p < .05. A post hoc test using Student-Neuman Keuls revealed that perceptions of comedy mimicked those of science fiction and drama, but that science fiction and drama were significantly different from each other.

Through the third question, participants were asked if they agreed that the appearance of the featured product in the movie was realistic. An ANOVA revealed there was no significant difference among genres. Mean scores suggested that the drama (M = 1.97, SD = .85) genre was viewed more favorably, but not significantly so, than the comedy (M = 2.06, SD = .98) and the science fiction (M = 2.29, SD = 1.13) genres, F(2, 197) = 1.82, p = .17.

Through the fourth question, participants were asked if they agreed that the featured product was a great product. An ANOVA revealed that participants viewing the science fiction genre ($M = 2.05$, $SD = 1.13$) agreed more than did participants watching the drama ($M = 2.62$, $SD = 1.25$). The comedy genre ($M = 2.55$, $SD = 1.24$) was in the middle and not significantly different from either of the others, $F(2, 197) = 4.43$, $p < .05$. A post hoc test using Student-Neuman Keuls revealed that perceptions of comedy mimicked those of drama, but that science fiction was viewed significantly more positvely.

Finally, through the fifth question, participants were asked if they agreed that the appearance of the featured product in the movie increased their liking of that product. An ANOVA revealed there was no significant difference among genres. Mean scores suggested that the science fiction ($M = 4.24$, $SD = 1.90$) genre was more favorable but not significantly more favorable than the comedy ($M = 4.35$, $SD = .90$) and the drama ($M = 4.34$, $SD = .87$) genres, $F(2, 197) = .286$, $p = .75$.

Mean results for attitude towards the product are illustrated in Table 4.

Attitude Toward Product Placement Hypothesis

H3, which stated a comedy movie will lead to a more positive viewer reaction toward brand placement in general than a drama and science fiction movie, was not supported.

H3 was tested using four questions. These four questions targeted participant's attitude toward product placement itself, whether movie producers should receive compensation, its ethical use in movies, and/or product placement's influence in making the movie experience realistic. Each question used a Likert based scale in which one equaled strongly agree and five equaled strongly disagree. Once again, a conglomerate score of these four questions was created to provide one overall conclusive score of the results. An ANOVA revealed the drama genre (M = 3.38, SD = .68) to be more favorable than the comedy (M = 3.68, SD = .61) and the science fiction (M = 3.77, SD = .57) genres, $F(2, 197)$ = 7.20, p < .05. A post hoc test using Student-Neuman Keuls revealed that perceptions of comedy mimicked those of science fiction, but drama was viewed significantly more positively.

The first question asked participants if they minded if brand-name products appear in movies. An ANOVA revealed that participants viewing

the drama clips ($M = 3.97$, $SD = 1.02$) minded less than did participants watching the science fiction genres ($M = 4.39$, $SD = .78$). The comedy genre ($M = 4.27$, $SD = .97$) was in the middle and not significantly different than either of the others, $F(2, 197) = 3.69$, $p < .05$. A post hoc test using Student-Neuman Keuls revealed that perceptions of comedy mimicked those of science fiction and drama, but science fiction and drama were perceived in a significantly different manner in comparison.

In the second question, participants were asked if they minded if movie producers recieved money or other compensation from advertisers for placing their brands in movies. An ANOVA revealed there was no significant difference among genres. Mean scores suggested that the drama ($M = 3.78$, $SD = 1.13$) genre was more favorable, but not significantly more so, than the comedy ($M = 4.06$, $SD = 1.05$) and the science fiction ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 1.00$) genres, $F(2, 197) = 2.70$, $p = .07$.

In the third question, participants were asked if they agreed that it is unethical for movie producers to attempt to influence the audience by including brand-name products in their movies. An ANOVA revealed that participants viewing the drama clips ($M = 3.59$, $SD = 1.16$) agreed less than did participants watching the science fiction genre ($M = 4.23$, $SD =$

.94). The comedy genre ($M = 4.15$, $SD = .90$) was in the middle and not significatly different than either of the others, $F(2, 197) = 8.04$, $p < .05$. A post hoc test using Student-Neuman Keuls revealed that perceptions of comedy mimicked those of science fiction, but drama was perceived significantly more positive.

In the last question, participants were asked if they agreed that seeing the brand-name product in a movie makes the experience more realistic. An ANOVA revealed there was no significant difference among genres. Mean scores suggested that the drama genre ($M = 2.18$, $SD = 1.05$) was more favorable, but not significantly more so, than the comedy ($M = 2.24$, $SD = 1.12$) and the science fiction ($M = 2.24$, $SD = 1.10$) genres, $F(2, 197) = .082$, $p = .92$.

Mean results for attitude towards product placement are illustrated in Table 5.

Research Question One

The research question asked if the prominence of brand placement influenced brand recall/recognition independent of movie genre. The research question was tested using three questions. These three questions tested whether participants saw a product placement, could

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correctly write down the name of the product (unaided), and if they could

successfully circle the name of the product from a list of brand names.

Movies were divided into placement types—prominent versus subtle. The

movies containing prominent placements were, *Me, Myself, & Irene,*

Monster's Ball, and *The Philadelphia Experiment*. Movies containing subtle

placements were, *There's Something About Mary, The Usual Suspects,*

and *Mission to Mars*.

In the first question participants were asked if product placement

was used, participants viewing different placement types responded

differently, $\chi^2(1, N = 200) = 21.86, p < .05$. A cross tabs analysis

revealed that 81.8% of the participants recalled a product placement in

the prominent placement clips while 18.2% did not. When participants

were asked if there was a product placement in subtle placement clips,

50.5% participants recalled a product while 49.5% did not.

The second question, which tested unaided recall, asked

participants to actually write in the name of the product placed in the

movie clip. Again, participants viewing different placement types

responded differently, $\chi^2(1, N = 200) = 27.49, p < .05$. A cross tabs

analysis revealed that 70.7% of the participants watching prominent

placement clips correctly wrote down the name of the product while only 29.3% of the participants did not. In subtle placement clips a cross tabs analysis revealed that 33.7% of the participants correctly wrote down the name of the product while 66.3% did not.

Through the final question, which tested for recognition, participants were asked to circle the one product they saw in the movie clip from a list of 20 popular products, participants viewing different placement types responded differently, $\chi^2(1, N = 200) = 55.44, p < .05$. A cross tabs analysis revealed that 97.0% of the participants watching prominent placement clips correctly circled the name of the product while only 3.0% of the participants did not. In subtle placement clips, a cross tabs analysis revealed that 50.5% of the participants correctly circle the name of the product while 49.5% did not.

Table 2

Mean Results for Demographic Questions

Questions	Comedy		Drama		Science Fiction	
	Clip 1 Me Myself & Irene	**Clip 2** Something About Mary	**Clip 3** The Usual Suspects	**Clip 4** Monster's Ball	**Clip 5** Philadelphia Experiment	**Clip 6** Mission to Mars
Number of Subjects	32	34	34	34	33	33
(Total = 200) Total	66		68		66	
Age	21.19 (1.51)	20.62 (1.26)	21.06 (1.82)	20.35 (1.37)	20.21 (1.67)	21.48 (2.21)
Total	20.89 (1.40)		20.71 (1.64)		20.85 (2.05)	
Gender Male =	16 (50%)	12(35.3%)	13(38.2%)	9 (26.5%)	10(30.3%)	11(33.3%)
Female =	16 (50%)	22(64.7%)	21(61.8%)	25(73.5%)	23(69.7%)	22(66.7%)
Total	M = 28 (42.4%) F = 38 (57.6%)		M = 22 (32.4%) F = 46 (67.6%)		M = 21 (31.8%) F = 45 (68.2%)	
Classification[1]	3.12 (.91)	2.96 (.78)	3.15 (.86)	2.65 (.69)	2.52 (.76)	3.33 (.74)
Total	2.94 (.86)		2.90 (.81)		2.92 (.85)	
1. Have You Seen Movie Before[2] Yes =	24 (75%)	33(97.1%)	12(35.3%)	10(29.4%)	1 (3%)	4 (12.1%)
No =	8 (25%)	1 (2.9%)	22(64.7%)	24(70.6%)	32 (97%)	29(87.9%)
Total	Y = 57 (86.4%) N = 9 (13.6%)		Y = 22 (32.4%) N = 46 (67.6%)		Y = 5 (7.6%) N = 61 (92.4%)	
2. This Clip Was A Good Example Of A Comedy[3]	1.41 (.95)	1.26 (.51)	4.53 (.79)	4.56 (.66)	4.64 (.82)	4.76 (.56)
Total	1.33 (.75)		4.54 (.72)		4.70 (.70)	
3. This Clip Was A Good Example Of A Drama[3]	4.16 (1.25)	4.06 (1.15)	1.88 (.81)	1.44 (.75)	2.94 (.90)	2.48 (1.20)
Total	4.11 (1.19)		1.66 (.80)		2.71 (1.08)	
4. This Clip Was A Good Example Of A Science Fiction[3]	4.53 (.98)	4.85 (.44)	4.47 (.93)	4.85 (.50)	2.03 (.92)	2.39 (1.17)
Total	4.70 (.76)		4.66 (.77)		2.21 (1.06)	

Note. Values enclosed in parentheses represent standard deviations or percentages of the whole. [1] = Mean values are on a four-point scale (1 = freshman, 2 = sophomore, 3 = junior, 4 = senior). [2] = Values are on a two-point scale (1 = yes, 0 = no). [3] = Mean values are on a five-point scale (1 = strongly agree, 5 = strongly disagree).

Table 3

Mean Results for Recall and Recognition

Questions to test Hypothesis 1	Comedy		Drama		Science Fiction	
	Clip 1 Me Myself & Irene	**Clip 2** Something About Mary	**Clip 3** The Usual Suspects	**Clip 4** Monster's Ball	**Clip 5** Philadelphia Experiment	**Clip 6** Mission to Mars
1. Was There PP In The Clip You Saw Yes = No =	29(90.6%) 3(9.4%)	13 (38.%) 21(61.8%)	5 (14.7%) 29(85.3%)	19(55.9%) 15(44.1%)	33(100%) 0	33(100%) 0
Total	Y = 42 (63.6%) N = 24 (36.4%)		Y = 24 (35.3%) N = 46 (64.7%)		Y = 66 (100%)	
2. Write In The PP You Saw In Clip Yes = No =	28(90.6%) 4(9.4%)	2 (38.%) 32(61.8%)	2 (14.7%) 32(85.3%)	9(55.9%) 25(44.1%)	33(100%) 0	30(100%) 3
Total	Y = 30 (45.5%) N = 36 (54.5%)		Y = 11 (16.2%) N = 57 (83.8%)		Y = 63 (95.5%) N = 3 (4.5%)	
3. From List Of Products Select The PP You Saw In Clip Yes = No =	31(90.6%) 1(9.4%)	7 (38.%) 27(61.8%)	12(14.7%) 22(85.3%)	32(55.9%) 2 (44.1%)	33(100%) 0	32(100%) 1
Total	Y = 38 (57.6%) N = 28 (42.4%)		Y = 44 (64.7%) N = 24 (35.3%)		Y = 65 (98.5%) N = 1 (1.5%)	

Note. All values are on a two-point scale (1 = yes, 0 = no). Values enclosed in parentheses are percentages of the whole.

PP = product placement

Table 4

Mean Results for Attitude Toward the Product

Questions to test Hypothesis 2	Comedy		Drama		Science Fiction	
	Clip 1 Me Myself & Irene	**Clip 2** Something About Mary	**Clip 3** The Usual Suspects	**Clip 4** Monster's Ball	**Clip 5** Philadelphia Experiment	**Clip 6** Mission to Mars
1. Do You Mind If Said Product Was In Movie	1.14 (.71)	1.97 (1.17)	1.79 (1.09)	1.62 (.92)	1.61 (1.14)	1.64 (.96)
Total	1.70 (1.01)		1.71 (1.01)		1.62 (1.05)	
2. Do You Think The Appearance Of Said Product Was Great In Movie	2.56 (.84)	3.06 (.69)	2.97 (.97)	2.91 (.90)	2.39 (.83)	2.67 (1.11)
Total	2.82 (.80)		2.94 (.93)		2.53 (.98)	
3. Appearance Of Said Product Was Real In Movie	1.47 (.72)	2.62 (.85)	2.21 (.91)	1.74 (.71)	2.55 (1.20)	2.03 (1.02)
Total	2.06 (.97)		1.97 (.85)		2.29 (1.13)	
4. Is Said Product A Great Product	1.94 (1.01)	3.12 (1.17)	2.96 (1.23)	2.47 (1.26)	1.76 (.94)	2.33 (1.24)
Total	2.55 (1.24)		2.62 (1.25)		2.05 (1.13)	
5. Did The Appearance Of Said Product Increase My Liking of Product	4.47 (.76)	4.24 (1.02)	4.29 (.97)	4.38 (.78)	3.97 (.95)	4.52 (.76)
Total	4.35 (.90)		4.34 (.87)		4.24 (.90)	

Note. All mean values are on a five-point scale (1 = strongly agree, 5 = strongly disagree). Values enclosed in parentheses represent standard deviations.

Table 5

Mean Results for Attitude Toward Product Placement

Questions to test Hypothesis 3	Comedy		Drama		Science Fiction	
	Clip 1 Me Myself & Irene	**Clip 2** Something About Mary	**Clip 3** The Usual Suspects	**Clip 4** Monster's Ball	**Clip 5** Philadelphia Experiment	**Clip 6** Mission to Mars
1. Mind If PP Appear In Movies	4.50 (.84)	4.06 (1.06)	4.06 (1.07)	3.88 (.98)	4.45 (.75)	4.33 (.82)
Total	4.27 (.97)		3.97 (1.02)		4.39 (.78)	
2. Mind If Producers Get Compensation For PP	4.09 (1.06)	4.03 (1.06)	4.09 (.90)	3.47 (1.26)	4.12 (1.08)	4.27 (.91)
Total	4.06 (1.05)		3.78 (1.13)		4.20 (1.00)	
3. It is Unethical To Influence Audience With PP	4.25 (.84)	4.06 (.95)	3.65 (1.20)	3.53 (1.13)	4.18 (.98)	4.27 (.91)
Total	4.15 (.90)		3.59 (1.16)		4.23 (.94)	
4. Seeing PP Makes Movie Experience More Realistic	2.19 (1.33)	2.29 (.91)	2.21 (1.07)	2.15 (1.05)	2.30 (1.16)	2.18 (1.04)
Total	2.24 (1.12)		2.18 (1.05)		2.24 (1.10)	

Note. All mean values are on a five-point scale (1 = strongly agree, 5 = strongly disagree). Values enclosed in parentheses represent standard deviations.
PP = product placement.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This study was conducted to address whether the comedy movie

genre favorably affects product placement, specifically in brand

recall/recognition, attitude towards the brand, and attitude towards

product placement itself. The results of this initial experiment suggest

that product placement is not more effective in the comedy genre and

that prominence of placement may be more important than genre of

placement vehicle.

First Hypothesis

In examining the first hypothesis, brand recall was high across two

genres—the comedy and science fiction. Approximately 63% of

respondents from the comedy genre indicated they saw a product

placement, and 46% of the participants viewing that genre correctly

wrote down the brand that appeared in the movie clip. The most

significant recall occurred in the science fiction genre, where 100% of the

participants reported seeing a product placement and 96% of those

participants correctly wrote down the brand placed in the movie clip.

Data suggests that the science fiction genre has a more successful recall and\or recognition rate than either drama or comedy movies for product placement. These results also appear to go against Zhang and Zinkhan's (1991) research that humor tends to produce higher levels of brand recall. More research is needed to fully determine whether this study's initial results are truly conclusive. A possible factor that may have influenced the high recall and recognition in the science fiction genre was its type of placement. In retrospect, the placements used in the science fiction movies were intertwined with the story's plot more so than the products appearing in the other two genres. Not only were the products an integral part of the story used by the characters, but also their placement was obviously noticeable in both movie clips. The placement in *Mission to Mars* was judged in coding to be a subtle placement, however post-study examinations revealed the placement was blatant, in that it was highly visible and centered across the screen. The placement was stronger than the subtle placements shown in *There's Something About Mary* and *The Usual Suspects* whose placements were as background props.

Second Hypothesis

With regards to the goals of product placement particularly in increasing liking of the brand these studies by Zhang and Zinkhan (1991), Gelb and Zinkhan (1986), and Duncan and Nelson (1985) found that humor was shown to increase brand liking. The use of humor through the comedy genre in this study did not support their findings or hypothesis two. In fact, the science fiction genre overall had a more favorable increase than either the drama or comedy movies.

As mentioned before, the second hypothesis was tested using five questions. The conglomerate score stated that the science fiction genre provided the most favorable perceptions of a brand when used in product placement.

In the first question used to build the conglomerate score, participants were asked if they minded if the featured product was in the movie clip they just watched. Unlike the study conducted by Gruner (1967) in which teachers that used humor in the classroom rated significantly higher on character scales than those who did not, the use of humor in a comedy movie in this study did not increase brand liking. In fact, this question revealed that there was no significant difference

among genres and that the use of humor was not influential. Participants were not influenced by the dramatic, the science fiction, or comedic content of the movie's genre to increase or decrease their liking for a specific product. A possible reason could be that the product was shown immediately after and during a comedic scene in only one (*Me, Myself, and Irene*) of the comedy clips. In the other comedy clip, *There's Something About Mary* the product placement did not occur immediately before or after a comedic situation and/or involve the product itself in the storyline.

In the second question, participants were asked if the appearance of the featured product was great. Participants considered the product's appearance good in all genres but the significant difference was between the science fiction and drama genres. The results of this question revealed that the use of humor in the comedy genre did not increase viewer's brand liking or participant's perception that the product was great. Again, comedy genre did not outshine the others.

In the third question, participants were asked whether the appearance of the featured product was realistic. Once again, participants considered the product's appearance very realistic across all genres;

however, there was no significant difference between them. One possible reason could be that the product was placed between highly emotional scenes in the drama genre. The emotional scenes before the placement included a tragic emergency in which a child character died, tensions of racism, and acts of discrimination. Emotional scenes immediately after the placement were of inebriated depression and sensuality. Participants may have felt this heavy montage of realism stimulated their perception that the product was just as realistic as the scenes in the movie clip. An interesting side note was that even though participants viewing the science fiction genres had the highest recall and/or recognition of the product placement, the products (Coke and Dr Pepper) did not impact the fictitious qualities of the science fiction genre. Participants still considered these popular and well-marketed sodas and the movie genre the least realistic in mean scores.

The fourth question asked participants if they thought the featured product was a great product. Once again, participants considered the product equally great in all genres but significant difference existed between the science fiction and drama genres. The results of this question revealed that the use of humor in the comedy genre did not

increase viewer's brand liking or participant's perception that the product was great. The results of this question also suggest that the science fiction genre appears to increase brand liking and/or the participant's perception that the product was great. Prior testing of the participant's attitude toward the brand would provide more definitive results. Again it is believed that the increase in brand liking in the science fiction genre may be due in part to the product's prominence and use in the movie.

Finally, in the fifth question, participants were asked if they agreed that the appearance of the featured product in the movie increased their liking of the product. Even though prior research suggests that humor positively effects liking and brand attitude, data from this study revealed that there was no significant difference among genres and that the use of humor was not influential in increasing brand liking.

In summary, the results for the second hypothesis and its favorablity of the brand in the science fiction genre may be due to several factors. First the products placed in the science fiction genre were intertwined with the story line. The products were blatantly used and seen across the middle of the screen. The product (Pepsi) in the subtle placement category of the comedy clip served only as a background prop

and was never cropped dead center of the screen. Please refer to figures 1 through 6 as they illustrate the type of placement. A second possible reason that drama scored so low was that an ethically-charged product such as alcohol may be better received in an optimistic movie than in a dramatic one (Kamins, Marks, & Skinner, 1991). For instance, some brands may be seen as more objectionable because of their being targeted to, or offensive to, certain groups (Gupta & Gould, 1997).

Third Hypothesis

Much like the first studies that shed light on consumers' attitudes toward brand placements in films (Nebenzahl & Secunda, 1993; Ong & Meri, 1994; Babin & Carder, 1996; Gupta & Gould, 1997) this study's third hypothesis tested whether a comedy genre favorably increased consumers' attitudes toward brand placement. As stated earlier, Nebenzahl and Secunda (1993) concluded that overall consumers do not object to brand placement and that they view it as an effective marketing communication medium which should be allowed. This study supported their findings with participants across all genres expressing a positive attitudinal score toward brand placement; however, this study's conglomerate overall score revealed that the drama genre had a higher

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positive viewer reaction toward brand placement in general than a science fiction and comedy movie.

The third hypothesis was tested using four questions, in addition to the conglomerate score. In the first question, participants were asked if they minded if brand placements appeared in the movie clip. Participants positively acknowledged the use of product placements in all genres, but there was significant difference between the science fiction and drama genres. The use of humor in the comedy genre did not positively increase viewer's attitude toward brand placement above the other two genres. The results of this question suggest that the science fiction genre appears to increase viewer's attitude toward brand placement.

In the second question, participants were asked if they minded if movie producers received money or other compensation from advertisers for placing their brands in movies. Participants positively agreed across all genres, however there was no significant difference between them. Again, the use of humor did not positively increase a favorable attitude toward brand placements above the other two genres.

In the third question, participants were asked whether they agreed that it was unethical for movie producers to attempt to influence the

audience by including brand name products in their movies. Participants considered the unethical influence attempted by movie producers with product placement very minimal in all genres but the significant difference was between the drama and science fiction genres. This question revealed that the use of humor in the comedy genre did not increase viewers' attitude toward product placement or that its use was unethical.

The final question asked participants if they thought that seeing the brand-name product in a movie makes the experience more realistic. Overall participants agreed that product placement made the movie experience more realistic, but the only significant difference was between the drama and science fiction genres. Results of this question did suggest that viewers' perceptions were positive toward the practice of brand placements and that viewers believed product placement made the movie experience more realistic. Possible reasons could be that the realistic images and scenes stimulated their perception that the product was just as realistic as the scenes in the movie clip.

In summary, the results for the third hypothesis and the overall favorable increase in viewer reaction toward product placement in a drama rather than a comedy may be due to a combination of factors.

Both Jack Daniels in *Monster's Ball* and Budweiser in *The Usual Suspects* were not intertwined in the storyline or centered across the screen as were the products in the science fiction genre. Placements in science fiction were blatent—highly visible and centered across the screen. Second, the drama genre had the lowest recall scores of all three genres. A combination of these two factors may have effected the outcome. With the lack of extreme prominence and blatent placement as well as a low recall score, participants may not have objected to something they did not see or hardly recognized.

Research Question One

The results of this study mimicked the conclusions made by Gupta and Lord (1998), in which prominent brand placements—placements that were highly visible due to their size, positioning, and/or centrality to the action in the scene—promoted a significantly higher level of brand awareness than subtle brand placements—placements which serve as background props. The study also supported Brennan and Dubas (1999), conclusions that audio cues were more effective than were subtle visuals without audio but that prominent visuals had the most effective means of instilling brand recall among viewers.

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As stated earlier, each movie was divided into two placement type categories. One category contained a prominent placement where the product was voiced, seen and used by the character. The other category contained a subtle placement where the product was just seen in the background.

In the first question participants were asked if product placement was used in the movie clip they just viewed. A significant difference between placement types was revealed. In fact, most participants (81.2%) in the prominent placement category recalled seeing a product placement, while only 50.5% of the subtle placement category recalled seeing a product. This seems to suggest that prominant placements are more effective in cueing movie goers to recall product placements than are subtle placements. A possible reason could be the added exposure of being voiced and used by the main characters.

In the second question, which tested unaided recall, participants were asked to actually write in the name of the product placed in the movie clip. Again a significant difference between placement types was revealed. An impressive 70.7% of the participants in the prominent placement category correctly wrote in the name of the product. Only

33.7% of the participants in the subtle placement category did the same. Once again, this study seems to suggest that prominent placements can effectively influence unaided recall more so than subtle placements. One reason could be the proximity of the product to the celebrity in a movie may have resulted in a higher amount of brand awareness and recall as suggested in Eddington's (1991) study.

In the final question, which tested for recognition, participants were asked to circle the one product they saw in the movie clip from a list of 20 popular products. An equally impressive 97% of the participants in the prominent placement category correctly circled the brand name they saw from a list of products. In the subtle placement category only 50.5% of the participants correctly circled the name of the product. This question revealed that the use of prominent placements are more effective in product recognition than subtle placements. Again, possible reasons could be the added exposure of being voiced and/or used by the main characters.

In summary, results seem to support both the research of Gupta and Lord (1998) and Brennan and Dubas (1999), which found that prominent brand placements promote a significantly higher level of brand

awareness than subtle brand placements and that the greater use of sensory cues may increase effectiveness of brand recall. Although the subtle placement category received lower percentage scores in all three test questions, these scores might have been even lower if the subtle placement in the movie, Mission to Mars was not blatant—highly visible and centered across the screen—which may have influenced a higher score in the subtle placement category than it would have recieved.

Limitations

There are many potential limitations to the generalization of a product placement study's findings. This study is a first in terms of assessing the effectiveness of product placement on a movie genre basis. While this study may be used as an initial benchmark, extensions of its approach should eliminate current limitations.

First, the stimulus material or films used in the experiment should be independently created if possible. This would allow the researcher to solve several problems plaguing product placement research. Created materials would allow the researcher to control the type of placement–subtle or prominent. This would allow for a cleaner investigation into genre effects. Additionally, by using stimulus materials

created specifically for research purposes, the types of products placed in clips could be controlled. When using actual products, as was the case in this study, participants possess pre-existing cognitions related to the brand. For instance, a participant may already have a set of beliefs concerning Pepsi or Jack Daniels. Ultimately, product placement studies that employ fictitious products would allow researchers to more accurately gauge how placement alone affects perceptions of products.

Second, the sample should not be limited to college students. Although 18-24-year-olds are an appropriate target for product placement, their opinions and reactions may differ from others. The participants of this study were students who perhaps were conscious and cautious of the classroom experiment and more sensitive to the use of placements than the general public. Therefore, more research is necessary with other groups. For example, an older sample might not be familiar with product placement practices or be an avid user(s) of the products used in the study. Also, this sample was limited geographically and ethnically.

Third, an attitudinal pretest should be given to the subjects several days prior to the experiment to determine whether there are existing

prejudices, favorable or not, to the products used in the experiment. An attitudinal pretest should provide a statistical benchmark of a participant's attitude prior to the experiment in order to compare changes, if any, after the movie genre's influence or exposure.

Finally, researchers should attempt to use the same product in all genres to help alleviate potential contaminates. Also using a product with moderate, prejudices, undertones and popularity may provide a more realistic account of subjects' attitudinal and recall scores.

Considerations for Future Research

There is much more research needed in this area of product placement. The present study positioned brand placement as being present in feature films screened in movie theaters. It did not assess attitudes toward brand placement, recall, or brand liking in television programs–dramas and/or sitcoms–or other home video markets. Researchers should consider the possibility of divergent attitudes between medias as well as new technologies such as TiVo, which could catapult the use of brand placement in coming years due to PVRs allowing consumers to zap advertisements during commercial breaks. Researchers should consider using fictitious products in their experiments to eliminate

any possible pre-existing preceptions respondants may have toward popular and often used products. And lastly, researchers should consider whether the type of movie rating (e.g., G, PG, PG-13, R-rated) affects product placement.

Figure 1. Photo 1, *There's Something About Mary*. This photo illustrates subtle placement in the movie clip.
Note. From the movie, *There's Something About Mary*, by 20th Century Fox. Copyright 1998.
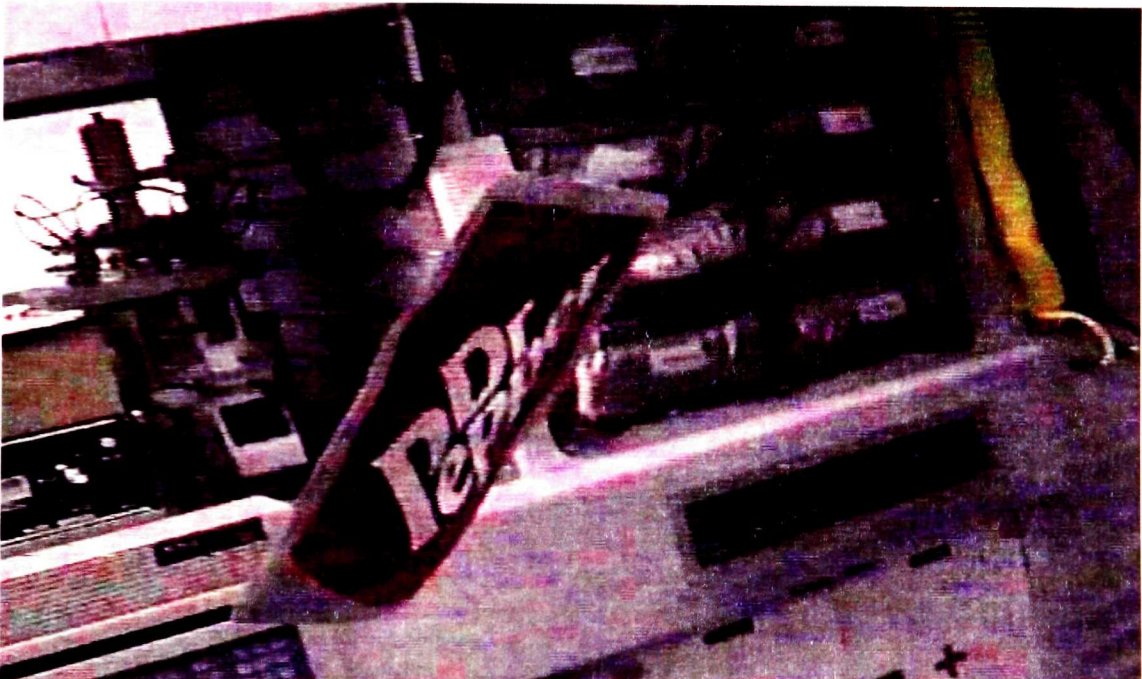

Figure 2. Photo 2, *Mission to Mars*. This photo illustrates subtle placement in the movie clip.
Note. From the movie, *Mission to Mars*, by The Jacobson Company and Touchstone Pictures. Copyright 2000.

Figure 3. Photo 3, *The Usual Suspects*. This photo illustrates subtle placement in the movie clip.
Note. From the movie, *The Usual Suspects*, by PolyGram Filmed Entertainment. Copyright 1995.

Figure 4. Photo 4, *Me, Myself, and Irene*. This photo illustrates prominent placement in the movie clip.
Note. From the movie, *Me, Myself, and Irene*, by 20th Century Fox. Copyright 2000.

Figure 5. Photo 5, *The Philadelphia Experiment.* This photo illustrates prominent placement in the movie clip.
Note. From the movie, *The Philadelphia Experiment,* by Cinema Group Ventures and New Pictures. Copyright 1984.

Figure 6. Photo 6, *Monster's Ball.* This photo illustrates prominent placement in the movie clip.
Note. From the movie, *Monster's Ball,* by Lee Daniels Entertainment. Copyright 2001.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the use of brand placements is quite evident in movies today. This study should be of interest to those companies or services considering or presently using brand placement in movies. This study attempted to determine whether the success of some brands reporting a phenomenal sales increase might be partly dependant on the type of movie in which the brand was placed. The results of this study suggest that the comedy genre does not outrank the other genres on brand recall/recognition, brand liking, and attitude toward brand placement. The results of this initial experiment did suggest though that the science fiction genre seemed to be more successful than the other two genres tested. Additionally, this research did confirm the findings gathered by Gupta and Lord (1998) that prominent brand placements promote a significantly higher level of brand awareness than subtle brand placements. Ultimately, this study suggests questions to the placement industry and to advertising researchers.

For the advertising and product placement industry, the question remains, is there some movie feature—be it genre, subject matter, or

cast—that can predictably result in positive and effective product placement? Specifically, can the industry discover an ideal vehicle that will provide the best bang for the buck in promoting a consistently higher brand recall, and/or brand liking? And, if a specific genre is determined as most effective, are all movies in that genre appropriate for the type of product the advertiser is selling.

Finally, for the researcher, the question remains, is the practice of product placement ethical? Social implications need to be addressed with the explosive growth of product placement and the emergence of new technology, like TiVo. Researchers will need to determine whether the industry is taking advantage of its daily foray into our homes by potentially subjecting viewers to 30-minute sitcom commercials and 90-minute product promotions?

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

MOVIE VIEWING STUDY

We are doing research on movie viewing and what parts of movies are best used to market upcoming films. Now that you have seen a movie clip, please comment on aspects of the clip.

1. How many times during a month do you go to a movie? _____

2. How many times during a month do you rent a movie? _____

3. Have you seen this entire movie before?   (please circle)
   - A. Yes
   - B. No
   - C. Not Sure

4. Please evaluate the movie clip you saw on the following scales:
   (please circle number)

Likable	1	2	3	4	5	Unlikable
Funny	1	2	3	4	5	Not Funny
Entertaining	1	2	3	4	5	Unentertaining
Dramatic	1	2	3	4	5	Not Dramatic
Good	1	2	3	4	5	Bad
Futuristic	1	2	3	4	5	Not Futuristic
Pleasant	1	2	3	4	5	Unpleasant
Worth Watching	1	2	3	4	5	Not Worth Watching

Please continue . . .

5. This movie clip represents a good example of a science fiction.
   (please circle number)

        Strongly Agree   1   2   3   4   5   Strongly Disagree

6. This movie clip represents a good example of a drama.
   (please circle number)

        Strongly Agree   1   2   3   4   5   Strongly Disagree

7. This movie clip represents a good example of a comedy.
   (please circle number)

        Strongly Agree   1   2   3   4   5   Strongly Disagree

Product placement is the practice of placing consumer brand products or services by a
placement agency or company in a motion picture.

8. Was there product placement in the movie clip you saw?
   (please circle)

        A. Yes
        B. No

9. Name the product placed in this movie clip?
   _____

Please continue . . .

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Please answer the following questions by indicating your opinion on the number scale.

10. I mind if brand-name products appear in movies?   (please circle number)

    Strongly Agree   1   2   3   4   5   Strongly Disagree

11. I mind if movie producers receive money or other compensation from advertisers for placing their brands in movies?   (please circle number)

    Strongly Agree   1   2   3   4   5   Strongly Disagree

12. I think it is unethical for movie producers to attempt to influence the audience by including brand-name products in their movies?   (please circle number)

    Strongly Agree   1   2   3   4   5   Strongly Disagree

13. I think that seeing the brand-name product in a movie makes the experience more realistic?   (please circle number)

    Strongly Agree   1   2   3   4   5   Strongly Disagree

Please continue . . .

14. The movie clip did contain a product placement. From the products listed below, please select the one product placed in the movie clip? (please circle the **ONE** product)

Coke	Snickers	Fritos	Miller Lite	Jack Daniel's
Doritos	Budweiser	Starbucks	Cheetos	Corvette
Sony	Bacardi	Pepsi	Heineken	Mountain Dew
BMW	Dr. Pepper	Twix	Crown Royal	Apple Computers

15. Please write in your age _____

16. Gender (please check one)

       Male _____

       Female _____

17. Classification (please check one)

Freshman _____	Graduate Student _____
Sophomore _____	Non Student _____
Junior _____	
Senior _____	

Please continue . . .

(Coke, Pepsi, Dr Pepper, Budweiser, Jack Daniels)* was the product placed in the movie clip you just saw. In the following questions please indicate your opinion regarding the product on the number scale.

18. I did not mind that (Coke, Pepsi, Dr Pepper, Budweiser, Jack Daniels) was a product placement in the movie?   (please circle number)

    Strongly Agree   1   2   3   4   5   Strongly Disagree

19. I thought the appearance of (Coke, Pepsi, Dr Pepper, Budweiser, Jack Daniels) in the movie was great? (please circle number)

    Strongly Agree   1   2   3   4   5   Strongly Disagree

20. I thought the appearance of (Coke, Pepsi, Dr Pepper, Budweiser, Jack Daniels) in the movie was realistic?   (please circle number)

    Strongly Agree   1   2   3   4   5   Strongly Disagree

21. I think that (Coke, Pepsi, Dr Pepper, Budweiser, Jack Daniels) is a great product? (please circle number)

    Strongly Agree   1   2   3   4   5   Strongly Disagree

22. The appearance of (Coke, Pepsi, Dr Pepper, Budweiser, Jack Daniels) in this movie has increased my liking of (Coke, Pepsi, Dr Pepper, Budweiser, Jack Daniels)? (please circle number)

    Strongly Agree   1   2   3   4   5   Strongly Disagree

THE END   Thank You For Your Time!

Note: One product choice was given in reference of the movie clip shown.

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Agree (Permission is granted.)

_____   _____
    Student Signature   Date

Disagree (Permission is not granted.)

_____   _____
    Student Signature   Date