

# UNDERSTANDING ATTITUDES TOWARD AND BEHAVIORS IN RESPONSE TO PRODUCT PLACEMENT

## A Consumer Socialization Framework

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**ABSTRACT:** Product placement attitudes have largely been assessed using college students or relatively small samples. In addition, no systematic framework has been used to investigate the origins or influencing social factors of such attitudes and how these interact with demographic characteristics. Using an online survey, we adopt the consumer socialization framework to examine placement-related attitudes and behaviors among 3,340 adults. Peer communication, a variable not previously investigated in this research stream, was the strongest predictor of both product placement attitudes and behaviors. Findings also reveal differences in both attitudes and behaviors across a range of demographic characteristics, including income, gender, and ethnicity.

Since Unilever's deliberate insertion of Sunlight Soap into several early Lumière films of the late 1890s, the practice of placing branded products within films for commercial purposes has developed into a distinct promotional tool (Newell, Salmon, and Chang 2006). In a recent industry report, PQ Media (2007) estimated that 2006 spending on movie-based placements reached \$885.1 million. The relatively recent popularity of the practice has come about due to its cost-benefit ratio and potential for extended audiences in the face of ever-increasing traditional media placement prices, limited ability by audiences to avoid exposure to the persuasion attempt, savings in rising marketing/production costs on the part of filmmakers (Motion Picture Association of America 2007b), and the aesthetic enhancement of settings depicted in film content (DeLorme and Reid 1999).

Following the practice's boom in popularity after the widely reported 60% increase in sales of Reese's Pieces chocolate after an on-screen appearance in *E.T.* (Newell, Salmon, and Chang 2006), a stream of scholarly research investigating consumer attitudes toward product placement as a practice began appearing in the early 1990s (e.g., Nebenzahl and Secunda 1993; Ong and Meri 1994). However, apart from a handful of exceptions, the attitude literature in this area has been characterized by the lack of a theoretical framework to guide discussions, a reliance almost exclusively on college student samples (for exceptions, see DeLorme and Reid 1999 [adults]; Nelson and McLeod 2005 [adolescents]; and Schmoll et al.

2006 [baby boomers]), and no reporting of any differences or similarities by demographic characteristics. Understanding both the public's perceptions of marketing communications tactics such as product placement and how such perceptions influence behavior is important for advertisers, as it can aid in development of more effective targeting efforts and provide additional knowledge about the potential success of using said tactics. In this regard, we propose consumer socialization (CS) as an effective lens and guide by which to analyze both product placement attitudes and related behaviors in a theoretically grounded manner. CS provides a systematic and well-established framework by which to analyze how demographic characteristics influence attitudinal and conative consumer behavior-oriented outcomes, as well as the influence of socialization agents and processes.

While college students are appropriate when assessing purely cognitive constructs that are likely to operate universally regardless of social status/situation (Kardes 1996), and for basic theory building, empirical comparisons have demonstrated that student responses often deviate from those of the larger nonstudent adult population (Peterson 2001; Soley and Reid 1983a). Indeed, while college-aged consumers comprise up to one-third of all moviegoers (Motion Picture Association of America 2007a), as a result of the prior focus on predominantly college student respondents, academic knowledge about product placement attitudes and behaviors about the other two-thirds of the population is very limited. Even in instances where nonstudents have served as respondents, however, small samples have been utilized, with limited information provided regarding whether differences were found based on demographic or other characteristics (Ong and Meri 1994; Schmoll et al. 2006). Thus, there is a need to develop a more refined and detailed understanding of how consumers beyond the traditional college student sample perceive the

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practice of product placement, and to begin closing the gap in knowledge regarding how demographic characteristics impact such perceptions. Moreover, there is also a limited understanding of the conative consequences of attitude toward placement in general (Morton and Friedman 2002). Although the link between attitudes toward advertising in general and effectiveness of specific ads has been documented (MacKenzie, Lutz, and Belch 1986; Mehta 2000; Muehling 1987), there have been few assessments of the outcomes of placement perceptions.

Thus, the current study addresses the discussed gaps in product placement knowledge by (1) utilizing consumer socialization as a guiding framework, and (2) investigating product placement attitudes and behaviors among a diverse sample of 3,340 nonstudent consumers.

## BACKGROUND

### Product Placement Attitudes

Prior investigations of attitudes toward product placement have revealed generally positive perceptions of the practice overall, but with reservations regarding the insertion of certain ethically charged products. Firearms, tobacco, and alcohol products are consistently rated as the most unacceptable for placement, particularly in youth-oriented content (Brennan, Rosenberger, and Hementera 2004; Gupta and Gould 1997; McKechnie and Zhou 2003).

Attempts to go deeper and provide more detailed assessments of demographic differences in placement attitudes have been few in number, and limited for the most part to gender considerations. Such analyses have broadly found a slightly greater concern among female students, especially pronounced for the placement of ethically charged product types, but still largely positive in the aggregate (Brennan, Rosenberger, and Hementera 2004; Gould, Gupta, and Grabner-Kraüter 2000; Gupta and Gould 1997; however, see Nelson and McLeod 2005's finding of no gender differences in adolescents' liking or awareness of placements). The aforementioned Nelson and McLeod (2005) study was also the only one to report perceptual differences by ethnicity, finding that adolescents "of color" (a combination category consisting of African-American, Asian, Hispanic, and other non-Caucasian ethnicities) were more aware of, and evinced greater liking for, product placements. With regard to age, DeLorme and Reid's (1999) in-depth interviews showed that older consumers were more concerned about the manipulative power of placements than younger interviewees and expressed broadly greater distrust of the practice. A separate study of 264 baby boomers employed at an insurance company found notably indifferent opinions about product placement, regardless of the medium in which the practice occurs (Schmoll et al. 2006).

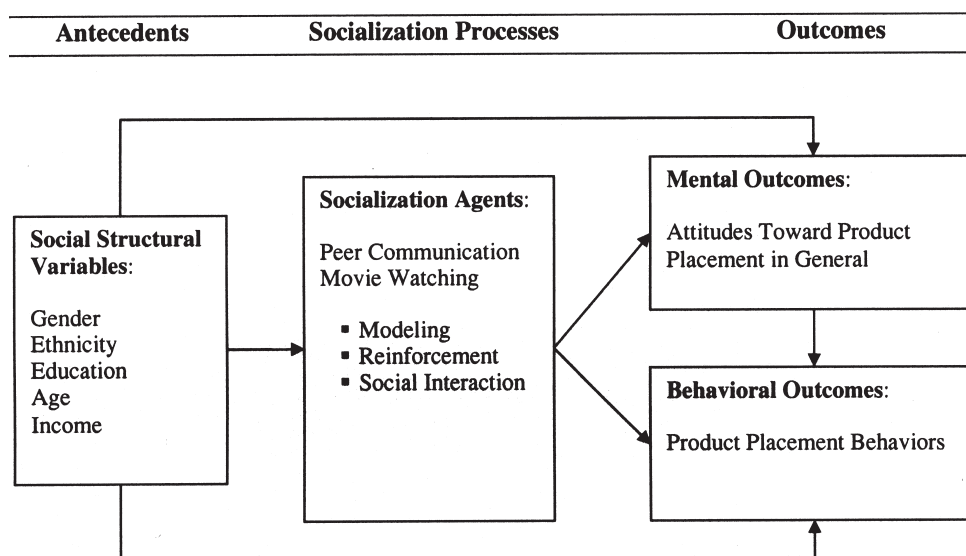
There has also been limited investigation of reported behavioral outcomes. When assessed, such measures have largely been derived from one item on Gupta and Gould's (1997, p. 45) attitude scale ("I buy brands I see movie stars holding or using in movies"). Using this measure, males and American consumers seem to be more likely to purchase placed brands than women and non-Americans (Gould, Gupta, and Grabner-Kraüter 2000). Conative outcome measurement was advanced by Morton and Friedman (2002) through inclusion of usage, search, and trial-related behaviors in their scale. Using a modified version of Gupta and Gould's (1997) scale, they found a positive relationship between placement attitudes and reported brand-related behaviors resulting from placements (Morton and Friedman 2002). Their study's two key factors of ethical perceptions and perceived effects of placement on audiences were found to significantly correlate with placement-related behaviors.

Finally, while there has been some work advancing knowledge about attitudes and behaviors related to product placement practice, there has been no analysis of the sources of these attitudes. What are the origins and/or influencing social factors of product placement perceptions? How do these interact with consumers' demographic characteristics? Furthermore, prior studies of placement attitudes have largely been premised on the same logic used in the attitudes-toward-advertising-in-general literature. Namely, general attitudes toward a practice in general (product placement) have an effect on the outcomes (e.g., brand attitudes) of exposure to specific instances of those practices (e.g., Will Smith drinking Pepsi in a movie). Although there are no reported applications of consumer socialization to product placement, the literature has supported the use of the framework as a means of analyzing orientations toward advertising more generally (Bush, Smith, and Martin 1999; Lee, Salmon, and Paek 2007; Smith and Moschis 1984).

### Consumer Socialization

Derived from the general socialization concept describing the development of people's cognitions, attitudes, social roles, and attendant behaviors, Ward's foundational definition of consumer socialization described it as collective "processes by which young people acquire skills, knowledge, and attitudes relevant to their functioning as consumers in the marketplace" (1974, p. 2). Essentially, the framework provides a means of analyzing the influences on and sources of how people learn to perform their roles as consumers in society. In line with Ward's emphasis on young consumers, the bulk of the CS literature has investigated children's and adolescents' socialization outcomes and antecedents (John 1999). However, while childhood is a key formative period in the development, reinforcement, and modification of consumption-related thoughts and behaviors,

**FIGURE 1**  
**A Conceptual Model of Consumer Socialization and Product Placement Attitudes/Behaviors**



*Note:* Adapted from Bush, Smith, and Martin (1999) and Moschis and Churchill (1978).

the process continues during the adult life cycle (Brim 1968; Moschis 1987) and into the elderly years (Smith and Moschis 1984, 1990) as adults modify existing consumption behaviors and adapt to new/changing consumer roles.

Adapted from Moschis and Churchill (1978) and Bush, Smith, and Martin (1999), Figure 1 models the general CS framework, and also includes the specific variables used in the current study. The four core components of antecedents, socialization processes, socialization agents, and outcomes are common to virtually all CS studies (Moschis 1987; Moschis and Churchill 1978). However, while these are central to CS, the framework is flexible as to the specific variables that can be investigated within each of these components. For example, religious affiliation could be incorporated as part of the social structural variables, depending on appropriateness of fit with the outcome(s) being assessed.

### *Foundations*

Although not a theory in and of itself, the theoretical foundations of CS are found in its socialization processes component (also referred to as learning processes; Moschis 1987), which is intrinsically linked with the socialization agents. Two of the most commonly utilized theoretical perspectives to explain the CS process have been the cognitive development model and social learning theory. The former is based heavily on psychologist Jean Piaget's view of learning and the socialization process as largely cognitive-psychological in nature, occurring as a function of the ongoing cognitive changes/stages that develop as people age. This perspective has largely been used

in CS research on children (Moschis 1987), although cognitive changes also continue into adulthood (albeit at a lesser rate for most people).

Rather than placing emphasis on internal, cognitive components, the social learning perspective places greater emphasis on the external, environmental sources of learning/socialization, such as peers and parents. These external sources transmit norms and models of attitudes, behaviors, and responses from which learning occurs. Although Moschis and Churchill (1978) note that the CS framework does not view developmental and social learning models as mutually exclusive, the majority of CS research has largely adopted the social learning perspective to explain the process, particularly when dealing with adult populations. Figure 1 includes three of the most commonly utilized social learning mechanisms by which the socialization agents are thought to influence CS outcomes—modeling, reinforcement, and social interaction. These mechanisms are considered to be complementary, operating together to varying degrees depending on the specific context. In turn, these mechanisms influence the outcomes, which can take the form of both actual behaviors and/or cognitions such as attitudes, values, or beliefs. The modeling mechanism is largely based on Bandura's (1969) ideas of observational learning, wherein people consciously emulate their consumption-related attitudes and actions based on important social agents such as peers, family members, or media content. Thus, through interaction with others, influential social agents transmit—intentionally or unintentionally—norms of “appropriate” cognitions and behaviors, with socialization occurring as part of the modeling process. In a product placement context, consider that shortly

following the world debut of the (then) new BMW Z3 roadster in the James Bond movie *GoldenEye*, in which the vehicle is used extensively by the main character, orders for the model were backlogged for more than one year.

The reinforcement mechanism of CS involves consumer learning occurring as the result of positive reinforcement (reward) or negative (punishment) on the part of the socialization agent on the consumer (Moschis 1987). As Moschis noted, the specific type of learning process involved in the social interaction mechanism of the socialization process is not clear, but is thought to be a combination of modeling, reinforcement, and mere social norms. The norms involved in a consumer's typical interactions with socialization agents serve to reinforce and shape consumer-related behaviors and orientations. For example, if one's peer group (a common socialization agent) is highly negative toward product placement (perhaps considering it a crass commercialization of film aesthetics), one's own attitude is likely to be similar, shaped by interactions with the group in this context.

#### *Socialization Agent: Peers*

Interaction with peer group others is considered a fundamental human trait, arising from psycho-physiological and sociological need gratification (Moschis 1987; Ward 1974). The CS framework posits that via consumption-related communications, peers serve as significant transmitters of attitudinal and behavioral norms/standards by which one's own beliefs and actions may be gauged or adjusted (Bush, Smith, and Martin 1999; Moschis and Churchill 1978). Furthermore, the behaviors and attitudes of one's peers not only serve as a base of comparison, but also provide a means of learning how to respond to new consumption-related stimuli in the environment (e.g., an unfamiliar car brand being joyfully driven by a film character). Peer groups essentially offer a real-world (often immediate) way of assessing whether and to what extent one's own orientations and actions are "appropriate" as compared with the norm among those groups of which one considers oneself to be part (e.g., the reaction among peers to the wearing of jeans to a company function or how one should feel about someone else who dresses in that way). Indeed, the influence of peers as reference groups on purchase behaviors is well documented (e.g., Bearden and Etzel 1982; Bearden, Netemeyer, and Teel 1989), although no studies have incorporated this issue in relation to product placement. Within the CS literature, peer groups have been one of the most commonly researched socialization agents and consistent results have shown that peer interactions regarding consumption-related matters is highly influential in shaping, among other things, shopping orientations (Shim and Gehrt 1996), retail patronage behavior (Bellenger and Moschis 1981), and consumption-oriented decision making (Singh, Chao, and Kwon 2006).

In the current case, we are interested in consumers' attitudes toward and behaviors in response to product placement in general, not their perceptions or actions in response to particular instances of branded **placements**. Therefore, we adopt the perspective that greater consumption-related communication with peers is indicative of a more positive orientation toward brands, and by extension, brand-related communications such as product placement. Initial findings in the attitude-toward-advertising-in-general arena confirm that peers are clear influencers of attitudes/orientations toward advertising among both African Americans and Caucasians (Bush, Smith, and Martin 1999; Lee, Salmon, and Paek 2007). Thus, given the robust relationships found between peer communication and both consumption attitudes and behaviors:

*H1a: Peer communication about consumption will be positively related with product placement attitudes.*

*H1b: Peer communication about consumption will be positively related with product placement behaviors.*

#### *Socialization Agent: Media*

As with one's peer groups, the CS framework views the media as a significant source of consumption-related beliefs, attitudes, and behavior norms. A key difference between media content and peer groups as socialization agents, however, is that the former offers a mediated, less direct (perhaps "safer") means of gauging one's behaviors and attitudes in relation to social norms (Moschis 1987). Using the general situation described in the previous section, one's decision about whether or not to dress in jeans to a company function can in part be made based on exposure to media content approving/disapproving of such an action (indeed, media content can transmit fine distinctions in norms, such as clothing being appropriate for an ad agency party versus for a bank party). However, this type of norm transmission with regard to general attitudes toward product placement would be unlikely given the limited instances of characters discussing the practice in films—brands simply appear as part of the story and setting.

Because of the very limited instances of media content directly providing norms of appropriate attitude and behavior in response to product placement practice (such as film characters discussing or responding to product placements they are exposed to), we propose that social norms with regard to the practice are indirectly transmitted and reinforced in a process similar to Zajonc's (1968) mere exposure or "familiarity breeds liking" effect. Key studies in the CS literature have proposed, and empirically supported, the socializing process of mass media operating partly through a mere exposure process (e.g., Moschis and Churchill 1978; Moschis and Moore 1979; Smith and Moschis 1984). The modeling component of the CS



process may seem initially to be incompatible with the mere exposure conceptualization as there is no response or attitude toward placement to be imitated. But as noted earlier, the three key socialization processes in Figure 1 are not mutually exclusive but complementary. Given that the number of product placements in films has increased over time (Galician and Bourdeau 2004), the more films one views, the more exposures to branded placements one is likely to experience. Based on the robust tenets of mere exposure theory, as one sees more instances of product placements, the more familiar they become and thus result in more positive attitudes toward the practice as a whole. This positive orientation toward the practice, in turn, is likely to influence the likelihood of responding behaviorally to branded placements.

There are some preliminary indications that media exposure influences CS-related outcomes among adults. Specific to CS, amount of media usage (most commonly operationalized in terms of television and television commercial viewership) has been found to be positively related with attitudes toward advertising and general consumption-related behaviors among young adults (Bush, Smith, and Martin 1999; Singh, Chao, and Kwon 2006), although not among the elderly (Smith and Moschis 1984). Among adolescent and children consumers, media exposure has been consistently documented as a significant influencer of their consumer behaviors and cognitions (John 1999; Mangleburg and Bristol 1998; Mascarenhas and Higby 1993; Moschis and Churchill 1978). Because our study is focused on placements in films, we operationalize media exposure as amount of movie watching in both the cinema and at home. Although not discussed as part of the CS framework, in a product placement context, frequency of movie watching has been found to influence attitudes toward the practice (greater watching related with more positive attitudes) among American, Chinese, Australian, and European college students (Brennan, Rosenberger, and Hementera 2004; Gould, Gupta, and Grabner-Kraüter 2000; Gupta and Gould 1997; McKechnie and Zhou 2003), as well as U.S. baby boomers (Schmoll et al. 2006). Thus:

*H2a: Frequency of movie watching will be positively related with product placement attitudes.*

*H2b: Frequency of movie watching will be positively related with product placement behaviors.*

We note here that another of the commonly researched socialization agents is the influence of parental communication. However, while parents are an important source of socialization for children and adolescents (John 1999), studies generally indicate limited impact on adult CS, regardless of race or gender (Bush, Smith, and Martin 1999; Singh, Chao, and Kwon 2006). Thus, we do not include parental communication as a socialization agent in the current study.

### *Social Structural Variables*

The CS framework defines social structural variables as those that “locate a person in a social grouping whose members’ behaviors tend to be relatively homogenous” (Moschis 1987, p. 18). Commonly investigated social structural variables mirror those used by marketers in segmenting consumers by demographic characteristics, including age, gender, income, ethnicity, and education level. As with most CS components, due to the predominant focus on children’s socialization, there is limited understanding regarding how these types of variables influence adult consumption-oriented cognitions and behaviors. Regarding product placement attitudes specifically, with the exception of gender, scholars have conducted few analyses of differences based on demographic factors. The literature reveals somewhat greater concern about the practice among female college students (Brennan, Rosenberger, and Hementera 2004; Gupta and Gould 1997; McKechnie and Zhou 2003), more positive attitudes among non-Caucasians (Nelson and McLeod 2005), and generally indifferent perceptions among older adults (Schmoll et al. 2006, but see DeLorme and Reid 1999 for more nuanced, qualitative discussions of older versus younger consumer differences).

In the more general attitude toward advertising stream, results have shown some initial demographic differences in response. In terms of gender, female consumers tend to be slightly more negative toward advertising, particularly with regard to regulation, in that they are more favorable toward government regulation of advertisements than males (Dutta-Bergman 2006; Shavitt, Lowrey, and Haefner 1998). Regarding ethnicity, the only consistent pattern of results shows that African Americans are more positively disposed toward advertising than Caucasians (Bush, Smith, and Martin 1999; Soley and Reid 1983b; Yoon 1995). Although both the Shavitt, Lowrey, and Haefner (1998) and Nelson and McLeod (2005) studies did not have enough respondents to make comparisons by specific ethnicities, both found more positive perceptions among non-Caucasians as a whole toward advertising and product placement, respectively. Other patterns in the literature indicate that those of greater age, higher income, and more advanced education levels have more negative perceptions of advertising (Alwitt and Prabhaker 1992; Dutta-Bergman 2006; Shavitt, Lowrey, and Haefner 1998).

It should be noted that although CS outcomes can be influenced by social structural variables directly, as well as indirectly via the socialization agents (see Figure 1), the social learning mechanisms described earlier apply only to the processes by which the socialization agents impact the outcomes. The framework does not provide a theory-oriented means of explaining how the social structural variables directly influence CS outcomes. Given that the CS framework does not propose a theoretical basis for how social structural variables directly

**TABLE I**  
**Demographic Profile of the Sample**

	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	1,147	34.7%
Female	2,159	65.3%
Total	3,306	
<b>Age group</b>		
19–25	279	8.4%
26–35	914	27.6%
36–45	894	27.0%
46–55	763	23.1%
Over 55	458	13.8%
Total	3,308	
<b>Education level</b>		
Did not finish high school	57	1.7%
High school	555	16.8%
Some college	1,019	30.8%
Bachelor's degree	962	29.1%
Master's/professional degree	645	19.5%
Other	71	2.1%
Total	2,409	
<b>Household income level</b>		
Less than \$15,000	270	8.3%
\$15,000–\$29,999	514	15.8%
\$30,000–\$44,999	609	18.7%
\$45,000–\$59,999	546	16.7%
\$60,000–\$74,999	447	13.7%
More than \$75,000	874	26.8%
Total	2,460	
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
African American	114	5.4%
Anglo-American	1,733	82.8%
Asian American	103	4.9%
Hispanic	144	6.9%
Total	2,094	

*Note:* Totals for each demographic characteristic do not match 3,340 (number of respondents) due to nonresponse to items.

influence CS outcomes, and in light of the fact that there have been few analyses of demographic differences beyond gender in the product placement and broader advertising attitude literatures, we propose the following interrelated research questions:

*RQ1: In terms of attitude toward product placement, how do consumers differ in regard to (a) gender, (b) ethnicity, (c) education level, (d) age, and (e) income?*

*RQ2: In terms of product placement behaviors, how do consumers differ with regard to (a) gender, (b) ethnicity, (c) education level, (d) age, and (e) income?*

As the social structural variables can influence CS outcomes indirectly through the socialization agents, for each

demographic characteristic included as part of RQs 1 and 2 we also analyze extent of peer communication and amount of movie watching.

## METHOD

### Sample

The current study employed a survey administered to an online consumer panel maintained by a large Southwestern university in the United States. The use of online panels has become increasingly popular because it reduces the costs associated with locating appropriate respondents, increases response rates, and ensures immediate availability of the respondents. At the same time, its popularity does not mean that the method is inherently valid and reliable due to some problems that are associated with this sampling method (e.g., control and representativeness issues). Despite such problems, the current study employed this method because the objective was to obtain a large sample featuring a variety of demographic and socialization characteristics from across the nation.

Potential participants were selected from the online panel, with all 18,640 active panel members receiving the first survey invitation by e-mail. Among them, 2,859 panel members completed the survey. Two weeks later, a reminder e-mail was sent to the remaining 15,981 members, resulting in an additional 863 completed surveys (3,722 total surveys). The final sample size ( $N = 3,340$ ) reflects a reduction in the number of respondents eliminated due to incomplete surveys, and represents a response rate of approximately 20%. This is in line with Couper's (2000) review of online research survey issues in general and his specific discussion of online panel response rates, as well as other studies using online panel samples (typically in the 16 to 25% range) (Joinson and Reips 2007). As compensation for their participation, all participants were entered into cash prize drawings (\$50) and five of them were randomly selected.

Among the 3,340 respondents, 2,159 (65.3%) were females and 1,147 (34.7%) were males. Approximately 28% of the respondents were ages 26–35, followed by ages 36–45 (27.0%), ages 46–55 (23.1%), ages over 55 (13.8%), and ages 19–25 (8.4%). Anglo-Americans comprised 82.8% of the sample, followed by Hispanics (6.9%), African Americans (5.4%), and Asian Americans (4.9%). Additional demographic characteristics of the respondents are shown in Table 1.

### Measures and Reliabilities

#### *Peer Communication About Consumption*

This variable was assessed using Moschis and Churchill's (1978) six-item, five-point Likert-type peer communication about consumption scale, with 1 being "never" and 5 being

**TABLE 2**  
**Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Coefficients Matrix**

	<b>Movie watching</b>	<b>Peer communication</b>	<b>PPL attitude</b>	<b>PPL behavior</b>	<b>Mean (SD)</b>	<b>n</b>
Movie watching	1.00				2.79 (.92)	3,305
Peer communication	.25*	1.00			2.81 (.70)	3,340
PPL attitude	.12*	.20*	1.00		3.33 (.98)	3,338
PPL behavior	.22*	.35*	.28*	1.00	1.25 (1.80)	3,224

Note: PPL = product placement.

\* Significant at .01.

“very often.” For example, respondents were asked to indicate how often each of the six items occurs (e.g., “You ask your friends for advice about buying things”; “You and your friends talk about things you see or hear advertised”; “Your friend tells you what things you should or shouldn’t buy”). The six items were found to be reliable ( $\alpha = .84$ ).

#### *Movie Watching*

This variable was operationalized as the frequency of combined movie watching in the cinema and at home. Respondents were asked to indicate how often they watch movies in the cinema and at home in a typical month (including rentals, purchases, and on television).

#### *Attitude Toward Product Placement*

Ever since the publication of Gupta and Gould’s (1997) attitudinal study of product placement, virtually all subsequent work in the area has utilized the same or modified versions of their scale. However, the scale’s items would more accurately be considered as measuring respondents’ responses to the underlying dimensions/factors of product placement and not overall attitude per se. Thus, because the current study seeks to assess attitudes toward product placement in general, and not the underlying beliefs or dimensions that comprise such attitudes, the survey adapted and applied Muehling’s (1987) three-item, five-point semantic differential attitude-toward-advertising-in-general scale to assess this construct (bad versus good; negative versus positive; unfavorable versus favorable). The three items were found to be reliable ( $\alpha = .89$ ) and were averaged for subsequent analyses.

#### *Reported Behaviors Related to Product Placement*

The extent of respondents’ self-reported behaviors related to product placement in movies was measured with Morton and

Friedman’s (2002) five-item, nominal yes/no scale: (1) “I have searched for information about brands after seeing them in movies”; (2) “looked for brands in the store after seeing them in movies”; (3) “learned new information about brands after seeing them in movies”; (4) “started using brands after seeing them in movies”; and (5) “wanted to try brands after seeing them in movies.” If a respondent indicated “yes” to all of the five questions, he or she was assigned five points. Similarly, if a respondent indicated “yes” to two questions out of five, two points were assigned. Therefore, each respondent could get a “product placement behavior” index score from 0 to 5 depending on their answers to the five questions.

## RESULTS

### *Hypotheses Testing*

The relationships between peer communication and product placement attitude as well as behavior were examined using correlation analyses. As shown in Table 2, the results indicate that there are positive correlations between peer communication and attitude toward product placement ( $A_{ppl}$ ) ( $r = .20, p < .01$ ) and product placement–related behaviors ( $B_{ppl}$ ) ( $r = .35, p < .01$ ), thus supporting H1. Furthermore, H2 is supported through positive associations between level of movie watching and  $A_{ppl}$  ( $r = .12, p < .01$ ) as well as  $B_{ppl}$  ( $r = .22, p < .01$ ).

### *Research Questions*

Because there are limited theoretical bases supporting the development of hypotheses with regard to the effects of the social structural variables, the analyses used to answer RQs 1 and 2 are considered exploratory in nature. An independent samples *t*-test was conducted for gender and an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted for the ethnicity, age group, and education variables discussed below. As noted earlier, we also sought to understand the relationships between respondents’

**TABLE 3**  
**Summary of Independent Samples t-tests and ANOVA**

	PPL attitude mean/SD (n)	t or F	PPL behavior mean/SD (n)	t or F
<i>Gender</i>				
Male	3.23/1.00 (1,147)	4.04*	1.37/.85 (1,106)	-2.76*
Female	3.38/.97 (2,157)		1.18/.77 (2,086)	
<i>Ethnicity</i>				
African American	3.80/.96 (114)	10.99*	2.00/1.06 (110)	28.46*
Anglo-American	3.28/.94 (1,732)		.93/.06 (1,681)	
Asian American	3.35/1.02 (103)		1.89/1.05 (98)	
Hispanic	3.39/.96 (144)		1.69/.92 (138)	
<i>Education</i>				
Didn't finish high school	3.61/1.21 (57)	12.75*	1.34/.84 (56)	1.29
High school	3.49/.97 (554)		1.27/.81 (527)	
Some college	3.39/1.01 (1,018)		1.32/.86 (993)	
Bachelor's degree	3.27/.91 (962)		1.25/.78 (925)	
Master's/professional degree	3.14/.98 (645)		1.11/.74 (623)	
<i>Age</i>				
19-25	3.37/.91 (279)	9.13*	1.77/.92 (266)	19.71*
26-35	3.36/.93 (913)		1.51/.88 (890)	
36-45	3.38/.98 (894)		1.20/.78 (861)	
46-55	3.37/1.00 (763)		1.11/.78 (735)	
Over 55	3.07/1.03 (457)		.76/.51 (443)	
<i>Income</i>				
Less than 15,000	3.40/.99 (270)	1.86	1.83/.93 (263)	10.45*
15,000-29,999	3.33/1.04 (513)		1.47/.88 (488)	
30,000-44,999	3.26/1.01 (609)		1.29/.85 (590)	
45,000-59,999	3.41/.93 (546)		1.26/.80 (532)	
60,000-74,999	3.36/1.03 (447)		1.15/.76 (428)	
More than 75,000	3.30/.91 (873)		1.00/.67 (846)	

Notes: ANOVA = analysis of variance; PPL = product placement attitudes.

\* Significant at .01.

demographic characteristics and their peer communications about consumption and amount of movie watching.

### *Gender*

As shown in Table 3, the results suggest that female respondents hold more positive  $A_{ppl}$  ( $M = 3.38$ ) than their male counterparts ( $M = 3.23$ ) ( $p < .01$ ). Conversely, the results indicate that males are likely to engage in more  $B_{ppl}$  ( $M = 1.37$ ) than females ( $M = 1.18$ ) ( $p < .01$ ). Further analysis suggests that male respondents view more films ( $M = 2.85$ ) and have greater peer communication about consumption ( $M = 2.83$ ) than their female counterparts (movie watching,  $M = 2.77$ ,  $p < .05$ ; peer communication,  $M = 2.76$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

### *Ethnicity*

The results of ANOVA show a significant effect of ethnicity on  $A_{ppl}$  and  $B_{ppl}$ . As shown in Table 3,  $A_{ppl}$  was most positive

for African Americans ( $M = 3.80$ ), followed by Hispanics ( $M = 3.39$ ), Asian Americans ( $M = 3.35$ ), and Anglo-Americans ( $M = 3.28$ ) ( $F = 10.99$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The nature of this effect was determined using a Bonferroni pairwise comparisons test. The results indicate that African Americans'  $A_{ppl}$  is significantly more positive than other ethnic groups ( $p < .01$ ). Similarly, African Americans are more likely to engage in  $B_{ppl}$  after being exposed to brands in movies (e.g., bought something after seeing them in movies) ( $M = 2.00$ ) than were other ethnic groups: Asian Americans ( $M = 1.89$ ), Hispanics ( $M = 1.69$ ), and Anglo-Americans ( $M = .93$ ) ( $F = 28.46$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The results of Bonferroni pairwise comparison tests indicate that Anglo-American respondents also showed significantly different mean scores from other ethnic groups ( $p < .01$ ), in their case being the least positive toward placement.

Results of the ANOVA for movie watching suggest that African Americans watch the most films per month ( $M = 3.14$ ), followed by Hispanics ( $M = 3.11$ ), Asian Americans ( $M = 3.01$ ), and Anglo-Americans ( $M = 2.73$ ) ( $F = 15.70$ ,



$p < .01$ ). For peer communication, Asian Americans demonstrate the highest mean scores ( $M = 3.13$ ), followed by Hispanics ( $M = 2.92$ ), African Americans ( $M = 2.88$ ), and Anglo-Americans ( $M = 2.75$ ) ( $F = 12.25, p < .01$ ). In sum, the results indicate that Anglo-Americans have the least positive attitudes toward product placement and are the least likely to engage in peer communication about consumption.

### Education

As shown in Table 3, the results suggest that the lower the respondents' education level, the higher their  $A_{ppl}$  mean scores ( $F = 12.75, p < .01$ ). That is, attitude was most positive for the group of respondents who did not finish high school ( $M = 3.61$ ), followed by high school ( $M = 3.49$ ), some college ( $M = 3.39$ ), bachelor's degree ( $M = 3.27$ ), and master's/professional degree ( $M = 3.14$ ). The Bonferroni tests suggest that respondents with either bachelor's or master's/professional degrees exhibited significantly different  $A_{ppl}$  mean scores from those who had finished some college, high school, and did not finish high school ( $p < .01$ ). However, education level was found not to be a significant differentiator of  $B_{ppl}$  ( $F = 1.30, p = .27$ ) (see Table 3).

Regarding movie watching, the results of the ANOVA suggest that respondents who did not finish high school show the least frequent film exposure ( $M = 2.30$ ), followed by high school graduates ( $M = 2.57$ ), those with some college ( $M = 2.79$ ), followed by bachelor's degree ( $M = 2.89$ ), and master's/professional degree ( $M = 2.93$ ) ( $F = 19.53, p < .01$ ), suggesting that the higher their education levels are, the more frequently they watch films. As for peer communication, respondents with a bachelor's degree show the highest mean scores ( $M = 2.84$ ), followed by master's/professional and some college ( $M = 2.82$ ), high school ( $M = 2.79$ ), and no high school ( $M = 2.39$ ) ( $F = 5.68, p < .01$ ).

### Age

The results of the ANOVA indicated a significant age difference for  $A_{ppl}$  ( $F = 9.13, p < .01$ ) as well as  $B_{ppl}$  ( $F = 19.71, p < .01$ ). Table 3 shows that respondents over 55 years indicated the least favorable and significantly different  $A_{ppl}$  mean scores ( $M = 3.07$ ) from other groups of respondents ( $p < .01$ ). However, all other groups showed very similar mean scores for  $A_{ppl}$  as each other. Regarding  $B_{ppl}$ , the results showed a consistent pattern. That is, the younger they are, the more likely respondents are to engage in such behaviors as seeking out a placed brand in stores or looking for additional information about that brand. For example, respondents 19 to 25 years old showed the highest mean scores for  $B_{ppl}$  ( $M = 1.77$ ), followed by 26 to 35 ( $M = 1.51$ ), 36 to 45 ( $M = 1.20$ ), and 46- to 55-year-olds ( $M = 1.11$ ). Further results indicate that

respondents 19–25 years view the most films ( $M = 3.17$ ), followed by 26–35 ( $M = 2.99$ ), 36–45 ( $M = 2.78$ ), 46–55 ( $M = 2.65$ ), and over 55 ( $M = 2.46$ ) ( $F = 44.58, p < .01$ ). Finally, similar patterns were found for peer communication. That is, the highest peer communication score was found for the 19–25 age group ( $M = 3.16$ ), followed by 26–35 ( $M = 3.00$ ), 36–45 ( $M = 2.89$ ), and 46–55 ( $M = 2.55$ ) ( $F = 55.75, p < .01$ ).

### Income

Table 3 suggests that there are no significant  $A_{ppl}$  differences with respect to income levels ( $F = 1.86, p = .09$ ). In contrast, the lower the respondents' income levels, the greater the likelihood they are to engage  $B_{ppl}$  ( $F = 10.45, p < .01$ ). That is, the mean score was highest for the group making less than \$15,000 ( $M = 1.83$ ), followed by 15,000–29,999 ( $M = 1.47$ ), 30,000–44,999 ( $M = 1.29$ ), 45,000–59,999 ( $M = 1.26$ ), 60,000–74,999 ( $M = 1.15$ ), and more than 75,000 ( $M = 1.00$ ). Finally, the findings suggest that the higher the respondents' income levels, the more movies they like to watch ( $F = 3.43, p < .01$ ). As for peer communication, however, the results of the ANOVA were not statistically significant ( $F = 1.10, p = .36$ ).

### Assessing Relative Influence of CS Variables

Two separate multiple regression analyses were employed to further explore the relative influence of consumer socialization variables on  $A_{ppl}$  and  $B_{ppl}$ . First, to predict attitude toward product placement, the following consumer socialization variables were entered as independent variables: peer communication, movie viewing, age, gender, education, income, and ethnicity. The tolerance values of the independent variables were assessed using the conventional .1 cutoff point for high multicollinearity (Hair et al. 1998). All independent variables were found to have high tolerance values ranging from .87 to .97, suggesting an absence of multicollinearity. As shown in Table 4, the results of the stepwise regression analysis show that some consumer socialization variables are significant predictors of  $A_{ppl}$  ( $R^2_{adj} = .07, F = 38.68, p < .01$ ). The stepwise regression results in Table 4 show significant standardized  $\beta$  coefficients for six of the consumer socialization variables entered. The consumer socialization variables with the most predictive power for attitude toward product placement are peer communication (partial  $r = .17, t = 9.57, p < .01$ ), education (partial  $r = -.14, t = -7.81, p < .01$ ), movie watching (partial  $r = .08, t = 4.66, p < .01$ ), African-American ethnicity (partial  $r = .08, t = 4.67, p < .01$ ), income (partial  $r = .04, t = 2.28, p < .05$ ), and gender (partial  $r = -.04, t = -2.25, p < .05$ ). However, age and three additional ethnicity dummy variables (i.e., Hispanic, Anglo-American, Asian American) were found not to be significant predictors. In sum, the results

**TABLE 4**  
**Summary of Multiple Regression Analyses**

Variable	Partial correlations	t	R <sup>2</sup>	F
<i>Product placement attitude</i>			.07	38.68**
Peer communication	.17	9.57**		
Education	-.14	-7.81**		
Movie watching	.08	4.66**		
Ethnicity—African American <sup>a</sup>	.08	4.67**		
Income	.04	2.28*		
Gender <sup>b</sup>	-.04	-2.25*		
Ethnicity—Hispanic <sup>c</sup>	.01	.54		
Ethnicity—Anglo-American <sup>d</sup>	-.01	-.35		
Age	.01	.32		
Ethnicity—Asian American <sup>e</sup>	.00	.03		
<i>Product placement behavior</i>			.22	141.34**
Peer communication	.28	16.09**		
Attitude toward product placement	.23	12.91**		
Ethnicity—Anglo-American <sup>d</sup>	-.14	-7.68**		
Movie watching	.13	6.95**		
Income	-.10	-5.66**		
Gender <sup>b</sup>	.08	4.14**		
Ethnicity—African American <sup>a</sup>	.02	1.14		
Ethnicity—Asian American <sup>e</sup>	.01	.77		
Age	-.01	-.54		
Education	.01	.41		
Ethnicity—Hispanic <sup>c</sup>	.00	.19		

<sup>a</sup> Dummy variable with 1 as African American.  
<sup>b</sup> Dummy variable with 1 as male.  
<sup>c</sup> Dummy variable with 1 as Hispanic.  
<sup>d</sup> Dummy variable with 1 as Anglo-American.  
<sup>e</sup> Dummy variable with 1 as Asian American.  
\* Significant at .05.  
\*\* Significant at .01.

suggest that individuals who communicate more with peers about brands, have less education, watch movies, and have higher incomes, are more likely to have positive attitudes toward product placement. Furthermore, African Americans and females are more likely to have positive attitudes toward product placement than are other ethnic groups and males.

Furthermore, all of the consumer socialization variables and attitude toward product placement were then entered as independent variables to predict  $B_{\text{ppl}}$ . All predicting variables had tolerance values from .58 to .96, suggesting an absence of multicollinearity. As shown in Table 4, some consumer socialization variables are significant predictors of  $B_{\text{ppl}}$  ( $R^2_{\text{adj}} = .22$ ,  $F = 141.34$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The stepwise regression results indicate significant standardized  $\beta$  coefficients for the seven variables. The variables with the most predictive power for  $B_{\text{ppl}}$  are peer communication (partial  $r = .28$ ,  $t = 16.01$ ,  $p < .01$ ), followed by  $A_{\text{ppl}}$  (partial  $r = .23$ ,  $t = 12.91$ ,  $p < .01$ ), Anglo-American

ethnicity (partial  $r = -.14$ ,  $t = -7.68$ ,  $p < .01$ ), movie watching (partial  $r = .13$ ,  $t = 6.95$ ,  $p < .01$ ), income (partial  $r = -.10$ ,  $t = -5.66$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and gender (partial  $r = .08$ ,  $t = 4.14$ ,  $p < .01$ ). In sum, the more an individual communicates with peers, holds a positive attitude toward product placement, watches movies, and has less income, the more likely he or she is to engage in product placement–related behavior. In addition, the results suggest that Anglo-Americans and females are less likely to engage in behaviors than are other ethnic groups and males.

## DISCUSSION

### Implications for Scholars

While there has been a growing stream of research focusing on product placement attitudes, there has also been a dearth

in the use of systematic, conceptual groundings to help guide such investigations. As we noted earlier, there has also been very limited analysis of the origins and/or influencing social factors of these attitudes and how they interact with consumers' demographic characteristics. The results of the current study show that consumer socialization contributes to product placement research by providing a flexible yet theory-grounded framework by which variation in and source factors of public attitudes toward product placement as a practice as well as placement-related behaviors may be assessed and better understood. The flexibility of the framework is particularly attractive in that it allows for an expansive yet theoretically grounded set of influencing factors to be examined in relation to placement attitude. As we discuss later, for example, the current results have introduced a significant predictor of both placement attitudes and behavior to the literature in this area—peer communication.

Prior studies have noted that frequency of movie watching predicts attitude toward placement among college students (Gould, Gupta, and Grabner-Kraüter 2000; Gupta and Gould 1997; McKechnie and Zhou 2003). Using the CS framework, we find that a similar relationship exists among our diverse nonstudent population. We further expand on these results by showing that movie-watching frequency does predict placement-related actions such as seeking information about, searching for, purchasing, and using placed products. While the relationship among the above variables and placement attitudes has been examined across a range of studies, the CS grounding allows for a more comprehensive investigation involving multiple, conceptually linked antecedents and outcomes.

The current study also demonstrates the predictive utility of peer communications as a predictor of attitudinal orientation toward product placement, a factor that has not been investigated in prior assessments. Indeed, results of the multiple regression analyses indicated consumption-related communication among peers as being the strongest predictor of both placement attitudes and placement-related behaviors. Given the highly social nature of a lot of movie watching (see, e.g., Austin 1986), discussion of placed brands and the practice itself arising from exposure through movie watching may result in more positive orientations toward product placement as a whole, based on the fact that the overall attitudes toward placement are generally positive (and at worst indifferent) and the demonstrated tendency of attitudes and behaviors to conform to those of one's peer groups (Bearden and Etzel 1982; Bearden, Netemeyer, and Teel 1989).

Although we confirm the direct relationship between peer communication and placement attitudes/behaviors, the mediating influence of peer communication on the social structural variables is murky. In some cases, groups that had higher levels of peer communication also exhibited more positive placement

attitudes and/or behaviors (e.g., males—placement behavior; age—attitudes and behavior), but in other instances, there was no such relationship (e.g., ethnicity—attitude and behavior; education—attitudes and behavior).

The African-American respondents in our sample evinced the most positive attitudes toward product placement relative to not only other ethnicities, but all other demographic groups as well (African Americans also reported the highest mean number of placement-related behaviors among any of the groups). These results further reinforce those from prior studies indicating that African-American audiences are particularly receptive and positively disposed to advertising messages in many different forms, including product placement (Bush, Smith, and Martin 1999; Nelson and McLeod 2005; Soley and Reid 1983b; Yoon 1995). It is possible that perhaps there is less of a "stigma" in African-American culture to admitting to enjoyment/appreciation of commercial communication forms such as product placements.

Beyond ethnicity, the results of our demographic analyses show some consistency with prior findings in the attitude toward advertising and product placement literatures. For example, level of education was inversely related with placement attitudes, and the oldest age group (55+) showed the least positive perceptions of the practice. However, in contrast with the findings of Alwitt and Prabhaker (1992) and Shavitt, Lowrey, and Haefner (1998), no statistically significant differences by income levels were found. Moreover, with regard to gender, our results are the reverse of those indicating greater concern on the part of women consumers than men (e.g., Brennan, Rosenberger, and Hementera 2004; Dutta-Bergman 2006; Gupta and Gould 1997; McKechnie and Zhou 2003; Shavitt, Lowrey, and Haefner 1998). Furthermore, we found that although males exhibit less positive attitudes, they report engaging in more placement-related behaviors than women. Perhaps this indicates that although evincing less concern over placement in general, the practice itself does not have sufficient impact on women as to result in as much behavioral activity as it does among males.

### Implications for Practitioners

Our findings that both attitude toward product placement and placement-related behaviors demonstrate differences among a range of demographic characteristics has practical implications for placement agents and marketers more broadly. Given that a particular film's audience can be segmented demographically (Cuadrado and Frasquet 1999; Motion Picture Association of America 2007a), our results suggest that advertisers would do well to match up their placement efforts based on a particular film's (or film genre's) projected target audience. For example, the data suggest that if Gillette wished to target its Mach 3 razor to African Americans, it may do better to place

the brand in African-American-themed productions such as Tyler Perry's *Medea* films.

Furthermore, our results provide some indications that advertisers would do well to (re)focus their placement efforts on films popular among African-American, female, and/or lower-income consumers. These audiences exhibit higher levels of receptiveness to product placement as a practice, and marketers can also take heart in that not a single one of the groups sampled indicated a negative perception of the practice. Indeed, the lowest attitude mean (3.05) was found among those 55 and older, indicating indifference rather than dislike (see Table 3). Moreover, consumers seem somewhat willing to take further consumption-related action after being exposed to a placement.

However, the above should not be interpreted by advertisers as a blank check to begin ratcheting up the number of brand insertions into films or to mean that audiences will be willing to tolerate any kind of placement. Although not addressed in the current study, results by Gupta and Gould (1997), McKechnie and Zhou (2003), and others demonstrate clear concern when it comes to so-called ethically charged product types (typically product types considered as harmful or having a strong potential of causing harm) such as firearms, alcohol, or tobacco. Indiscriminate placement runs the risk of rapidly eroding the generally positive perceptions of the practice as revealed in our study and increasing the possibility of outside regulation. In addition to the types of products placed, marketers must also be cognizant of the potential ethical considerations regarding the (perceived) vulnerability of the audience being targeted via placements (such as children). Indeed, several of the demographic groups in our study that reported the most positive attitude toward product placement and the greatest amount of placement-related behaviors are the same as those considered to be vulnerable consumers (those who lack the knowledge or skills to navigate the marketplace or act on information provided by commercial entities), including those of low income and those who have lesser amounts of education (Ringold 2005). Practitioners must tread carefully and consider the nature of the product to be placed as well as the perceived susceptibility of the audience they are focusing on given that people exhibit notably negative reactions to the targeting of ethically charged products to vulnerable target groups (Smith and Cooper-Martin 1997).

### Future Directions

While our study has expanded the knowledge regarding influences on and predictors of attitudes toward product placement and placement-related behaviors by utilizing a large, nonstudent sample and employing a theoretically grounded framework in the form of consumer socialization, a limitation of this work is that it does not provide a means of assessing the

underlying "why" of our results. For example, why do African-American, female, or younger audiences have more positive attitudes toward placement? Which sociocultural forces can explain such results? The CS model would propose that the complementary socialization processes of modeling, reinforcement, and social interaction by way of people's interaction with socialization agents are the bases for the results. However, there have been few empirical tests of how exactly such socialization processes operate to influence the outcomes and the extent to which each process contributes to the overall socialization (given that they are considered to operate together to varying extents). Future researchers in the area are encouraged to delve more deeply into the underlying mechanism, thoughts, feelings, and factors that drive such differences, perhaps through similarly data-rich qualitative methods as those used by DeLorme and Reid (1999) and La Pastina (2001).

More specifically, additional research into the mechanism by which peers facilitate both attitudes toward and behaviors related to placement via consumption-oriented communications needs greater investigation, given that our results show it to be the strongest predictor of both outcomes. Future studies could delve into the relative influence of particular types of consumption-related communications (e.g., placement-specific versus general brand discussions), as well as the medium of communication. With the Internet potentially modifying/expanding the conceptualization of who is considered a "peer," studies assessing differences between face-to-face versus virtual, real-time versus lagged time (e.g., messages in an online forum versus in a chat room), and between weak tie versus strong tie peer communications would add greatly to our understanding of how interactions with peer others moderates responses to placement tactics.

We noted previously that our data indicates some level of effectiveness on the part of product placement in convincing people to take consumption-related actions after viewing placements, such as seeking out information about a product or looking for it in the store. While this is good news for marketers, the scale used in our study focuses solely on reported reactions to placement, and does not address the specific characteristics of a placement that may enhance the likelihood of people taking such actions or the number/kinds of actions people carry out. Beyond the traditional purchase intention measure of potential conative response to placement, we encourage future studies to experimentally investigate a wider range of behavioral responses to assess whether different types of consumers would be more prone to respond in particular ways (seeking information, desiring trial) to specific types of placement.

As noted earlier, the childhood period is key to the development of consumption-related thoughts and behaviors, and indeed, the majority of consumer socialization research has focused on children and adolescents (John 1999). But inves-



tigations of the socialization process with regard to adults and the elderly (Brim 1968; Moschis 1987; Smith and Moschis 1984, 1990) indicates that it continues throughout a person's lifetime as new consumer roles take shape and older consumer roles and behaviors undergo modification as part of social, psychological, and physiological changes. However, this time orientation of the consumer socialization construct has largely been assessed via cross-sectional studies of different age groups at the same point in time (as the current study does) rather than true longitudinal studies of the same people over an extended period (for an exception in the context of television commercial effects, see Moschis and Moore 1982). Thus, there is limited direct knowledge regarding how a particular person's consumer socialization patterns modify over time with regard to product placement-related attitudes and actions in particular, as well as consumer behaviors more generally. We therefore recommend that more investigations adopting the CS framework in the future are designed so that they may track the process of such changes at different time points in peoples' lives.

Furthermore, we would recommend that future attitudinal studies of product placement use nationally representative respondent samples to assess the degree to which our findings are generalizable to the population as a whole. Although we sampled a large and demographically diverse group of respondents, the members of our online panel may likely suffer from the limitations of other similar panels with respondents who are likely to have higher education levels, higher income, greater interest in academic research, spend more time surfing Web sites, and be more computer savvy.

Finally, we recommend applying the consumer socialization framework to the issue of adolescents' and children's awareness of, recognition of, attitude toward, and behavioral responses to product placements. We know little about youth attitudes toward the practice and how they may influence their responses/susceptibility. CS would be an excellent guiding framework in that childhood is considered the prime period during which one's consumption cognitions and behaviors are being established by means of socialization processes and a time when people are the most influenced by social structural factors and ubiquitous socialization agents in the form of peers, parents, and the media.

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