

From Screen to Symbol

Chanel's Cinematic Presence and the Reinforcement of Luxury Brand Identity

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ABSTRACT

This study explores how Chanel's cinematic presence in contemporary films contributes to the communication and reinforcement of its brand identity and cultural relevance as luxury brand. In the context of a digital era marked by content saturation and evolving consumer preferences, traditional advertising has become less effective for luxury brands. Chanel, as a leading luxury brand, has responded by integrating its identity into contemporary films through product placement and branded entertainment. While this strategic shift is visible in the media, academic research has not yet clarified how this cinematic presence contributes to the construction and reinforcement of brand identity and cultural meaning for luxury brands. To address this gap, the present study systematically analyses Chanel's cinematic presence in five purposively selected English-language commercial films released between 2005 and 2025. This study employs qualitative content analysis, drawing on Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism, Russell's three-dimensional model of product placement, and Hudson & Hudson's Integration Type, each operationalised into coding indicators for visual and narrative elements. The films were chosen for their cultural impact and the narrative or visual importance of Chanel's presence, ensuring a representative sample of contemporary cinematic branding. The results indicate that Chanel's cinematic presence functions as a multi-layered branding strategy, shaping perceptions of femininity, exclusivity, heritage, and emotional resonance. Four overarching themes emerged from the analysis: femininity and empowerment, construction of exclusivity, heritage and craftsmanship, and emotional symbolism. The analysis demonstrates that Chanel's approach often surpasses passive product placement, achieving the deeper integration characteristic of branded entertainment, wherein the brand is integral to narratives, character development, and emotional resonance. This study refines the conceptual differentiation and interaction between product placement and branded entertainment, offering a comprehensive framework for understanding luxury brand integration in film. The findings contribute to academic debates by demonstrating how cinematic presence reflects and shape cultural values, while defining the mechanisms through which luxury brands maintain relevance and aspiration in contemporary media. From a practical perspective, the results provide actionable insights for brand managers, marketers, and filmmakers seeking to achieve effective and culturally relevant brand integration. The qualitative nature and focus on a single brand limit the generalisability of the results, indicating that future research could compare other luxury brands or employ quantitative methods to broaden understanding. The study highlights the cultural and symbolic power of cinematic presence as a mechanism for luxury branding in the digital era.

KEYWORDS: *Product Placement, Branded Entertainment, Brand Identity, Luxury Brands, Chanel.*

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PREFACE

Last year, if you had told me that a night at the movies would lead to my next study topic, I would have laughed. But that is exactly how it happened. It all started when I saw Barbie for the first time. I was completely drawn in by the many Chanel placements from the very first scene. Barbie's closet was overflowing with Chanel bags and accessories. The iconic pink tweed dress stood out, and the heart-shaped bag that I will never forget attracted my eye. I became so obsessed with spotting every Chanel detail that it turned into a personal treasure hunt for luxury branding. The way Chanel's fashion identity was perfectly integrated into the story and visuals of the film was a treat for any fashion lover and made my marketing heartbeat faster. This fascination stayed with me when I later went to see Challengers with Alysia and Zeynep, my favourite fellow ARTS students and dear friends. As the narrative of the film evolved, I found myself distracted again, this time by how many product placements there were on screen. Instead of following Zendaya and her drama, I was mentally keeping track of every brand appearance, which I found both funny and intriguing. That was the moment I realized I could combine my observations from Barbie and Challengers for my master thesis.

This topic was a new adventure for me. My (academic) comfort zone has always been the beauty business, so analysing film, advertising, and specially fashion branding challenged me to see the power of visual storytelling from a completely new angle. Certainly, none of the would have been possible without the support of some wonderful people. My heartfelt thanks go to Laura, my supervisor, for her patience and encouragement. To my mom and sister, thank you for always being there for me. Always my biggest supporters. And to my favourite people, your mental support was needed during this period. Whether it was through sending me the sweetest messages, sharing a Red bull break, or simply reminding me to breath. This research would not exist without the collective encouragement, patience, and love from all of you!

1. Introduction

In today's digital- and media-driven society, luxury brands face a critical challenge as traditional advertising loses its effectiveness in an environment flooded with digital content and rapidly evolving consumer preferences. The emergence of digital technology has transformed the marketing environment, modifying the structure of relationships between brands and consumers. This transition, widely referred to as the digital era, has impacted how brands engage with their target markets. Traditional advertising is losing effectiveness due to the overwhelming volume of digital content, prompting brands to seek alternative ways to engage consumers (Ghanem et al., 2024, p. 1). Information consumption habits have been fundamentally affected because of the digital era, as individuals today are exposed to an endless flow of information across many platforms. This transition has resulted in shorter attention spans and an enhanced capacity to filter out irrelevant content. Since more than 95% of luxury decisions begin online, this process is especially important for luxury brands looking to stay culturally relevant (Langer, 2023, p. 1). In this context, luxury, traditionally associated with exclusivity and elite power, fails to captivate consumers' interest and loyalty. For sustained success, luxury brands must transcend the tangible aspects of their products and invest in the creation of symbolic and cultural value (Kapferer & Bastien, 2009, p. 477).

In response to these changes, luxury brands are seeking innovative methods to maintain their cultural relevance and aspirational value. Although influencer and celebrity partnerships online have dominated recent years, a growing trend sees brands shifting towards entertainment partnerships, such as those with films (Ghanem et al., 2024, p. 2). Product placement and branded entertainment allow brands to seamlessly integrate their identity into cinematic narratives, reinforcing their exclusivity, aspirational value, and cultural relevance. High-income consumers, who are the primary audience for luxury brands, now intentionally disregard advertisements and attempt to multitask during exposure, making traditional advertising even less effective (Gartner & PQ Media, 2023, as cited in BENlabs, 2023, p. 2). Despite the growing role of luxury brands in film, there remains a significant gap in academic literature regarding how high-end brands such as Chanel use cinematic presence to construct and reinforce brand identity and cultural relevance (Wiles & Danielova, 2009, p. 54; Rossi et al., 2023, p. 563).

This study adopts the umbrella term cinematic presence to refer to all occurrences of Chanel's appearance in film. This encompasses not only product placement but also the seamless integration of branded entertainment. This inclusive approach is essential as contemporary luxury branding in film blurs the boundaries between them, decorative appearances, and deeper narrative integration. Product placement generally refers to the purposeful inclusion of branded goods or references within a film's visual or verbal context, often serving a decorative function. Branded entertainment involves a higher degree of collaboration and narrative integration, where the brand becomes essential to the storyline and character development (Hudson & Hudson, 2006, p. 492). By analysing product placement

and branded entertainment, this study provides a comprehensive understanding of how Chanel leverages film for exposure, brand meaning, and cultural relevance. Chanel's approach views both categories as fundamental, despite the coding differences between them. This dual focus enables a deeper appreciation for the diverse methods by which Chanel's brand identity and cultural relevance are constructed and reinforced through various forms of cinematic integration.

Chanel demonstrates this method by successfully establishing itself as a timeless icon through its carefully created cinematic presence (Liu, 2024, p. 3). Chanel's is deeply rooted in its heritage, timeless elegance, commitment to craftsmanship, and female empowerment (Hong, 2022, p. 162; Xu, 2024, p. 723; Zihan, 2021, p. 857). The *Barbie* film serves as a contemporary example of this phenomenon, featuring Chanel products as an essential part of the character's wardrobe, symbolising femininity and aspirational. This study aims to address this gap by exploring the following research question: *How does Chanel's cinematic presence in contemporary films contribute to the communication and reinforcement of its brand identity and cultural relevance as a luxury brand?*

The study consistently applies the phrase "cinematic presence", which incorporates both traditional product placement and branded entertainment.

1.1 Academic Relevance

An increasing volume of research has investigated the function of product placement and branded content within marketing and media studies (Hudson & Hudson, 2006, p. 490; Russell, 1998, p. 357; Wiles & Danielova, 2009, p. 44). Scholars have shown that product placement can be a powerful tool for increasing brand visibility and shaping consumer perceptions, especially when integrated meaningfully into cinematic narratives (Russell, 1998, p. 357; Sharma & Bumb, 2022, p. 104). Recent studies on luxury branding point out the role of symbolic communication and emotional resonance in maintaining brand desirability in a saturated media environment (Kapferer & Bastien, 2009, 477; Rossi et al., 2023, p. 564). However, a significant portion of existing academic research does not clearly distinguish between traditional product placement and branded entertainment, frequently using the term product placement to encompass a broad spectrum of brand integrations in film. Consequently, the boundaries between these concepts often remain blurred, and the specific narrative, creative, and collaborative differences are overlooked (Wiles & Danielova, 2009, p. 54; Rossi et al., 2023, p. 563). This lack of conceptual clarity means that branded entertainment is often being categorised under the broader umbrella of product placement, despite the important differences in the degree of narrative integration and brand involvement.

Although considerable evidence indicates that product placement can enhance aspirational brand images and emotional connections, research rarely addresses how luxury brands like Chanel strategically integrate product placement and branded entertainment to develop and maintain brand identity and cultural relevance within film (Hudson & Hudson, 2006, p. 492). As a result, the

academic literature lacks a comprehensive framework for understanding the full spectrum of luxury brand integration within cinematic contexts.

This study addresses the gap by systematically analysing Chanel's cinematic presence, considering both product placement and branded entertainment. By applying Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism (2008), Russell's three-dimensional framework (1998), and Hudson & Hudson's Integration Type (2006) to formulate an elaborate analytical approach for luxury branding in films. The study contributes to the academic field by clarifying the conceptual distinctions and interrelations between product placement and branded entertainment. It illustrates the current application of these strategies by a luxury fashion brand and provides empirical evidence regarding their collective influence on brand identity and cultural relevance. The research enhances the theoretical understanding of luxury branding, narrative integration, and symbolic communication within contemporary media.

1.2 Societal Relevance

This study's societal relevance derives from its examination of how luxury brand integration in films affect cultural values and broader social narratives. Brands must discover innovative strategies to be visible and culturally relevant in a media environment where traditional advertising is increasingly ineffective, especially for high-income consumers who disregard advertisements and attempt to multitask during exposure (Gartner & PQ Media, 2023, as cited in BENlabs, 2023, p. 4). Product placements have risen in importance in the last twenty years, attracting managers, filmmakers, and marketers (Ghanem et al., 2024, p. 4). This information is especially relevant for luxury brands looking to stay culturally relevant (Langer, 2023, p. 1).

According to recent industry research, 91% of marketers believe that product placement is a successful strategy for reaching non-ad-supported consumers, and 93% believe it is an effective way to promote cultural relevance (Gartner & PQ Media, 2023, as cited in BENlabs, 2023, p. 2). Empirical consumer statistics further reveal that audiences consider product placement in films to be more authentic. Popular and relatable characters use brands more effectively, leading to increased audience involvement (Gartner & PQ Media, 2023, as cited in BENlabs, 2023, p. 18). This creates for marketers and brand managers a way to contact consumers during peak moments of interest, while for society, it means that branded content increasingly influences the authenticity and relatability of media narratives.

As branded storytelling becomes more immersive and central to popular culture, its effects extend beyond consumer engagement to the construction and negotiation of social values, aspirations, and ideals. By incorporating brands such as Chanel into cinematic narratives, films reinforce ideals of exclusivity, aspiration, and femininity while simultaneously engaging in the ongoing negotiation of social values and status symbols. This study enhances the understanding of how media portrayals

impact social values, shape consumer identities and define contemporary ideals of luxury, empowerment, and self-expression. By analysing Chanel's cinematic presence, this study reveals the ways in which luxury branding in film can both reflect and shape societal values, offering valuable information to consumers and industry experts. Considering the academic and societal stakes involved, it is essential to use a methodological approach that is both rigorous and transparent for analysing Chanel's cinematic presence in contemporary film.

1.3 Methodology and Organization of the Study

This study employs a qualitative research approach, drawing on qualitative content analysis to systematically examine Chanel's cinematic presence in five purposively selected contemporary films. Films and television shape daily life, and qualitative research employs them to investigate the cultural construction of reality (Flick, 2009, p. 246). The analysis is guided by established theoretical frameworks, including Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism, Russell's Product Placement, and Hudson & Hudson's Integration Type. These models are translated into concrete indicators and applied to both visual and narrative elements, allowing for a deeper understanding of how Chanel's brand identity and cultural relevance are constructed and reinforced through film.

The structure of this study is created to deliver a coherent and nuanced perspective. Following the introduction, chapter two presents a comprehensive review of relevant academic literature, critically engaging with research on product placement, branded entertainment, brand identity, and luxury branding. The theoretical framework positions Chanel's cinematic presence within extensive discussions on symbolic communication, cultural significance, and the advancements of marketing in the digital age. The third chapter details the qualitative research design, including sampling data collection, operationalisation of theoretical frameworks, coding procedures, and criteria for analytical rigour. It explains the rationale for selecting the five films, the development of the coding frame based on theory, and the process of coding and thematic analysis.

Chapter four presents the main findings, organised thematically to demonstrate how Chanel's cinematic presence functions as a narrative device, a symbol of exclusivity, and an emblem of empowerment and heritage throughout the selected films. To demonstrate how Chanel's brand identity and cultural relevance are actively constructed and reinforced, this chapter makes use of specific examples and data that have been coded. The concluding chapter integrates these findings, examines their implications for theory and practice, considers the societal effects of luxury branding in cinema, and identifies directions for future research. The last chapter includes emphasising the necessity for audience-focused studies and critical reflection on the cultural power of branded narratives. In doing so, this study not only contributes to the advancement of the theoretical understanding of luxury branding in film, but it also offers practical insights for brand managers, marketers, and filmmakers who are navigating the evolving world of branded storytelling.

2. Theoretical Framework

This chapter outlines the theoretical foundation of this study by exploring the core concepts that frame the analysis of Chanel's presence in films. By critically engaging with the existing literature on product placement, branded entertainment, brand identity, and the specificities of luxury branding, this chapter establishes how these concepts intersect in the context of Chanel's cinematic appearances. Drawing on established theoretical models and recent empirical studies, it positions Chanel's filmic visibility within a broader discussion of marketing, culture, and symbolic communication. In addition, the chapter includes a focused examination of Chanel as a brand, tracing its historical development, aesthetic codes, and branding philosophy in order to contextualise its role within the luxury and media environment.

2.1 Product Placement

2.1.1 Product Placement

Product placement has become an increasingly prevalent alternative to traditional advertising (Srivastava, 2020, p. 233). As with its practice, the definition of product placement has evolved over time. One of the earliest concepts was offered by Balasubramanian (1994), who laid the foundation for understanding product placement as the deliberate and discrete introduction of a branded product into a film with the intention of influencing consumers (p. 31). The expansion of the entertainment industry has offered marketers new opportunities to embed products within cinematic narratives. According to Sharma and Bumb (2022), the growth of media formats and rising consumer sophistication are key drivers of this shift (p. 103). A key development in these shifts is the acknowledgement that product placement extends beyond film and television, occurring across a wide range of media platforms, including digital content, video games, and social media (Hudson & Hudson, 2006, p. 492). Historical evidence indicates that product placement relies on two conditions: sponsors must see promotional value, and media producers must be motivated by the financial benefits it offers (Balasubramanian, 1994, p. 33). These mutual incentives have consistently sustained the integration of branded content into entertainment media. Product placement, also referred to as brand placement, entails the deliberate and paid integration of branded goods or services into entertainment content, aiming to subtly influence audience perception without overt advertising (Sharma & Bumb, 2022, p. 104; Guo et al., 2019, p. 216). In this study a widely accepted definition is offered by Russell and Belch (2005), who describe product placement as "the purposeful incorporation of a brand into an entertainment vehicle" (p. 74). This integration serves to keep brands top-of-mind among consumers while fostering a more natural connection with the audience.

Product placement is best conceptualised as a marketing communication strategy in which branded products or services are intentionally incorporated into the content of films, television programmes, or other media. The aim is to subtly influence audience attitudes and behaviours without

disrupting them (Guo et al., 2019, p. 216; Sharma & Bumb, 2022, p. 104). Stated differently, product placement traditionally occurs when a brand is included in a communication or entertainment channel with the intention of promoting the product in return for money. Product placement contrasts with advertising in that it is primarily indirect and typically does not aim to supply audiences with product information. While advertising narratives are centred on the brand, product placement usually consists of integrating the brand within an established storyline.

Product placement has transformed from a simple exchange of goods to a strategic marketing practice embedded in the media industry. In its early form, brand owners provided products to film sets without financial compensation, expecting promotional benefits in return (Hudson & Hudson, 2006, p. 490). These exchanges were informal and driven by mutual convenience. As the commercial potential of brand exposure in film became more evident, the practice grew more sophisticated. This shift allowed brand owners to secure targeted visibility, while filmmakers gained both funding and enhanced realism. The evolution reflects a broader professionalisation of brand integration in entertainment media. In the luxury fashion sector, product placement is particularly valuable due to its ability to reinforce aspirational brand images through association with glamorous and exclusive settings. Since product placement strategy is one of the newest and most effective marketing tactics, the industry has changed from being traditional to being inventive (De la Garza, n.d.).

2.1.2 Luxury Product Placement in Films

In the last five years, the luxury sector saw a phase of remarkable value generation. Luxury brands surpassed worldwide markets and attained unprecedented profitability records (Balchandani et al., 2025, p. 6). This rise is due in part to the sector's ability to proactively place itself in aspirational and culturally significant contexts. In this context, product placement has evolved as a particularly effective marketing strategy for luxury businesses. Its effectiveness derives from its ability to integrate branded goods into glamorous and exclusive stories, enhancing the brand's symbolic worth and desirability. The success of this strategy is demonstrated by iconic instances, such as the appearance of Givenchy's little black dress worn by Audrey Hepburn in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* and Ray-Ban's aviator sunglasses in *Top Gun* (De la Garza, n.d.). These examples show how fashion brands have effectively partnered with popular movie plots to strengthen their customer recognition and aspirational appeal. Compared to traditional brand-sponsored events, product placement in the film industry allows luxury marketers to contact broader and more diversified audiences, making it one of the most valuable methods within the industry's promotional toolbox (Rossi et al., 2023, p. 563).

However, empirical research indicates that just presenting a premium product in a cinematic setting does not increase its appeal or desirability (Rossi et al., 2023, p. 576). Instead, the success of such placements is dependent on narrative congruence: when luxury products are meaningfully

incorporated into the tale, audiences tend to react more positively, developing affective associations with the brand (Rossi et al., 2023, p. 564).

Fashion product placement serves as a narrative tool that actively supports character and theme development, going beyond simple visual exposure. Fashion brands are frequently used as symbolic extensions of the characters in films rather than being only passive props. Strong association meanings can be produced when a well-liked figure and a certain brand are aligned, increasing the brand's emotional appeal and cultural relevance (Ghanem et al., 2024, p. 5). Because of this, fashion brands are now looking to incorporate themselves into movie plots as a calculated way to develop aspirational personas and increase customer involvement. One prominent example is the portrayal of Manolo Blahnik in *Sex and the City*, where the main character's consistent engagement with the brand, particularly her iconic "something blue" heels, transformed the shoes into enduring symbols of extravagance and empowerment (Nemirovsky, 2024).

Based on these insights, it is essential to acknowledge that the efficacy of the product placement is not only a matter of visibility but also of narrative coherence and symbolic relevance. When luxury brands are meaningfully integrated into character development and narratives, they become active agents of cultural values. This dynamic is especially important to the study's focus on Chanel's cinematic presence in contemporary film. As it analyses its presence as a means for shaping perceptions of femininity, empowerment, and exclusivity. This study critically analyses how Chanel's products are integrated into cinema narratives, demonstrating that product placement can serve as a powerful form of symbolic communication, reinforcing and evolving brand meaning in line with broader cultural norms.

2.1.3 Product Placement Framework

According to Russell and Belch (2005), the main goal of product placement is to get additional financing for the filmmaker while enabling marketers to embed their products within entertainment contexts for diverse marketing results (p. 76). This study adopts Russell's (1998) three-dimensional model of product placement, which categorises brand appearances into screen placement (visual presence), script placement (verbal mention), and plot placement (narrative connection between the brand and the storyline) (p. 358).

Screen placement refers to the visual appearance of the brand on screen (Russell, 1998, p. 357). This includes any instance where products, logos, or brand symbols are visible but not referenced in dialogue. Within this category, there are two subcategories: creative placement and on-set placement. Creative placement is incorporating the brand into the visual narrative in a way that is consistent with the film's style or narrative framework (Russell, 1998, p. 357). On-set placement is the physical positioning of branded objects on the film set, such as apparel, accessories, or interior pieces, that do not necessarily serve a narrative purpose (Russell, 1998, p. 357). Both styles seek to establish

brand visibility solely through visual cues. Script placement refers to verbal references to the brand within the dialogue or text shown on screen (Russell, 1998, p. 357). This includes characters mentioning the brand in conversation, reading it aloud, or referring to it in a way that signals brand recognition. The prominence of script placement is determined by who mentions the brand, how frequently it is referenced, and the narrative tone or emphasis applied to the brand name.

Plot placement captures the degree to which the brand is integrated into the storyline (Russell, 1998, p. 357). Sometimes the product is incorporated into the story, playing a significant role in the storyline or helping to develop a character's personality. Plot placement can be defined as the degree of relationship between the product and the plot and can include any mix of verbal and visual elements (Russell, 1998, p. 357). Given that luxury brands depend on emotional and symbolic connections rather than functional advertising, Russell's framework serves as a crucial tool in assessing how Chanel's placement style aligns with its broader brand identity and cultural significance.

2.2 Branded Entertainment

2.2.1 From Product Placement to Branded Entertainment

Product placement, which provides subtle but effective brand exposure inside entertainment narratives, is becoming more and more acknowledged by marketers as a useful element of the promotional mix (Hudson & Hudson, 2006, p. 491). This shift in strategy has led to the emergence of the concept of branded entertainment, which refers to the combination of entertainment content with advertising. Sharma and Bumb (2022) explain that product placement has grown more complex and intertwined with narrative structures, creating a hybrid space where marketing meets storytelling (p. 103).

Hudson and Hudson (2006) define branded entertainment as "the integration of advertising into entertainment content, whereby brands are embedded into storylines of a film, television program, or other entertainment medium" (p. 492). This study employs Hudson and Hudson's definition of branded entertainment. Unlike traditional product placement, branded entertainment ensures seamless, emotionally resonant, and often co-created brand integration (Hudson & Hudson, 2006, p. 492). Adopting a socio-cultural approach to branding fosters an understanding of how films, as cultural brands, serve as optimal places for the promotion of other brands, thereby reinforcing or establishing brand meaning (Stolley et al., 2021, p. 373). Branded entertainment integrates media, brands, and entertainment to promote collaborative branding, enabling organisations to work together and leverage each other's strengths. This strategic approach allows brands to build emotional relationships with audiences by situating themselves within immersive and culturally resonant narratives.

Bowman (2024) notes that marketers are increasingly balancing persuasion with pleasure,

designing experiences that resonate more deeply with viewers (p. 397). Chanel exemplifies this evolution through its collaborations with filmmakers and designers to shape not only costumes but also the visual and emotional texture of a film. Marketing communication focuses on getting audiences involved in a way that encourages them to buy something. For this to work, it's important that the message a brand wants to send matches how the audience interprets it. Product placement has traditionally been a way to include brand messages in existing films or shows. But with branded entertainment, that approach has developed further. Now the entire film or show can be created around the brand, making it part of the story and the promotional strategy (Stolley et al., 2021, p. 376). This study looks at whether Chanel sticks to basic product placement in films or whether it goes a step further by using branded entertainment, where the brand becomes deeply woven into both the content and production of the film.

2.2.2 Branded Entertainment Framework

The relationship between product placement and branded entertainment can be conceptualized as a continuum that illustrates the process from minimal to maximal brand integration inside entertainment content. This continuum, introduced by Hudson and Hudson (2006), outlines the progression of brand involvement from basic product placement to full integration of a brand into the narrative (p. 495). The primary distinction between product placement and branded entertainment lies in the level of brand integration. Pure product placement is at one extreme, in which the brand is merely acknowledged or displayed without contributing significantly to the narrative. The opposite extreme is branded entertainment, in which the brand is deeply woven into the story and advances the plot or character development (Hudson & Hudson, 2006, p. 493). The Product Placement-Branded Entertainment Continuum can be found in Appendix A.

This framework highlights a few crucial elements that affect how successful these placements are (Hudson & Hudson, 2006, p. 494). The effectiveness of branded entertainment depends on several factors, including the media used, brand characteristics, supporting promotional activity, audience attitudes, and regulations (Hudson & Hudson, 2006, p. 495). Branded entertainment is a unique approach including co-creation and collaboration between advertisers, media producers, and content creators rather than just a more noticeable form of product placement. Integration level, narrative fit, and visibility all influence recall and audience perception (Hudson & Hudson, 2006, p. 495).

Since this study only looks at films, it does not apply the full continuum. Therefore, it uses only the integration type to determine the degree to which Chanel is embedded in each narrative. The objective is to determine whether Chanel's appearance in each chosen movie represents branded entertainment or pure product placement. In doing so, the analysis determines whether Chanel's presence reflects the most advanced type of branded entertainment, in which the brand is not only visible but also deeply ingrained in culture and story. In this study this framework is referred to as

Hudson & Hudson's Integration Type.

The integration is closely related to the development and promotion of Chanel's brand identity in popular culture and goes beyond traditional marketing. When Chanel is woven into the narrative, the brand's core values, personality, and cultural associations are actively presented to the audience. This includes shaping character development, symbolising empowerment, or aspirational indicators. The extent of Chanel's integration into the narrative strongly impacts the audience's impression of its identity. The study of Chanel's cinematic presence not only categorises the type of brand integration but also discusses how the cinematic acts contribute to the construction and reinforcement of Chanel's brand identity in the thoughts of viewers.

2.3 Brand Identity

2.3.1 Defining and Communicating Brand Identity

The foundation of branding lies in brand identity, which encompasses the values, personality, and aspirations a brand aims to project to its audience (Ianenko et al., 2020, p. 1). Brand identity plays a fundamental role in shaping consumer perceptions and differentiating luxury fashion brands within a competitive market. Jean-Noël Kapferer originally put forth the idea of brand identity in 1986. According to Kapferer (2008), a brand is not the same thing as a product name; it is the vision that inspires the development of products and services bearing that name. Identity refers to a brand's vision, key beliefs, and basic values (p. 171). To determine brand identity, questions like the brand's goal and values need to be answered (Kapferer, 2008, p. 172). Kapferer highlights the importance of differentiation and emotional resonance, especially in saturated marketplaces where brand image can drive consumer choice as much as, if not more than, product value.

In a comparable manner, Aaker's brand identity refers to everything a brand stands for (Aaker, 2011, p. 68). Aaker (1996) defines brand identity as "a unique set of brand associations that the brand strategist aspires to create or maintain." (p. 68). These connections reflect the values of the brand and suggest a commitment made by the people of the organisation to the customers. It comprises a core identity that captures the brand's eternal character. The extended identity refers to the elements that offer texture and wholeness (Aaker, 2011, p. 85). In the case of Chanel, brand identity is deeply rooted in its heritage, timeless elegance, commitment to craftsmanship, and female empowerment (Hong, 2022, p. 162; Xu, 2024, p. 723; Zihan, 2021, p. 857).

2.3.2 Brand Identity Prism

This study draws on Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism (2008), a widely recognised model for analysing brand identity, to provide a structured framework for understanding Chanel's deployment of product placement in films (p. 182). Kapferer suggests that brand identity covers various features and should be consistent throughout all forms of communication (Mahdi et al., n.d., p. 111). Strong brands

may weave these components into an effective whole, resulting in a concise, clear, and compelling brand identity. Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism consists of six dimensions: physique, personality, culture, relationship, reflection, and self-image, which together provide a holistic view of how a brand communicates its essence to consumers (Kapferer, 2008, p. 182). Previous research shows that product placement can boost brand equity and give a brand a positive personality (Srivastava, 2020, p. 234).

The relevance of the Brand Identity Prism for this study lies in its ability to reveal how luxury brands like Chanel use film as a multifaceted medium to construct and communicate their identity. In the context of films where brands are integrated in various ways, the prism enables a systematic analysis of how each aspect of Chanel's identity is projected and reinforced through cinematic representation. This study demonstrates how Chanel used the narrative, visual, and emotional depth of cinema to transform its brand identity. By connecting the coded scenes and placements onto the six dimensions of the Brand Identity Prism.

The six facets of the Brand Identity Prism illustrate interrelated dimensions through which a brand expresses its identity. Physique refers to a brand's tangible features and visual identity, such as design, style, and iconic components that make it easily identifiable. Personality encapsulates the brand's personality, which is frequently represented through tone, communication style, and the types of personalities or narratives it associates with. Culture refers to the ideals and heritage that create a brand's internal perspective and govern its behaviours and aesthetic decisions. The term "relationship" refers to the emotional, aspirational, or symbolic connection that a brand has with its customers. Reflection refers to the way a brand depicts its ideal consumer, creating an image of the type of person who interacts with or aspires to the brand. Finally, self-image refers to how consumers perceive themselves through the brand, reflecting the personal identity or lifestyle that they believe the brand supports (Ianencko et al., 2020, p. 6).

This model has been applied in various studies examining luxury branding and marketing strategies, making it a relevant theoretical foundation for analysing Chanel's presence in cinematic content. By applying Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism, this study will offer a structured and comprehensive analysis of Chanel's presence in cinematic content, demonstrating how product placement serves as a strategic tool in maintaining its luxury status and cultural relevance. The prism is used as a descriptive framework and analytical tool to explain how each facet is systematically produced and communicated through its integration in contemporary films. Instead of regarding Chanel's cinematic presence as a passive branding activity, the analysis systematically correlates coded film scenes onto the six facets of the framework.

2.4 Luxury Brands

2.4.1 The Dynamics of Luxury Brands

Since 1990, the luxury market has experienced steady growth and has remained highly profitable (Kapferer & Bastien, 2009, p. 473). Luxury brands have expanded their global footprint, opening flagship stores in major cities and most international airports. This widespread availability enhances their exclusivity, making luxury items more accessible while maintaining a sense of elegance. The notion of luxury is closely associated with dreams and desires, triggering emotional responses that drive consumer behaviour (Kapferer & Bastien, 2009, p. 474). The luxury industry therefore profits from its propensity for generating feelings of self-elevation, recognition, and pleasure, which frequently outweigh the product's actual functioning. Luxury goods boost social status, cultural power, and self-esteem (Kapferer, 2008, p. 478).

However, the insufficient recognition of luxury marketing specificity is largely attributable to the broad and imprecise application of the term "luxury" in modern discussion. As luxury evolves and expands into new industries, its definition becomes increasingly unclear, making it difficult to distinguish from other premium or high-end markets. As a result, luxury brands must be cautious of how they communicate their identity in order to maintain their uniqueness and attraction. The "luxury sector" refers to a group of brands and companies that are universally acknowledged for producing and promoting items or services that meet the high standards of exclusivity, craftsmanship, and desirability (Bastien & Kapferer, 2013, p. 22). This sector includes not only traditional luxury goods like fashion and watches but also services such as travel experiences.

Given these trends, it is increasingly important to consider how luxury brands navigate the challenges of maintaining their uniqueness in a saturated and evolving market. The rise of branded entertainment and the strategic use of product placement have become important to this process. Embedding luxury brands within cinematic narratives and culture enables brands to communicate exclusivity, aspiration, and cultural relevance in ways that traditional advertising is unable to achieve. This integration strengthens luxury brand identities and allows them to remain influential as marketing, entertainment, and consumer experience merge. To understand today's luxury marketing, a critical perspective on how product placement and branded entertainment serve as powerful tools is required.

2.4.2 The Luxury Strategy

Luxury brands have developed a strategy that contradicts traditional marketing ideas used by FMCG companies to target mass audiences (Kapferer & Bastien, 2009, p. 476). A principal benefit of a luxury strategy is its reliance on uniqueness as a means of sustaining elevated market positioning and consumer desirability. In traditional marketing, the starting point is to listen to the consumer, analyse their needs, and develop products accordingly. Luxury brands do just the opposite: they are

not guided by market research because it limits their ability to create something truly unique and dream-worthy. Luxury has experienced significant growth due to its ability to appeal to a wide range of consumers without appearing overly targeted (Kapferer & Bastien, 2009, p. 480).

In terms of communication strategies, luxury brands prioritise the narrative surrounding their products. The focus is not just on the physical attributes of the goods but on the story, heritage, and status that the brand embodies. Through strategic marketing, luxury brands cultivate a sense of uniqueness and timelessness, appealing to consumers' desires for prestige and exclusivity. This storytelling approach not only fosters emotional connections but also reinforces the brand's position as a symbol of aspiration and high social standing.

2.5 The Brand Chanel

2.5.1 Chanel's Heritage

Born in 1883, Gabrielle 'Coco' Chanel emerged as a pioneering figure in fashion design and entrepreneurship (Sugimoto & Nagasawa, 2017, p. 295). Gabrielle Chanel established the French company Chanel in 1913. Chanel's apparel is distinguished by its delicate, understated, and sophisticated aesthetic. The founder excels at challenging the norm. She was able to influence restricted women's attire to become more comfortable and basic as early as the 1940s, which may have been the first instance of modern casual wear. Chanel opened the first women's apparel store in Paris and immediately became well-known among Paris' upper class due to its distinctive design philosophy and fine craftsmanship. This highlights Chanel's deliberate emphasis on three foundational pillars of the brand's identity: functionality, comfort, and elegance. Her creations were never driven by aesthetics alone; instead, design consistently served a purpose, integrating practical utility with stylistic refinement (Sugimoto & Nagasawa, 2017, p. 295). Coco Chanel's style is highly feminine and ageless. Chanel is one of the world's most well-known companies, and its principles include independence, power, freedom, and femininity. Perhaps Gabrielle Chanel's well-known statement, "Fashion changes, but style remains" (Baudot, 2003, p. 16), best captures her creative philosophy and highlights her preference for enduring stylistic identity over the inconsistent nature of fashion trends.

Under the creative guidance of German designer Karl Lagerfeld, who took over in 1983, twelve years after Gabrielle Chanel's passing, Chanel experienced a dramatic metamorphosis in the area of branding (Sugimoto & Nagasawa, 2017, p. 296). Lagerfeld reinterpreted the 'Chanel look' by intentionally disrupting the brand's original codes, boldly reworking its conventions, and exemplifying a design philosophy rooted in audacity and exclusivity rather than mass appeal. It's noteworthy that Chanel's successors, most notably Karl Lagerfeld and the larger design team, did more than just copy Gabrielle Chanel's trademark characteristics. Instead, they engaged in a process of innovation that honoured her legacy by reinterpreting her aesthetic of designs in a manner consistent

with her creative ethos (Sugimoto & Nagasawa, 2017, p. 300). Chanel's significance lies in the fact that Coco Chanel focused exclusively on designing and producing women's clothing, positioning the brand as a symbol of female empowerment (Hong, 2022, p. 162). As a testament to her desire to emphasise women's independence and to establish their social standing apart from men, Chanel has never included men's apparel in its designs.

2.5.2 Chanel's Marketing Strategy

Chanel operates as a privately held enterprise that positions itself as a leading luxury brand, structured around three principal sectors: fashion, watches and fine jewellery, and fragrance and beauty. Chanel products exhibit a strong alignment with the brand's core identity and heritage, consistently reflecting its iconic features and underlying brand DNA (Sugimoto & Nagasawa, 2017, p. 298). This coherence between tangible product attributes and the brand's foundational values underscore the strategic importance of maintaining internal consistency across design and brand expression. Within the luxury brands, Chanel has upheld premium pricing strategies, justified by its commitment to exceptional craftsmanship and a distinctive design philosophy (Xu, 2024, p. 724). The brand uses successful market segmentation techniques to maintain solid control over several target customers. The middle and upper classes are Chanel's main target market because of their high spending power, which complements the brand's premium pricing and luxury positioning (Hong, 2022, p. 161).

Chanel frequently creates lasting impressions through visually striking presentations that communicate an image of sophistication, fantasy, and untouchable exclusivity (Zihan, 2021, p. 856). This image always includes the five colours of Chanel: white, beige, black, red, and gold. Gabrielle Chanel's memories became the enduring codes in the collections (Tay, n.d.). The brand strategically selects Hollywood celebrities and supermodels as brand ambassadors due to their substantial cultural influence. The media inevitably turns its attention to these celebrities when they show up at high-profile events dressed in Chanel accessories and haute couture. The individuals and the brand both benefit from increased visibility and status as a result of this exposure (Hong, 2022, p. 161). As these ambassadors appear in films, Chanel's cinematic appearances serve as a prime example of how luxury brands employ product placement and branded entertainment to maintain relevance and cultural authority. Chanel's strategy is defined by selectivity, exclusivity, and narrative coherence. The brand avoids mass exposure, instead opting for collaborations that reinforce its high-cultural associations. Its involvement often extends beyond visual representation to creative collaboration, reinforcing brand control and aesthetic consistency.

2.5.3 Chanel and the Dynamics of Cultural Relevance

In this study, culture is understood as the evolving set of meanings, values, and symbolic associations that keep Chanel relevant and valuable in contemporary society. Rather than treating culture as an isolated keyword in the theoretical framework, this section positions culture as vital to Chanel's brand identity. Brand culture refers to the historical, artistic, and symbolic codes that shape how brands are understood and valued in society (Schroeder, 2009, p. 124). This perspective considers how brands like Chanel reflect cultural influences and how they actively participate in shaping contemporary meanings and consumer aspirations.

At the heart of the Chanel brand is a dedication to enduring elegance and to design that is both inventive and refined. This strategic focus not only preserves the brand's heritage but also ensures its relevance in contemporary fashion landscapes. By consistently blending timeless aesthetic principles with creative innovation, Chanel has cultivated a strong emotional and cultural connection with its consumers. This connection spans generations, reinforcing the brand's iconic status and securing its position as a benchmark for excellence in the global luxury industry (Zihan, 2021, p. 857).

When talking about cultural differences in business models, Kapferer highlights that Chanel has a typical French model. Chanel's value proposition focuses on "The Dream", and they abandon traditional marketing rules to build their luxury brand (Kapferer & Bastien, 2009, 487). This is also known as following the anti-laws of marketing (Bastien & Kapferer, 2013, p. 26). Kapferer highlights that the production is craftsmanship, and the distribution is exclusive. Luxury is all about exclusivity (Kapferer & Bastien, 2009, 487). If something is too easily available, it loses its luxury status. The historical legacy of the Chanel brand enables it to function as a marker of cultural identity. Each product creates a strong emotional bond with the brand and makes women feel appreciated through thoughtful design (Hong, 2022, p. 162).

3. Method

This chapter outlines the methodological framework designed to address the central research question: How does Chanel's cinematic presence in contemporary films contribute to the communication and reinforcement of its brand identity and cultural relevance as a luxury brand? Given the symbolic and cultural dimensions of luxury branding, a qualitative methodology allows for an in-depth exploration of the role of Chanel's presence in cinematic storytelling. The study employs qualitative content analysis to systematically examine selected films as audiovisual texts, focusing on both visual and narrative elements. The chapter details the research design, sampling, data collection, operationalisation, data analysis, and the validity & reliability. By clearly documenting each step, the chapter seeks to establish the study's credibility and scholarly integrity.

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative design to examine how Chanel's cinematic presence in contemporary films contributes to the communication and reinforcement of its brand identity and cultural relevance as a luxury brand. The primary objective of qualitative research is to comprehend a study question from an idealist or humanist perspective (Kalra et al., 2013, p. 192). A qualitative methodology is adopted due to the research question's necessity for an in-depth understanding of symbolic meaning, narrative context, and visual representation, which are unattainable using quantitative methods. Qualitative content analysis is particularly suited for this objective, as it enables a systematic and theory-driven examination of audiovisual material, enabling the identification and interpretation of both explicit and implicit forms of brand integration.

The research material for this study consists of a purposively selected sample of contemporary films in which Chanel features prominently. These films are seen as audiovisual texts, allowing the examination of visual elements, including logos and set design, as well as narrative elements, including dialogue, character development, and plot integration. The units of analysis are defined as scenes or moments where Chanel is present, either visually or narratively. To ensure a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of Chanel's cinematic presence, this study systematically analyses each appearance across three interconnected dimensions: visual, verbal, and narrative. Specifically, the analysis distinguishes between screen placement, script placement, and plot placement (Russell, 1998, p. 357). Adopting Russell's approach, the analysis captures not only what is seen on screen but also how Chanel is referenced in dialogue and is woven into the storyline, providing a foundation for thematic analysis.

The coding and categorisation process is guided by established theoretical frameworks, including Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism, Russell's Product Placement, and Hudson & Hudson's Integration Type. These frameworks are operationalised into concrete, observable indicators, providing a transparent and reproducible analytical process. By systematically coding the research

material and focusing on the context and function of Chanel's appearances, this research design offers a solid framework for analysing how cinematic representations contribute to the brand's identity and cultural relevance. The following sections will detail the sample, data collection, operationalisation, coding frame, and data analysis methodologies.

3.1.1 Qualitative Content Analysis

Qualitative content analysis (QCA) is a method for systematically describing the meaning of qualitative data (Schreier, 2012, p. 17). QCA allows for a detailed exploration of how brand identity is communicated through cinematic representations, moving beyond basic descriptions to analyse the context, symbolism, and narrative role of each brand appearance. According to Babbie, content analysis is the study of recorded human communications, including fashion (Babbie, 2017, p. 333). QCA is a method that allows researchers to methodically view media content, scrutinising not just what is shown but seeking deeper meanings and messages that media consumers are exposed to. Content analysis enables academics to study the material's context, including visual components, and is highly suited to addressing how questions (Babbie, 2017, p. 333). The fundamental idea at the heart of the approach is to divide more extensive content into smaller groups (Kort-Butler, 2016, p. 4). In contrast to quantitative content analysis, which focuses on measuring frequency, QCA allows for an in-depth, contextual understanding of how meaning is constructed and communicated through media.

3.2 Sample & Data Collection

The sample of this study consists of five contemporary sets of films in which Chanel's cinematic presence is both prominent and narratively or visually significant. In QCA, the first criterion is to choose the material that accurately represents the complete diversity of data (Flick & Schreier, 2014, p. 11). The selection of these films was guided by purposive and criterion sampling to ensure that each case would be highly relevant to the research question, which aligns with established qualitative research standards (Fossey et al., 2002, p. 726; Patton, 2002, p. 238).

The initial identification of qualifying films employed the Brand Tracking Pro tool by ProductPlacementBlog.com, which claims to have the largest product placement database with over 127,500 events tracked across films and television since 2015 (Kamolins, n.d.). However, as this tool does not provide brand-specific filters with detailed contextual insights necessary for this study's interpretative goals, the researcher contacted the company directly to obtain a more tailored dataset. To support the selection process of this study, an internal Excel dataset obtained from the company behind ProductPlacementBlog.com was used as a starting point. The Excel dataset is presented in Appendix B. This dataset listed numerous films containing Chanel placements. Direct engagement with the company to obtain this dataset improved the reliability and transparency of the sample selection, allowing for verification and clarification of the data source where necessary.

From this broader pool, films were screened using the inclusion criteria stated below, ensuring that each selected film featured Chanel in a narratively or visually significant way that is consistent with the research aims. The selection process was guided by both industry databases and academic standards, with the following inclusion criteria:

1. The film must contain Chanel's cinematic presence, either through visual representation or verbal mention.
2. Chanel should be shown at least twice during the length of the film.
3. The film must be in English.
4. The film must be a commercial film.
5. The film must have been released within 2005-2025.
6. The films are accessible online.

The rationale behind each inclusion criterion is grounded in established academic standards for qualitative sampling and is designed to ensure both methodological rigour and relevance to the research question. Firstly, ensuring the inclusion of Chanel, either visually or through dialogue, guarantees that all chosen films are immediately relevant to the study. The requirement for Chanel to appear a minimum of twice guarantees that the brand's participation is significant enough to provide meaningful analysis. This approach aligns with qualitative sampling, as its emphasis is on information-rich cases that develop a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon being researched (Fossey et al., 2002, p. 726). Limiting the sample to English-spoken films serves both practical and methodological purposes. It mitigates the possibility of misinterpretation arising from translations and ensures the findings are accessible to a broad academic audience. The focus on commercial films is justified by their wide reach worldwide and cultural impact; these films are more likely to shape public impressions of Chanel. Establishing the release window from 2005 to 2025 captures a period marked by a significant shift in media. Innovation is an inherent aspect of the media industry, and in recent decades the demand has intensified (Storsul & Krumsvik, 2013, p. 9). The rise of digital streaming and the progression of branded entertainment thus ensure the sample reflects on industry developments. Ultimately, requiring online accessibility of the films for smooth data collection and transparency. By employing these criteria, the study ensures that the selected films are relevant and capable of this study.

Although a broader pool of films was initially considered, only five films were selected as part of the final sample. The chosen films exemplify a variety of branding situations and narrative techniques based on these characteristics. This technique allows for the deliberate selection of films that meet predefined criteria selected by the researcher (Babbie, 2017, p. 196). Each film was thereafter evaluated for the narrative or visual importance of Chanel's involvement, ensuring that the brand's appearance contributed meaningfully to the story. The final sample films include *Barbie*

(Gerwig, 2023), *Challengers* (Guadagnino, 2024), *Meet Me Next Christmas* (Cundieff, 2024), *Sex and the City* (King, 2008), and *The Devil Wears Prada* (Frankel, 2006).

Barbie and *Meet Me Next Christmas* are analysed on the platform Netflix. *Challengers* and *Sex and the City* were available through Prime. Disney+ was used to analyse *The Devil Wears Prada*. Data was collected from the mentioned platforms in the period from the first of February until the end of April. Further details on the selected films are provided in Appendix C.

3.3 Operationalization

Operationalisation in this study refers to the process of translating the research question into concrete, observable indicators that can be systematically identified and coded in the selected films (Babbie, 2017, p. 117; Flick & Schreier, 2014, p. 3). This step guarantees that the analysis is empirically rigorous and theoretically grounded, allowing for a transparent and replicable approach.

The selection of three established theoretical models guides the operationalisation of this study. These models have been translated into concrete analytical categories, each linked to specific indicators that can be observed and interpreted within the selected films. Each framework is chosen for its relevance to a certain aspect of the research question: brand identity, the form and function of cinematic presence, and the degree of narrative integration.

3.3.1 Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism

The first framework is used to analyse how Chanel's brand identity is constructed and communicated through film. This approach identifies six dimensions: physique, personality, culture, relationship, reflection, and self-image. Each dimension is translated into specific, observable indicators, as shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1. Codebook Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism

Code	Definition	Indicators	Example from the data
Physique	Physical, tangible aspects of the brand	Visible Chanel logo; recognizable Chanel product design (leather bags, tweed, accessories)	Chanel logo on bags, tweed outfits, visible Chanel accessories
Personality	Human characteristics or tone associated with the brand	Scenes portraying elegance, sophistication, confidence, femininity, or luxury through Chanel Items	Chanel is elegant, fashionable, sophisticated

Culture	Values, beliefs, and cultural associations embodied by the brand	References to French style, luxury settings, exclusivity, or tradition in Chanel context	French heritage, luxury, exclusivity
Relationship	Nature of interaction and relationship between brand and characters/audience	Emotional or symbolic bonds between Chanel and characters/audience, gifting, status, bonding moments	Interaction such as gifting, status, aspiration, or transformation
Reflection	How the brand reflects the target audience's identity	Characters expressing desire for Chanel. Chanel used as symbol of status	Characters aspiring to own a Chanel. Chanel as status symbol
Self-image	How characters/audience see themselves through the brand	The way Chanel enables characters or viewers to project empowerment, exclusivity, or refinement through association with the brand	Characters showing transformation when wearing Chanel feeling empowered

Physique is coded when the tangible visual cues of Chanel, such as the logo, tweed items, pearl accessories, and handbags, are clearly visible. Only explicit, visually recognisable features of the brand are included as evidence (Mahdi et al., n.d., p. 114). For example, a character carrying a Chanel bag with a visible logo is coded as *Physique*.

Personality is coded when Chanel's cinematic presence expresses traits like elegance, confidence, and modern femininity. Coding focuses on scenes where Chanel items are not just present but actively convey these traits, such as a female character wearing Chanel while demonstrating confidence (Sugimoto & Nagasawa, 2017, p. 295). The analysis considered gestures, dialogue, narrative roles, and the broader emotional or social context surrounding the brand's appearance. The code is assigned only when there is a clear link between brand presence and the expression of these qualities.

Coding in culture occurs through visual or narrative parallels to French heritage, elegance, exclusivity, or tradition. *Culture* refers to the underlying values, heritage, and worldview that a brand communicates (Mahdi et al., n.d., p. 115). In analysing this, scenes were evaluated for elements that

reflect Chanel's cultural positioning, such as references to Parisian settings, luxury lifestyles, historical symbolism, or allusions to fashion as a cultural institution. Additionally, Chanel's association with timelessness, craftsmanship, and exclusivity was considered. These indicators included both explicit references and indirect cultural codes.

The *relationship* dimension is coded when Chanel mediates gifting, aspiration, status, or transformations. Coding emphasises scenarios in which the brand is vital to emotional connections or symbolic moments. In the context of film, that means looking at scenes where Chanel plays a role in how characters relate to each other or how they express identity, status, or desire. These kinds of scenes were included only when the brand did more than appear in the background and actually shaped or reflected something about the relationship or dynamic in the story. The coding focused not only on the physical presence of the brand but on the symbolic work it performs, including how it mediates connection, distinction, or emotional impact.

Reflection is coded when Chanel indicates status, aspiration, or the brand's ideal consumer. It refers to the mirror image of the brand's ideal customer as presented through media (Mahdi et al., n.d., p. 115). This dimension was captured by identifying the social profiles, lifestyles, and identities of characters who engage with Chanel in the films. The analysis considered factors such as gender, class, ethnicity, age, and attitude to assess whether Chanel was reinforcing or evolving its traditional consumer imagery. Reflection is particularly relevant in understanding whether the brand's cinematic appearances uphold or challenge normative ideals of beauty, success, and desirability.

The *self-image* dimension reflects how viewers are encouraged to envision themselves by identifying with the brand (Mahdi et al., n.d., p. 115). This is coded when Chanel is linked to empowerment, confidence, or personal transformation. Coding targets scenes where wearing Chanel enables a character to project a new or aspirational self-image. The focus lies on the emotional connection and imaginative identification that Chanel creates through visual storytelling. A code is assigned solely when the indicator is clearly evident in the data; see Table 3.1. This method guarantees that every aspect of brand identity is operationalised as a concrete, codable element, allowing for transparent analysis of Chanel.

3.3.2 Russell's Product Placement Framework

The second framework is essential for differentiating the narrative role of Chanel's appearances. This approach differentiates among the visual, verbal, and narrative aspects of brand integration. In practice, each scene is evaluated for the presence and role of Chanel according to three categories: screen placement, script placement, and plot placement.

Screen placement is coded when Chanel's products, logos, or brand symbols are visible but not referenced in dialogue. Within this category, there are two subcategories: creative placement and on-set placement. Creative placement is incorporating the brand into the visual narrative in a way that

is consistent with the film's style or narrative framework (Russell, 1998, p. 357). On-set placement is the physical positioning of branded objects on the film set, such as apparel, accessories, or interior pieces, that do not necessarily serve a narrative purpose (Russell, 1998, p. 357). Examples include a character wearing a Chanel outfit, a handbag on display, or a boutique shown in the background. Coding required visual clarity to confirm the brand's presence.

Script placement is recognised when Chanel is verbally referenced within the dialogue or text shown on screen (Russell, 1998, p. 357). This includes characters mentioning "Chanel" in conversation, reading it aloud, or referring to it in a way that signals brand recognition. These placements were only coded when the mention was obvious and explicit. Plot placement captures the degree to which Chanel is integrated into the storyline (Russell, 1998, p. 357).

Sometimes the product is incorporated into the story, playing a significant role in the storyline or helping to develop a character's personality. Chanel was coded as *plot placement* when its presence shaped character development, served as a plot device, or contributed symbolically to key moments in the narrative. Scenes where Chanel was merely present but had no bearing on the plot were excluded from this category. Scenes where, for example, Chanel was both verbally present and impacted the plot were coded in both categories. This dimension reflects the narrative significance of the brand beyond its visual or verbal appearance. Table 3.2 represents the codebook.

Table 3.2. Codebook Russell's Product Placement Framework

Code	Definition	Indicators	Example from the data
Screen Placement	Brand is visually present	Chanel Logo, product, or store visible in scene	Chanel store in background of scene
Script Placement	Brand is mentioned in dialogue or text	Chanel in conversation or on-screen text	"I am feeling that Chanel on you."
Plot Placement	Brand is essential to plot or character development	Storyline involving Chanel	Emotional turning points with Chanel accessories featured

3.3.3 Hudson & Hudson's Integration Type

To further distinguish the dept of brand integration, framework three is employed. Hudson & Hudson differentiates between product placement and branded entertainment. In table 3.3, the indicators are listed. *Product placement* is coded when Chanel appears decoratively or usefully in a scene without affecting the plot or character development. To operationalise this concept, a scene is coded as product placement when Chanel appears visually (e.g., logo, product, or design), is mentioned verbally, or interacts with characters while remaining non-essential to the storyline. The plot could progress identically without the brand's presence, and Chanel's inclusion serves a decorative or associative function rather than a narrative one. In practice, evidence for product

placement is collected through systematic scene observation. The presence of the brand was then evaluated against predefined criteria: visibility, verbal reference, and interaction without narrative consequence. This allowed for a consistent and replicable identification of product placement across all five films.

In contrast, *branded entertainment* is operationalised by identifying scenes where Chanel is essential to the construction of the film's narrative world. This includes influence on character development, thematic focus, or the aesthetic and emotional tone of the film. In these instances, the brand moves beyond passive presence and becomes embedded within the creative fabric of the production. Scenes are coded as branded entertainment when the absence of Chanel would alter the storyline, reduce thematic coherence, or change the viewer's interpretation of characters or setting. Coding is conducted with attention to the narrative significance of Chanel's presence, ensuring the established criteria for brand integration are included as evidence.

Table 3.3 Codebook Hudson & Hudson's Integration Type

Code	Definition	Indicators	Example from the data
Product Placement	Brand present but not central to plot	Chanel store in the background or product without narrative impact	Chanel shoebox held by stylist
Branded Entertainment	Brand pivotal to plot or transformation	Chanel is key to plot or character transformation.	Chanel as a verbal and visual cue for transformation

3.4 Coding Frame

The coding frame is the method's central component and must always be data-driven (Flick & Schreier, 2014, p. 9) Constructing a coding frame entails selecting materials, producing, defining, and modifying categories (Flick & Schreier, 2014, p. 9) initial stage in constructing a frame is to choose an appropriate quantity of material. The main consideration is to choose the material that incorporates diversity of data. As mentioned in the Methodological Guidelines of Thesis Research (Janssen & Verboord, 2024, p. 7), 5 films are the appropriate quantity of material for this study. The next stage involved the producing of the main and sub-categories of the framework. This stage is executed in a concept-driven way, as the main categories are based on existing theory (Flick & Schreier, 2014, p. 12). The subcategories are created based on the data, as the material was analysed until relevant concepts were found. By defining all categories in the next stage, the coding frame has been developed. The category name, definition, rule, and justification are included in the coding frame (Flick & Schreier, 2014, p. 13). During the last step, the coding frame was corrected from any inconsistencies.

Coding consistency, defined as the uniform use of categories across the entire data set, is a

crucial quality criterion in qualitative analysis (Flick & Schreier, 2014, p. 15). After the coding frame was constructed, it was evaluated by contrasting two rounds of coding at two different time intervals. The time period between the coding was two weeks in this study. During the segmentation of the material, scenes were divided into coding units, matching with one sub-category. Important in QCA is the condition that any coding unit may be categorised just once within a single primary category (Schreier, 2012, p. 10).

In this study, the coding process involved noting the time stamp, character involved, scene context, and presence of each theoretical dimension. The focus is not only on the appearance of Chanel products but also on how these branded items are woven into the narrative and action of scenes. The coding frame makes the analysis process transparent; this is crucial as it increases the credibility of the study. The coding process used in this study is deductive as the coding procedure starts with predefined categories and concepts from established theories (Schreier, 2012, p. 8). The coding frame was constructed before analysing all the data and is applied to the 5 selected films after the pilot phase. During this phase, the coding framework was tested for the last time. This was critical for identifying and addressing frame flaws before the main analysis (Schreier, 2012, p. 16).

While analysing all the films, screenshots were captured for reference, and analytic memos were written to document interpretation and potential ambiguities. Only placements that were visually clear, narratively relevant, or symbolically rich were included in the final dataset. This ensured consistency and theoretical alignment in the interpretation of branding cues. Given the narrative focus of this study, simultaneous coding is used by applying two or more different codes to a single qualitative data. This is suitable, as some data imply numerous interpretations that require the justification of more than one code (Saldaña, 2009, p. 62). Appendix D presents a comprehensive illustration of the coding framework as used for *Barbie*.

3.5 Data Analysis

The data analysis for this study was guided by thematic analysis, which is a method particularly suited for identifying and interpreting patterns of meaning in qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). Thematic analysis was selected for its systematic and adaptable methodology in examining complex audiovisual content, facilitating the researcher's ability to move beyond surface-level and reveal fundamental themes associated with Chanel's cinematic presence and its impact on brand identity and cultural relevance. By organising data into recurring themes, this study draws meaningful conclusions.

The thematic process started with familiarisation, where the coded scenes were read through multiple times in phase one. As the data was collected by the researcher, a far more thorough understanding of the data was acknowledged (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 88). Each film was viewed four times in its entirety. The first viewing involved general annotation and scene selection, while the

second, third, and fourth focused on detailed coding using a matrix structured around the operationalised categories. The operationalised categories created from the theoretical frameworks were then used to build initial codes by methodically identifying data relevant to the research question. Once all relevant data had been coded, the next stage involved synthesising the codes into broader themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 89).

Following the initial coding, thematic analysis is applied to the coded data. This was done using thematic analysis, following Braun & Clarke's (2006) guidelines. This interpretive step enables the development of cross-cutting themes that synthesise and explain the cultural and brand meanings emerging from the data. Codes were grouped and reviewed to identify recurring patterns and overarching themes that defined the construction of Chanel's brand identity and cultural relevance in film. For instance, codes relating to empowerment, aspiration, and confidence were grouped under broader themes such as Femininity & Empowerment. The following phase 4 included reviewing the themes. In this next phase, it became apparent that certain themes were not strong enough due to insufficient evidence (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 91). The approach was iterative, with themes improved and redefined based on the coded data and the research question. Subsequently, each theme was clearly defined and named to capture its essence and relevance. The data were combined and presented in a narrative that demonstrates how Chanel's cinematic presence enhances its ongoing cultural relevance and brand identity.

3.5.1 Validity & reliability

In qualitative research, validity and reliability are ensured not through statistical measures but through transparency, consistency, and reflexivity at every stage of the research process. In order to conduct reliable research, it is necessary to take a methodical and rigorous approach to the planning and operationalisation of the study and the gathering and examination of data, as well as the interpretation and reporting of the findings (Fossey et al., 2002, p. 720). A specific coding frame has been used in this study in order to strengthen validity, operationalising all concepts from theory into explicit, observable indicators. The implementation of the clear, observable indicators guaranteed that all codes were based on theory and practical data, rather than researcher assumptions. Only data segments that clearly satisfied these requirements were included as evidence (Flick & Schreier, 2014, p. 3).

Also, the analysis is grounded in well-established, peer-reviewed theoretical frameworks, including Russell's (1998) three-dimensional framework, Hudson and Hudson's (2006) Integration Model, and Kapferer's (2008) Brand Identity Prism. The use of these validated concept-driven models enhances theoretical rigour and ensures that the coding categories are conceptually sound and widely recognised within the fields of marketing and media studies (Flick & Schreier, 2014, p. 4). This approach minimised interpretive bias and ensured that the analysis could be replicated by other

researchers employing the identical coding framework.

Reliability was ensured through the implementation of a systematic and consistent coding procedure. This is a key feature of qualitative content analysis, as the method necessitates a thorough evaluation of every component of the material that is in any way relevant to the research (Flick & Schreier, 2014, p. 3). All films and scenes were reviewed multiple times to guarantee the completeness and precision of coding. The coding frame was refined after testing on a sample of data prior to comprehensive data analysis (Flick & Schreier, 2014, p. 16). Researcher reflexivity was maintained throughout the analytical process, as qualitative researchers seek to critically examine their role as researchers (Brennen, 2017, p. 22). The researcher is solely responsible for each choice about coding, themes, and how to report the data. By referencing back to the literature, this study aims to construct a compelling argument for selecting specific themes (Nowell et al., 2017, p. 11).

4. Results and Discussion

This chapter presents the results of the qualitative content analysis of Chanel's cinematic presence in five multi-genre films. The analysis was guided by the research question: How does Chanel's cinematic presence in contemporary films contribute to the communication and reinforcement of its brand identity and cultural relevance as a luxury brand? Following the operationalisation and analytical procedures described in the methodology, the data were systematically coded for instances of Chanel's visual and narrative presence. The coded material was then synthesised through thematic analysis, resulting in the identification of four overarching themes. Each theme is supported by sub-themes and illustrated with representative examples from the films. These themes reflect the principal ways in which Chanel's cinematic presence communicates and reinforces the brand's identity and cultural relevance as a luxury brand, including femininity and empowerment, the construction of exclusivity, heritage and craftsmanship, and emotional symbolism. This thematic structure provides both analytical depth and transparency in how cultural and brand meanings were interpreted and categorised from the data. The coding tree, which illustrates the overview of the constructed themes, is presented in Appendix E.

4.1 Femininity and Empowerment as Chanel's Cinematic Identity

An in-depth academic analysis of the coded films demonstrates that femininity and empowerment are central and recurring themes in Chanel's cinematic presence. Across all five films, Chanel continuously creates and celebrates a particular vision of femininity. One that is complex and aspirational but has strong roots in history and luxury. This finding is substantiated through the application of the three operationalised coding frameworks. The brand is not merely a background brand but a dynamic agent in shaping the visual and narrative language of femininity. Chanel's presence is consistently coded as physique (signature products such as tweed, pearls, and logo bags), the double C logo, tweed outfits, pearls, and black & white colours serving as a symbol for tradition and ambition. Personality (elegance, confidence, and modern femininity) and self-image (aspirational transformation) within Kapferer's model. These codes frequently co-occur with screen placement in Russell's framework, while brand appearances in scenes are also marked as product placement, reflecting the brand's visual significance.

Chanel's visual codes are employed in set design and styling to symbolise femininity and empowerment. The films emphasise these components, using them as visual references for heritage and modernity as well as symbols of tradition and aspiration. This dynamic is seen in sequences where Chanel's products are effortlessly incorporated, thereby reinforcing the brand's identity. The films and brand co-create this female image. Filmmakers use Chanel's brand codes to visually and narratively represent empowered females, but Chanel's brand identity makes them cultural signifiers of empowerment and elegance. The findings and the operationalised coding frameworks show that

Chanel's presence in films is crucial to the brand's identity and cultural relevance in contemporary media. The results support Kapferer's argument that strong brands communicate identity through multi-layered, consistent storytelling and that luxury brands rely on symbolic association to maintain cultural relevance. (Kapferer & Bastien, 2009, p. 477).

4.1.1 Timeless & Elegant Femininity

The delicate styling in *Barbie* is where Chanel's role in constructing timeless and elegant femininity is most noticeable. Barbie's closet is portrayed as a carefully organised collection of Chanel purses, both big and small. At least four bags feature visible logos and white heels embossed with gold Chanel emblems (Gerwig, 2023, 00:04:47). Chanel's house codes are explicitly invoked by the colour scheme of the logo, which consists of black and gold. A pink tweed skirt suit from Chanel is also included in the wardrobe as presented in Figure 4.1, which is a photo of Barbie's closet in the film (Buitendijk, 2023b). Tweed, as reinterpreted by Chanel, has emerged as a lasting symbol of the brand's timeless elegance. Its delicate textures and traditional designs always reflect elegant femininity across generations. The wardrobe screams elegance and modern femininity, with the carefully selected items on display. The visual focus on Chanel accessories highlights its role in constructing an aspirational identity. These elements are coded as physique and personality, self-image in Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism, screen placement in Russell's framework, and product placement in Hudson & Hudson's framework. Specifically in the subcategory creative placement, since the logo and design are clearly foregrounded for the viewer. This finding supports the theoretical argument that luxury brands such as Chanel employ iconic codes to establish both continuity and aspiration, making the brand instantly recognisable and appealing to a worldwide audience (Kapferer, 2008, p. 182; Sugimoto & Nagasawa, 2017, p. 295).



Figure 4.1. Barbie's walk-In closet with toy-box display cases (Buitendijk, 2023b).

This motif is extending beyond the main character, Barbie herself. Other women in the film are also styled in tweed outfits, some featuring skirts and others trousers, as presented in Figure 4.2 (Warner Bros., 2023). During this scene the president encouraged all the women in the office to turn to each other and give compliments (Gerwig, 2023, 00:06:53). This scene involves multiple ladies in the Oval Office dressed in tweed clothing, highlighting the adaptability and ageless appeal of Chanel's iconic tweed fabric among multiple female characters. This scene signals a shared aspirational femininity among the women, suggesting that Chanel's codes are not just individual markers but shared cultural signifiers. The coding framework captures this through physique, personality, and self-image, as well as the strategic use of creative placement and product placement. All these elements work together to ground Chanel's brand in a timeless yet contemporary, sophisticated yet strong, feminine image. By showing how Chanel's codes become a collective language of empowerment, the results illustrate how product placement can foster not only individual aspiration but also a sense of community, triggering emotional responses. This aligns with literature on luxury branding and Chanel (Kapferer & Bastien, 2009, p. 474; Sugimoto & Nagasawa, 2017, p. 295).



Figure 4.2. *Barbie's Presidential Outfit* (Warner Bros., 2023).

The same pattern is evident in *Sex and the City*, where Chanel bags and accessories serve as symbols of refined taste, identifying the main characters as icons of urban and cosmopolitan womanhood (King, 2008). The repeated, prominent display of different Chanel bags reinforces the brand's association with stylistic refinement and cultural continuity. For instance, in the beginning of the film, the female main character is shown with a silver Chanel tote bag with a silver emblem, setting the tone of luxury and fashion coded as physique (King, 2008, 00:13:24). Personality code is highlighted by the female main character's portrayal of style and elegance. In this scene, the Chanel product is a symbol of empowerment as she walks through the designer store. Throughout the film, Chanel bags are seen in more shopping and city scenes with logos clearly visible, coded in

subcategory creative placement, Kapferer's physique, and product placement (King, 2008, 00:01:14; 00:13:24; 00:59:04; 01:46:22; 01:57:05; 02:02:15). The stylish and modern femininity showcased in these scenes by the characters is coded personality and self-image. These placements enhance the brand's connection with stylistic refinement and cultural continuity, strengthening the idea that Chanel's identity is based on both tradition and timeless relevance. In Appendix F, Chanel's cinematic presence in *Sex and the City* is illustrated.

Even in *Challengers*, where Chanel's influence is more subtle, the female lead's choice of Chanel espadrilles signals a form of femininity that is both confident and classically elegant (Guadagnino, 2024, 00:46:12; 00:52:09). The espadrilles, with their distinct logo, are coded as physique, creative placement, and product placement. Their subtle integration into the character's wardrobe suggests that Chanel's codes can be applied to contemporary, athletic narratives while maintaining their association with elegance and refinement. The female main character's confidence and style reflect Chanel's personality of modern femininity coded as personality and self-image.

4.1.2 Empowered & Independent Femininity

Chanel's cinematic representation significantly contributes to the expression of empowered and independent femininity. Mostly in scenes where the items signify moments of evolution, power, and self-worth. The courtroom scene in *Barbie*, featuring a female lawyer and Barbie in a blue tweed suit, accentuates Chanel's status as a symbol of professional success (Gerwig, 2023, 00:07:30). Here Chanel serves as the visual anchor for the empowerment narrative; her outfit serves as a visual symbol for her femininity and authority. The coding emphasises physique, personality, self-image, and creative placement. Since Barbie's fashion sense, self-assurance, and aspirational transition are intrinsically connected to the Chanel aesthetic.

In *The Devil Wears Prada*, Chanel's integration into the main character's transformation is a perfect illustration of the multifaceted nature of luxury branding within narrative and symbolic frameworks (Frankel, 2006). In Appendix G, Chanel's cinematic presence in *The Devil Wears Prada* is illustrated with examples showing the recognisable visual cues coded as physique. The personality dimension of Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism is emphasised through the brand personality traits embodied by Andy as she embraces the Chanel styling. This includes elegance, confidence, modern femininity, and power visually represented in important scenes (Frankel, 2006, 00:36:20; 00:38:04; 00:43:43; 01:07:09), where her transformation is signified by Chanel boots, necklaces, and pearl accessories as shown in the figures in Appendix G). This visual transformation is not only about external appearance but also about internal change; Andy's personality and self-confidence visibly evolve alongside her new style. Most crucially, the category of self-image is continuously shown in moments when Andy's confidence and public status increase (Frankel, 2006, 00:36:20; 00:38:04; 01:07:09). Lastly, these moments are coded visually as creative placement by Russell as Chanel is

presented visually on screen.

These results demonstrate that Chanel's cinematic presence in all these films is more than just aesthetic; it acts as a visual anchor for the brand's identity. Connecting current femininity to a long history of grace and cultural importance. The brand's products are not props but rather active agents in the development of characters identities and storylines. The coding frames confirm this first theme, there are 15 scenes in this theme where the following coding co-occur: physique, personality, self-image, and creative placement, all centring on Chanel's theme of femininity and empowerment. These findings support the literature about the luxury industry generating feelings and cultural power (Kapferer & Bastien, 2009, p. 478).

4.2 The Luxury of Desire: Chanel's Construction of Exclusivity

The creation of exclusivity, status, and aspirational longing emerged as a major theme from the analysis. This theme is grounded in the systematic coding of Chanel's appearances across the selected films, wherein the brand's appearance is consistently linked to themes of scarcity and social distinction. The study reveals that Chanel's cinematic presence signifies not only luxury but also actively constructs an aura of exclusivity and elevated status.

This theme is articulated through two interrelated subthemes: aspirational consumption & scarcity and social distinction & cultural capital. Both explain how Chanel's brand identity is reinforced by its status as a desirable object and symbol of privilege. The frameworks combined show that Chanel's products function as narrative drivers and emotional triggers and indicate social capital in film. By integrating these elements, the analysis shows that Chanel serves as a powerful emblem of social distinction and refined taste, influencing character development and narrative significance in film. This theme is explained using examples from *Meet Me Next Christmas*, *Sex and the City*, and *The Devil Wears Prada*.

4.2.1 Aspirational Consumption & Scarcity

Chanel's products are consistently portrayed as highly desired items, with their appeal enhanced by a narrative focus on scarcity, competition, and the rituals of luxury consumption. This is particularly evident in *Meet Me Next Christmas*, where the limited-edition *Sugar Plum* Chanel bag is coded as creative placement and script placement. Even though in the film Chanel is not simply a product but a narrative driver, here the brand is highlighted by dialogue, visual branding, and the ritual of luxury shopping. The Chanel bag is a status symbol in the film and a coded reflection in Kapferer's Prism. The anticipation for the limited-edition Sugar Plum Chanel bag is dramatised through a sequence of scenes. It starts with a conversation between the two main characters, talking about getting a Chanel bag. The Chanel bag is referred to in the conversation as the "one thing he wants more than tickets to the concert" (Cundieff, 2024, 00:38:02-00:38:12). This scene is coded as script

placement, as Chanel is mentioned in the dialogue. The fact that the main characters are so interested in the Chanel bag portrays ideal consumers and aspirational identity coded as reflection and self-image. Followed by the main characters walking to a Chanel store, the logo is visible on flags (Cundieff, 2024, 00:39:53), coded as physique and creative placement. The brand appears here functionally within this scene, primarily as a visual element but part of the bigger picture. The dialogue between the two main characters indicates the aspirational and emotional charge of the Chanel purchase. Below this specific scene is quoted:

Female main character: “Okay, what purse are we getting? Um, is it one of those quilted ones with a chain? I really love those.”

Male main character: "No, he said to get the Sugar Plum. You know that one?"

Female main character: “Oh, mm. It just sounds special.”

Male main character: “It does, doesn’t it?”

Female main character: “Yeah.”

(Cundieff, 2024, 00:39:58-00:40:10).

This exchange is coded as script placement in Russell’s framework, while the emotional investment and aspiration expressed in this exchange are captured by reflection and self-image. It reveals how Chanel is positioned as an object of desire, sophistication, and emotional investment. The exclusivity is further highlighted by the Chanel employee, who explains, “The Sugar Plum is our limited-edition holiday release. If you don’t have an appointment, we kindly ask that you wait in line,” emphasising the scarcity and prestige of the product (Cundieff, 2024, 00:40:13-00:40:23). In this scene there is a line of people waiting outside of the Chanel store to get in, emphasising scarcity and status and reinforcing the codes of script placement, reflection, and self-image. The Chanel employee is highlighting the exclusive lifestyle ideal for consumers this way: Chanel enables exclusivity.

The anticipation, excitement, and competitiveness associated with the Chanel bag reflect not only the brand’s exclusivity but also function as a marker of personal aspiration. The coding frameworks collectively illustrate that Chanel’s scarcity and desirability are pivotal to its cinematic brand identity. The findings support the argument that luxury product placement is most effective when it is narratively congruent and emotionally resonant (Rossi et al., 2023, p. 564). Chanel’s scarcity and desirability function as markers of empowerment and personal aspiration, proving symbolic significance in luxury branding (Kapferer & Bastien, 2009, p. 474).

4.2.2 Social Distinction & Cultural Capital

The study identifies social distinction and cultural capital as themes in the construction of Chanel’s exclusivity within films. Chanel is continuously linked to high-status characters, prestigious settings, and the practices of luxury consuming due to its rigorous coding. In this context, Chanel’s

products function not merely as decorative props but as significant indicators of social capital and elite status. The brand physically distinguishes individuals as part of a stylish and wealthy class.

In *Sex and the City*, Chanel bags and accessories are everywhere, serving as visual cues of the main characters' privileged status and cosmopolitan lifestyle, coded physique, and creative placement. The repeated display of Chanel bags (see Appendix F) also highlights their role as status symbols, which is represented by reflection in Kapferer's Prism. These items are not merely props but signify social capital, visually differentiating the characters as members of a stylish, wealthy class. The gifting and display of Chanel bags further serve as tokens of friendship and status, symbolising the bonds between the main character and her assistant (King, 2008, 01:25:10-01:25:15). The statement "I am feeling that Chanel on you" by the main female character (King, 2008, 01:25:10) directly links the emotional and symbolic weight of the brand to the experience of femininity and social belonging.

This scene is categorised as reflection, self-image, and portraying Chanel's target audience and enables character exclusivity through brand association. Chanel emphasises characters status and is here mentioned and categorised as script placement. The frequent and visible exhibition of Chanel bags reinforces the brand's association with stylistic refinement and cultural continuity. This confirms that Chanel's identity is founded on tradition and enduring value but also actively shaped by its association with aspirational lifestyles and elite social circles. This is visualized in Figure 4.3 (GetYarn, n.d).



Figure 4.3. Two Woman At Café Table In *Sex and the City* (GetYarn, n.d).

In *The Devil Wears Prada*, Chanel is linked to high status and practices of luxury consuming during the sequence from 00:35:22 to 00:36:20 (Frankel, 2006). In this scene, the stylist's remark, "You're in desperate need of Chanel," is followed by the dialogue of Andy with a coworker, "Are you wearing the Chanel boots?" "Chanel boots? Yes, I am" (Frankel, 2006, 00:35:22-00:36:20). These

verbal exchanges are coded script placement, as Chanel is explicitly mentioned. In Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism, this scene is coded reflection, since Andy's adoption of Chanel is portrayed as a moment of social approval and entry into the world of high fashion. Most crucially, self-image is coded, as Andy's confident response and visible embrace of Chanel signify her transformation from outsider to fashionable insider. This reflects the aspirational journey of Chanel's ideal consumer.

Chanel is continuously linked to high-status characters, prestigious settings, and the practices of luxury consuming due to its rigorous coding. In this context, Chanel's products function not merely as decorative props but as significant indicators of social capital and elite status. Collectively, these findings show that Chanel's cinematic presence is systematically used to signify social distinction and cultural capital. The coding frameworks confirm that through script placement, reflection, self-image, physique, and creative placement. The codes collectively illustrate that Chanel's scarcity and desirability are central to its cinematic brand identity. This perspective is crucial for understanding how Chanel's brand identity and cultural relevance are reinforced in film, as it demonstrates that the brand's value is not only rooted in its products but also in the social and emotional connections constructed through its cinematic representation.

4.3 Timeless Craft: Chanel's Heritage as a narrative device

The themes of heritage, craftsmanship, and French luxury are notably evident in the qualitative content analysis of Chanel's cinematic presence. This theme is grounded in the systematic coding of Chanel's appearances in *Barbie*, *Meet Me Next Christmas*, and *The Devil Wears Prada*, where Chanel's use of product serves as a narrative mechanism that evokes the brand's legacy, artistry, and cultural symbolism. The analysis reveals that Chanel's cinematic presence serves as both a display of luxury products and a storytelling device that reinforces the brand's historical heritage and craftsmanship. This theme is articulated through two subthemes: French Heritage & Cultural Symbolism and Craftsmanship & Iconic Codes. Both demonstrate how Chanel's brand identity is reinforced by visual and narrative elements that connect the brand to its Parisian origins and reputation of excellence. The coding shows that Chanel's heritage is communicated through distinct visual cues, symbolic references, and narrative integration that collectively enhance the brand's cultural relevance. The study reveals that Chanel's heritage functions as a dynamic narrative device, influencing viewer perceptions of authenticity, tradition, and timeless elegance.

4.3.1 French Heritage & Cultural Symbolism

Chanel's French identity is emphasised through visual elements, set design, and symbolic references, positioning the brand as an emblem of Parisian luxury and international fashion status. In *Meet Me Next Christmas*, the Chanel store's window display showcases a miniature Eiffel Tower decorated with Chanel bags (Cundieff, 2024, 00:41:42). This serves as a purposeful visual centrepiece

that links the brand to its Parisian heritage and the broader mythology of French luxury. The store interior is decorated with French berets and sophisticated product displays, and the Chanel employee is dressed in a black dress and pearl necklace (Cundieff, 2024, 00:41:52; 00:43:21). These scenes evoke the timeless style of Coco Chanel herself and are coded as physique and culture in Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism. The French Eiffel Tower display with Chanel bags connects the brand to the French culture, and the store setting and product presentation evoke French luxury and craftsmanship. In Russell's framework the category creative placement emphasises Chanel's role as a living emblem of French artistry and tradition as Chanel is presented visually on screen. The narrative significance of French heritage is emphasised by the ambiance and customs associated with the Chanel boutique. The earlier mentioned visual presence of the Eiffel Tower, French berets, and the store's architectural cues all contribute to establishing Chanel's Frenchness within the film. The heritage is not just a backdrop but an integral aspect of the brand's cinematic brand identity.

In *The Devil Wears Prada*, Chanel's French heritage is woven into both narrative and visual design. The scene about going to Paris Fashion Week features the main character wearing a Chanel necklace adorned with pearls, black logos, and an Eiffel Tower charm (Frankel, 2006, 01:07:09). This charm is a powerful symbol of both Chanel's Parisian identity and the global reach of French haute couture. The narrative context, in which the main characters travel to Paris for Fashion Week, reinforces Chanel's deep roots in French culture and its affiliation with global status. The coding here reflects creative placement, physique, and culture, as Chanel's heritage is essential to the film's emotional narrative climax. The film shows Paris during Fashion Week, completing the French heritage narrative (Frankel, 2006, 01:17:44).

These findings demonstrate that Chanel's French heritage and cultural symbolism are not only visually referenced but are systematically constructed through intentional cinematic decisions. The consistent coding of these scenes as creative placement, physique, and culture highlights how tangible brand elements and deep-rooted cultural associations represent Chanel's French heritage and cultural symbolism. This directly supports the luxury branding literature that emphasises the importance of emotional desirability, aspirational value, and cultural relevance in maintaining brand desirability (Kapferer & Bastien, 2009, p. 474; Sugimoto & Nagasawa, 2017, p. 295).

4.3.2 Craftsmanship & Iconic Codes

Chanel's heritage is inseparable from its reputation for craftsmanship and the timeless allure of its signature design elements. Across all three films, the brand's signature products are emphasized as tangible markers of handcrafted mastery and French expertise. These products include tweed outfits, pearl necklaces, and quilted bags.

In *Barbie*, the careful organization of Chanel products in Barbie's closet and the repeated use of Chanel outfits during the movie, highlight the brand's dedication to quality and timeless design

coded creative placement, physique, and culture. The coding here focuses mostly on Kapferer's physique and culture, as these items serve as references to Chanel's craftsmanship and enhance the narrative luxurious aesthetic. While no direct dialogue references heritage, the Parisian luxury aesthetic is implied by the wardrobe. The attention to craftsmanship is shown in detailed costumes and accessories in multiple scenes (n=11) (Gerwig, 2023, 00:04:47; 00:06:53; 00:07:07; 00:07:30; 01:25:27). The Nobel Prize scene in particular, where Barbie and other woman are styled in tweed and pearl accessories, visually link achievement and status to the brand's famous craftsmanship (Gerwig, 2023, 00:07:07).

In *Meet Me Next Christmas*, the Chanel store is portrayed as temple of craftsmanship, with product displays that highlight the physical and visual richness of the brand. The purple Chanel bag with gold logo and chain, and the assortment of Chanel products including clothing and berets (Cundieff, 2024, 00:40:25; 00:41:42). The store's French inspired details and product arrangement reinforce Chanel's commitment to excellence and the beauty of luxury shopping. These details are coded creative placement, culture, and physique illustrating how Chanel's craftsmanship is woven into the film's setting and character interactions.

The Devil Wears Prada, enhances Chanel's reputation for craftsmanship through accentuating accessories like pearl necklaces (Frankel, 2006, 00:38:04; 00:43:43; 01:07:09). The new style of Andy, with the pearl Chanel necklaces featuring multiple logos and an Eiffel Tower charm, serves as a visual and symbolic expression of the brand's artisan heritage. The coding here covers creative placement, physique, and culture. Chanel's house codes are explicitly invoked by the colour scheme of the looks (Appendix G), which consist here of white, black and gold.

Across these films, Chanel's heritage and craftsmanship serve not only as aesthetic elements but also as narrative tools that establish the brand in a legacy of excellence and French cultural identity. The codes creative placement, physique, and culture (N=3) illustrate how Chanel's cinematic presence consistently reinforces its status as a timeless symbol of luxury and creative heritage. Chanel's heritage is not merely referenced but actively embodied, producing a dynamic narrative force modern film. These results reinforce the literature, which emphasizes the importance of craftsmanship, heritage, and cultural symbolism in maintaining the value of luxury brands (Sugimoto & Nagasawa, 2017, p. 295; Kapferer, 2008, p. 182).

4.4 Chanel as a Symbol of Emotional Connection

Chanel's cinematic presence extends far beyond visual branding and status. It functions as a powerful emotional symbol and a narrative tool, influencing character development, relationships, and pivotal moments. This theme is grounded in the systematic coding of Chanel's appearances across *Barbie*, *Meet Me Next Christmas*, *Sex and the City*, and *The Devil Wears Prada*, where the brand is repeatedly woven into pivotal emotional and relational moments (N=4). Chanel functions as agent for

transformation, and a symbol of personal connection. The study reveals that Chanel's integration in film is not merely decorative, but meaningfully woven into the emotional and relational dynamics of the narrative. This theme is expressed through two subthemes: Pivotal Transformations & Plot Triggers and Relationship Symbol & Emotional Vibration. In both, the coding frameworks consistently show that Chanel's cinematic presence enhances character development, triggers narrative shifts, and captures the aspiration and connection that define contemporary luxury narrative.

4.4.1 Pivotal Transformations & Plot Triggers

Chanel's products often act as triggers for significant narrative developments and emotional turning points. The presence of the brand often marks moments of transformation, decision, or self-realization for main characters. In *Barbie*, the most striking example occurs during the pivotal scene in which Barbie prepares to save Barbie World (Gerwig, 2023, 01:21:30). Barbie is styled in a pink tweed Chanel outfit displaying the brand prominently on the strap, a pink heart-shaped Chanel bag featuring the Chanel emblem in large white, and Chanel earrings illustrated in Figure 4.4 (Buitendijk, 2023a). The look is finished with a gold Chanel necklace presented in Figure 4.5 (Sakhuja, n.d.), displaying the Chanel emblem multiple times. These visual elements are coded as physique and creative placement for their iconic design and prominent display. The Chanel logo remains on screen for three minutes, visually positioning the brand at the core of Barbie's transformation. This moment is coded as Personality, reflecting Barbie's confidence and modern femininity. Since Chanel is meaningfully woven into the narrative and contributes to the plot and character development, the codes plot placement and branded entertainment are applicable. The emotional and symbolic bond during this transformation is captured by the relationship code, as Chanel's presence supports Barbie's empowerment. This scene illustrates Rossi et al. (2023)'s argument that narrative congruence enhances both emotional and brand recall (p. 564). Chanel's contribution to Barbie's transformation is meaningfully incorporated in the narrative's symbolic and emotional climax.



Figure 4.4. Barbie with hot-pink heart-shaped Chanel bag in Barbie (Buitendijk, 2023a).



Figure 4.5. Chanel Necklace On Pink Mannequin From Barbie (Sakhuja, n.d.).

A similar pattern is observed in *Meet Me Next Christmas*, where the limited-edition Sugar Plum Chanel bag becomes a narrative mechanism that drives both the emotional development and plot forward. During the high-tension scene in the Chanel store, the bag is in the foreground visually and narratively (Cundieff, 2024, 00:46:53). This is coded as creative placement, and as physique for its iconic design. The excitement, rivalry, and anticipation surrounding the last Chanel bag are illustrated through the characters actions and expressions, capturing the aspirational and competitive atmosphere that Chanel inspires. Figure 4.6 visually illustrates this moment of rivalry in the store, highlighting the significant importance of the brand. The main characters need the Chanel bag to reach their goal in the film. Coded as personality, as their desire reflect on Chanel's brand values of ambition. Crucially, this scene is coded as plot placement and branded entertainment, referencing Chanel's role in both the storyline and the emotional stakes for the characters. The hunt for the Chanel Bag is key to the narrative progression. The best friend of the main character later remarks "That bag was the key to your love story" reinforces the product's symbolic role in the romantic and personal journey of the main character (Cundieff, 2024, 00:48:30). Here, Chanel is not only a narrative driver, but also an emotional pillar, representing the character's hopes and aspiration by the code relationship.



Figure 4.6. Screenshot taken by author from *Meet Me Next Christmas* (Cundieff, 2024, 00:46:53).

By integrating these codes: physique, personality, relationship, creative placement, plot placement, and branded entertainment, these scenes demonstrate that Chanel's cinematic presence is not only visually prominent but also central to character development, emotional depth, and narrative progression. This supports the argument that luxury product placement is most effective when is narratively congruent and emotionally resonant (Rossi et al., 2023, p. 564). These findings reflect Hudson & Hudson's (2006) conceptualization that branded entertainment is most effective when the brand is deeply woven into the story and advances character development and emotional engagement

(p. 493). While this study does not evaluate effectiveness, the analysis reveals that Chanel's integration in these films follows the pattern described in the literature, with the brand holding a pivotal narrative and emotional role.

4.4.2 Relationship Symbol & Emotion Vibration

Chanel also operates as symbol of connection, aspiration, and emotional satisfaction. Their items often symbolize gestures of friendship, love, or personal achievement. These moments are consistently coded in this theme as physique, relationship, creative placement, plot placement, and branded entertainment when they significantly influence character interactions and narrative development.

In *Sex and the City*, the gifting and display of Chanel bags are central to the portrayal of relationships and social bonds. The Chanel bag, serving as visual cue is coded physique and creative placement. The scene serves as token of friendship and status, symbolizing the bonds between the main character and her assistant (King, 2008, 01:25:10-01:25:15). The scene where an assistant shows her Chanel bag to the main character, followed by the main character's remark. "I am feeling that Chanel on you" (King, 2008, 01:25:10-01:25:15). Important for this sub-theme is the code relationship, as the Chanel bag creates emotional connection through admiration. Here the brand functions as agent for relationship development. The Chanel product is transformed into a means of expressing affection, adoration, and social identity. The scene is also coded as plot placement, since the Chanel bag serves as a narrative device that marks the bond and status between the characters. branded entertainment highlights emotional significance of Chanel meaningfully woven into the narrative.

In *The Devil Wears Prada*, Chanel's narrative role is equally significant in the transformation of the main character. Andy her transition is marked by key moments where Chanel products indicate changes in confidence, status and self-perception. The Chanel products, serving as visual cues are coded physique and creative placement. The first notable moment occurs when Andy enters her boss's office wearing a Chanel necklace adorned with multiple logos (Frankel, 2006, 00:38:04). For the first time, she strides confidently into the professional space, stopping her employer mid-sentence to look at Andy's outfit with a look of obvious surprise. This moment not only signals Andy's growing confidence, but also marks a shift in how she is perceived by others. With this same Chanel necklace centrepiece outfit, she visits her first Designer house party evolving her character drastically. In a later scene at the office, Andy wears a pearl necklace featuring a prominent silver Chanel logo on her left chest (Frankel, 2006, 00:43:43). This second Chanel necklace further emphasizes the narrative relevance of the brand. Unlike her earlier, more reserved approach, Andy here engages witty, even sarcastic tone of voice in conversation with the stylist.

The transformation is very clear, her body language, tone, and interactions reflect a newfound

confidence and assertiveness. This evolution is further acknowledged when, still wearing the same Chanel necklace, Andy is entrusted with a key responsibility by her boss, “Andrea, I would like you to deliver the Book to my home tonight” (Frankel, 2006, 00:45:20). The smile on Andy her face demonstrates the changed status, confidence, and self-perception marked in this key moment. These scenes are coded plot placement and branded entertainment, as Chanel plays a sustained role in the storyline and character development of Andy. In these emotionally charged moments, the Chanel accessory is not merely decorative, symbolising relationship through its significance in Andy’s acceptance, growth, and the evolving dynamic with her work environment.

Across these films, Chanel’s products and branding are active agents of emotional meaning and story progression. The consistent coding of physique, relationship, creative placement, plot placement, and branded entertainment demonstrates how Chanel’s presence enhances character development, triggers key narrative moments, and captures the aspirations, connections, and transformations that define contemporary luxury narrative. Literature on branded entertainment indicates that the success of luxury brands comes from their ability to establish emotional resonance ad symbolic meaning through narrative integration (Hudson & Hudson, 2006, p. 493; Stolley et al., 2021, p. 373).

5. Conclusion

This final chapter set out to answer the central question: How does Chanel's cinematic presence in contemporary films contribute to the communication and reinforcement of its brand identity and cultural relevance as a luxury brand? The following conclusion synthesizes the main findings, discusses them within relevant theoretical frameworks, addresses societal and practical implications, reflects on the limitations of the study, and suggests directions for future research. Accomplishing so, this chapter synthesizes the analytical steps and sub-conclusions from the previous chapters, while addressing the conceptual differentiation and interaction between product placement and branded entertainment.

The preceding chapters were necessary steps in addressing the research question. The introduction established the scientific, societal, and practical relevance of the topic. Emphasizing the necessity to comprehend not just the frequency of luxury brand appearances in films but also their integration into narratives, character development, and emotional experiences. The theoretical framework argued for a move beyond surface-level visibility, highlighting the importance of symbolic communication, emotional resonance, and narrative congruence in luxury branding. The results and discussion chapter clearly illustrates that Chanel's cinematic presence is not merely a matter of exposure, but a sophisticated, multi-layered strategy that actively influences brand meaning and cultural relevance.

5.1 Synthesis of Main Findings

This study analyses the incorporation of Chanel's brand into the narrative and visual elements of contemporary film, examining how this integration serves as a medium for brand communication and cultural positioning. The study revealed multiple interconnected findings that collectively provide a comprehensive answer to the central research question. Chanel's cinematic presence was found to be far more than a matter of background branding or incidental product placement. Instead, the results indicate that Chanel's cinematic presence functions as a dynamic and multi-layered approach, actively shaping perceptions of femininity, exclusivity, heritage, and emotional resonance. This was carefully demonstrated through the identification of four overarching themes, each grounded in detailed coding and thematic analysis: femininity and empowerment, construction of exclusivity, heritage and craftsmanship, and emotional symbolism.

First, the analysis revealed that Chanel's brand is consistently positioned as an agent for empowered, modern femininity. Chanel's visual codes, such as tweed, pearls, and emblemated items, are not just evident but are intricately woven into character development, narrative turning points, and social practices of desire. In films such as *Barbie*, *Sex and the City*, and *The Devil Wears Prada*, Chanel is portrayed as a symbol of timeless elegance and an agent of transformation, confidence, and advancement in society. The brand's cinematic presence is coded as physique, personality, and self-

image in Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism, creative placement in Russell's framework, and frequently marked Product Placement by Hudson & Hudson's framework. These placements act as a visual anchor for the brand's identity and are integral to the narrative development of empowered female identity, supporting the argument that luxury brands communicate identity through multi-layered, consistent storytelling.

Second, the findings indicate that Chanel's cinematic presence is closely associated with a sense of exclusivity and aspirational desire. In *Meet Me Next Christmas*, where the anticipation for a limited-edition Chanel bag dramatizes the brand's atmosphere of scarcity and desirability. In *Sex and the City*, Chanel serves as a visual cue for social capital and cosmopolitan prestige. These placements reinforce Chanel's association with refined taste, social exclusivity, and aspirational value. The scenes were coded as reflection, self-image, and script placement, demonstrating how Chanel's products function as both narrative drivers and symbols of privilege. The analysis indicates that Chanel's cinematic presence is systematically employed to represent social distinction and cultural capital, reinforcing and actively constructing the brand's identity as marker of elite status.

Third, the emphasis on heritage and craftsmanship is consistently reinforced through visual and narrative references, grounding Chanel in a legacy of excellence and cultural symbolism. The brand's Parisian heritage and craft mastery are both acknowledged and powerfully presented in scenes ranging from boutique interiors to fashion items. The brand's heritage is coded as physique, culture, and creative placement, with its iconic products are emphasized as tangible markers of craftsmanship and French expertise. These elements function as aesthetic and narrative tool, grounding Chanel in a legacy of excellence and reinforcing its status as timeless symbol of luxury.

Fourth, Chanel's cinematic presence functions as an influential emotional symbol, shaping character development and pivotal narrative moments. The brand is repeatedly woven into the emotional core of the films, acting both an agent for change and a symbol of personal connection. In *Barbie*, Chanel is central to scenes of collective achievements and recognition, while in *The Devil Wears Prada*, Chanel accessories mark key moments of confidence, status, and self-perception. The placements are categorized as physique, relationship, plot placement, and Branded Entertainment, demonstrating that Chanel's presence is deeply embedded in the emotional and relational aspects of the narrative.

The syntheses of these findings lead to the central conclusion that Chanel's use of product placement and branded entertainment in film is a deliberate act of brand production. Chanel leverages the narrative and aesthetic power of cinema to strengthen and evolve its core identity, while also adopting it establishes patterns to new genres, audiences, and cultural moments. This strategy guarantees Chanel's continued distinctiveness and cultural relevance, confirming that its cinematic presence serves as both a testament to its enduring appeal and an instrument through which the

evolving strategies of luxury brands construct meaning, aspiration, and social distinction in modern culture.

5.2 Reflection on Product Placement and Branded Entertainment

This study reveals a crucial conceptual distinction and interaction between product placement and branded entertainment in Chanel's cinematic approach. Product placement, as evident in this study, refers to the strategic integration of Chanel's products within the visual and narrative frame of a film. This can range from appearing as either discreet background elements or more explicit references in dialogue and action. These placements serve to reinforce brand visibility and association with luxury, demonstrated by the recurring appearance of Chanel bags in *Sex and the City* and the prominent display of Chanel accessories in *Barbie*.

The data indicates that Chanel's cinematic technique often transcends conventional product placement. In numerous cases, the brand's presence evolves into branded entertainment, with Chanel serving as an active narrative and emotional agent within the storyline. The brand is integrated into character development, emotional turning points, and plot progression. In *Meet Me Next Christmas*, the pursuit of a limited-edition Chanel bag is not just a backdrop but a core narrative driver, shaping both the characters motivations and the film's emotional stakes. In such cases, Chanel's identity, values, and emotional impact become intertwined with the film's core message and audience experience.

This interplay highlights the brand's ability to go beyond passive visibility and instead function as an agent for aspiration, empowerment, and cultural meaning. The findings demonstrate that Chanel's cinematic impact is most significant when it transcends traditional product placement and advances into branded entertainment. Here, the brand is not simply seen or mentioned; it becomes an inspiration for desire, empowerment, and emotional engagement, shaping both the narrative and the viewer's perception of luxury. This result reinforces and expands theoretical frameworks, emphasizing that the true power of luxury branding in contemporary cinema lies in its capacity to become a narrative force, an agent of meaning, transformation, and cultural relevance.

5.3 Theoretical Implications

This study theoretically validates and refines key frameworks in luxury branding and media studies. The results validate the significance of Kapferer's (2008) Brand Identity Prism, demonstrating the strong brands communicate through consistent, multi-faceted narratives and symbolic connections. Chanel's cinematic presence illustrates the six facets of brand identity, showing how these elements are activated and reinforced through narrative integration (p. 182).

The results also support Russell's (1998) three-dimensional framework, highlighting the importance of creative and plot placement in enhancing emotional resonance and brand recall (p.

358). Chanel's placements are not passive or incidental but are strategically designed to advance character development, emotional turning points, and collective rituals of aspiration and empowerment. This conclusion supports Hudson & Hudson's (2006) argument that branded entertainment is most effective when the brand is deeply woven into the story and advances plot or character development (p. 493). A further theoretical contribution of this study is the clarification of the distinction and interaction between product placement and branded entertainment. The analysis shows that product placement underpins brand visibility and association, whereas branded entertainment signifies a deeper level of integration, in which the brand functions as an active narrative and emotional agent. This twin method enables Chanel to uphold both consistency and adaptability, ensuring that its standards stay meaningful across genres, narrative contexts, and audience demographics.

Furthermore, the findings enhance the literature by demonstrating that Chanel's cinematic codes serve as a collective language of empowerment and aspiration, for individual characters but also communities within films. This indicates that luxury branding in film can cultivate both individual and collective cultural significance. Consequently, reinforcing the brand's position as a dynamic icon of modern femininity and social status.

5.4 Societal & Practical Implications

The importance of this study is in its contribution to new understandings regarding the cultural and strategic role of luxury brand presence in contemporary film. The findings demonstrate that Chanel's cinematic presence is not a passive visual element, but a dynamic narrative and symbolic force that reinforces the brand's identity and cultural relevance through coded themes of femininity, empowerment, exclusivity, heritage, and emotional symbolism. This study expands the academic understanding of luxury branding as a cultural practice that extends beyond traditional marketing.

Recent research highlights the practical relevance of product placement for brands in today's media environment: 91% of marketers believe that product placement is a successful strategy for reaching non-ad-supported consumers, and 93% believe it is an effective way to promote cultural relevance (Gartner & PQ Media, 2023, as cited in BENlabs, 2023, p. 2). This study's findings confirm this broader industry trend, demonstrating that narrative and emotional integration in product placement and branded entertainment are effective strategies for luxury brands to retain their uniqueness and relevance in chaotic media environment.

Chanel's persistent employment of iconic codes across multiple genres and narratives illustrates how luxury brands can adapt to different cultural settings while maintaining a coherent and aspirational identity. The incorporation of Chanel's products in pivotal scenes, demonstrates that luxury branding in film functions as both narrative device and a source of cultural meaning. From a

practical perspective, these findings offer important insights for luxury brand managers, filmmakers, and marketers. The continuous and meaningful integration of Chanel into film narratives reveals the potential for cinematic presence to fulfil economic goals while also enhancing cultural value and symbolic capital. This emphasises the need for professionals to transcend superficial brand appearances and pursue placements that are narratively coherent, emotionally impactful, and culturally relevant.

Moreover, the findings indicate that luxury branding in film can influence social distinctions and ideals of modern femininity. Films link Chanel with powerful, independent female characters and aspirational lifestyles, hence influencing the ongoing negotiation of social norms and cultural hierarchy. At the same time, the study's findings raise questions about the inclusivity and accessibility of luxury branding, as the portrayal of exclusivity and status may reinforce certain ideals while excluding others. This underscores the importance of critical reflection on the societal implications of luxury brand integration in media, especially as brands and filmmakers continue to navigate evolving cultural expectations.

This study provides a foundation for understanding the broader societal and practical implications of luxury brand integration in film. By highlighting how Chanel's cinematic presence operates as both narrative agent and cultural signifier, the study offers a model for how luxury brands can leverage media storytelling. Maintaining relevance, foster aspiration, and engage in the ongoing development of cultural meaning in society.

5.5 Limitations & Direction for Future Research

As with any qualitative research, this study is subject to several important limitations that must be acknowledged. The primary methodological limitation relates to the use of a concept-driven coding frame. Flick & Schreier (2014), observes that this can restrict the analysis to visible and explicit instances of brand presence (p. 12). This methodology may have neglected more subtle appearances of Chanel in the examined films, such as less prominent branded items. For instance, the custom Chanel suits in the *Barbie* film were not consistently apparent to the human eye (Phillips, 2023). This limitation is intrinsic to qualitative content analysis, which although providing analytical depth and transparency, is also time-consuming and dependent on the interpretive skills of the researcher.

The dependence on a concept-driven coding frame also indicates that the analysis was influenced by the chosen theoretical frameworks. Although these models demonstrated consistency and appropriateness for the research objectives, they may not capture all possible nuances of luxury brand integration. Particularly as media and branding practices continue to evolve. Another limitation concerns the scope of the sample. The analysis was limited to five films, chosen most importantly for the presence of Chanel. This created a concentrated and manageable dataset for thorough research,

nevertheless it also implies that the results cannot be generalized to all cinematic contexts or to boarder landscape of luxury branding in media. The exclusive focus on Chanel restricts the generalizability of the findings, as different luxury brands may employ distinct strategies or trigger different cultural meanings through their cinematic integrations.

Building on these limitations, several promising directions for future research arise. Future studies could broaden the sample to include a broader range of films and luxury brands, allowing for comparative analysis and enhancing generalization. Secondly, there is a necessity for research that integrates audience viewpoints, including experimental designs, to investigate how viewers interpret and emotionally react to luxury brand placements and branded entertainment in films. Such work would complement this study's focus on narrative and symbolic integration by examining the meanings created by the audiences themselves.

Third, future research could examine the comparative effectiveness of narrative-driven product placements versus traditional advertising in shaping brand perceptions. Especially interesting in the context of luxury branding. Fourth, the combination of luxury branding with matters of diversity, inclusion, and representation demand deeper investigation. Particularly concerning how branded narratives reinforce or challenge dominant ideals of beauty, success, and empowerment. Finally, future research should address the ethical and societal implications associated with the incorporation of luxury brands in media. This involves investigating how marketed narratives affect consumer aspirations, status, and self-worth. Also, consider the responsibilities of brands and filmmakers in shaping these values.

This study offers a comprehensive and theoretically grounded research of Chanel's cinematic presence, also highlighting the need for continuous critical reflection as the boundaries between branding, media, and culture shift. By addressing these limitations and exploring new study routes, future studies can enhance our understanding of how luxury brands construct meaning, aspiration, and cultural relevance in the contemporary media environment.

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Appendixes

Appendix A: Product Placement – Branded Entertainment Continuum

Figure 2. The Product Placement-Branded Entertainment Continuum

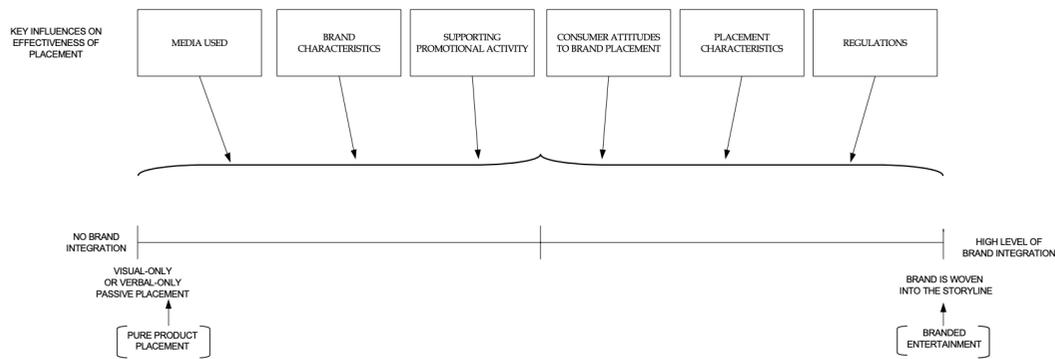


Figure A. (Hudson & Hudson, 2006, p. 495).

Appendix B: Chanel's Product Placement Excel sheet by ProductPlacementBlog.com

Date	Categories	Title
2015-08-16 22:16:54	Movie	Chanel – The Ghost Writer (2010)
2016-01-03 16:47:09	Movie	Chanel Store in Home Alone 2: Lost in New York (1992)
2016-04-28 18:47:28	Movie	Chanel – The Fifth Element (1997)
2017-01-01 14:14:28	Movie	Chanel – Taking Care of Business (1990)
2017-01-01 14:18:15	Movie	Chanel Anteus Shave Foam – Taking Care of Business (1990)
2017-02-07 17:34:21	Movie	Chanel - Absolutely Fabulous: The Movie (2016)
2017-02-07 17:35:37	Movie	Chanel Dress - Absolutely Fabulous: The Movie (2016)
2017-02-07 17:38:25	Movie	Chanel N°5 Perfume - Absolutely Fabulous: The Movie (2016)
2017-02-07 17:39:58	Movie	Chanel Shoes - Absolutely Fabulous: The Movie (2016)
2017-07-31 00:54:28	Movie	Gucci, Chanel, Versace, Prada and Marc Jacobs - Sex and the City (2008)
2017-10-16 05:14:21	Movie	Chanel bag in THE BLING RING (2013)
2017-07-27 09:16:43	Movie	Chanel Cuff Bracelet - The Wolf of Wall Street (2013)
2017-06-25 00:27:12	Movie	Chanel Dress – Personal Shopper (2016)
2017-06-25 00:49:39	Movie	Apple iPhone 6 And Chanel Dress – Personal Shopper (2016)
2017-07-09 22:32:57	Movie	Chanel - The Devil Wears Prada (2006)
2017-07-09 22:34:39	Movie	Chanel Boots - The Devil Wears Prada (2006)
2017-07-09 22:40:28	Movie	Chanel Paper Bag – The Devil Wears Prada (2006)
2017-07-20 01:38:21	Movie	Chanel – The Terminal (2004)
2017-07-20 01:40:09	Movie	Chanel And Verizon – The Terminal (2004)
2017-08-05 22:28:15	Movie	Chanel Fragrances (Ad), The New York and Vogue Magazines – Sex and the City (2008)
2017-08-05 22:30:39	Movie	Chanel Girl's Knitted Handbag – Sex and the City (2008)
2017-08-05 22:33:54	Movie	Chanel Handbag – Sex and the City (2008)
2017-08-05 22:35:48	Movie	Chanel Black Paper Bag – Sex and the City (2008)
2017-08-05 22:37:48	Movie	Chanel Beige Quilted Handbag – Sex and the City (2008)
2017-08-05 23:05:51	Movie	Diane Von Furstenberg Store & Chanel Bag – Sex and the City (2008)
2017-08-05 23:18:01	Movie	Gucci Sandals And Chanel Bag – Sex and the City (2008)
2017-08-06 00:24:30	Movie	Bluefly Paper Bag, Chanel Box and Manhattan Mini Storage – Sex and the City (2008)
2017-08-06 01:20:19	Movie	Starbucks And Chanel Bag – Sex and the City (2008)
2017-08-06 01:26:01	Movie	Starbucks, Chanel Bag and Sprint Paper Bag – Sex and the City (2008)
2017-08-06 04:47:33	Movie	Chanel Clutch - Sex and the City 2 (2010)
2017-08-12 20:39:04	Movie	Chanel Store Sign – Pretty Woman (1990)
2017-08-18 09:07:02	Movie	Chanel Cosmetics - What Women Want (2000)
2017-08-18 09:25:09	Movie	Estée Lauder, CK, Chanel – What Women Want (2000)
2017-12-01 02:36:30	Movie	Chanel Handbag Used by Lake Bell in Home Again (2017)
2018-01-28 13:19:06	Movie	Derek Lam Blouse, Isabel Marant Blazer and Hermès Birkin Handbag Used by Dakota Johnson in Fifty Shades Freed (2018)
2018-03-03 12:02:33	Movie	Chanel Store in Book Club (2018)
2018-04-29 16:08:33	Movie	Chanel Gloves Worn by Jessica Chastain in Molly's Game (2017)
2018-04-29 16:10:36	Movie	Chanel Pearl Necklace Worn by Jessica Chastain in Molly's Game (2017)
2018-07-11 14:47:54	Movie	Chanel Women's Sunglasses in How to Lose Friends & Alienate People (2008)
2018-08-26 10:08:00	Movie	Chanel Sunglasses and MacBook Laptop in Ocean's 8 (2018)
2018-08-27 13:13:11	Movie	Chanel Handbag Used by Jane Fonda in Book Club (2018)
2018-12-01 20:27:47	Movie	Chanel Perfume Magazine Cover in A Christmas Prince (2017)
2018-12-20 18:21:15	Movie	Chanel Handbag Used by Sandra Bullock in Miss Congeniality 2: Armed & Fabulous (2005)

2018-12-20 18:22:25	Movie	Chanel Sunglasses Worn by Sandra Bullock in Miss Congeniality 2: Armed & Fabulous (2005)
2019-01-15 17:22:48	Movie	Chanel Handbag in Temptation: Confessions of a Marriage Counselor (2013)
2019-01-26 12:45:09	Movie	Chanel Necklace Worn by Katheryn Winnick in Polar (2019)
2019-04-27 17:12:33	Movie	Chanel Handbag Used by Diane Kruger in Jeremiah Terminator LeRoy (2018)
2019-05-15 14:06:44	Movie	Chanel Sunglasses Worn by Isabelle Huppert in Greta (2018)
2019-08-01 13:52:27	Movie	Chanel in Reality Queen! (2019)
2019-08-05 12:25:17	Movie	Chanel Green Skirt Suit Worn by Reese Witherspoon as Elle Woods in Legally Blonde 2: Red, White & Blonde (2003)
2019-08-05 12:26:29	Movie	Chanel Necklace Worn by Reese Witherspoon as Elle Woods in Legally Blonde 2: Red, White & Blonde (2003)
2019-08-05 12:27:26	Movie	Chanel Pink Skirt and Jacket Suit Worn by Reese Witherspoon as Elle Woods in Legally Blonde 2: Red, White & Blonde (2003)
2019-10-17 12:23:22	Movie	Chanel Handbag Used by Kristin Davis in Holiday In The Wild (2019)
2019-12-23 12:50:50	Movie	Chanel in Elf (2003)
2020-01-31 20:06:55	Movie	Chanel Red Dress Worn by Hailey Gates as Adley's Receptionist in Uncut Gems (2019)
2020-04-07 16:53:12	Movie	Chanel Brooch of Salma Hayek in Like a Boss (2020)
2020-06-09 11:49:20	Movie	Coco Chanel Parfum in A.I. Artificial Intelligence (2001)
2020-08-20 12:29:18	Movie	Chanel Handbag of Rashida Jones as Laura in On the Rocks (2020)
2021-02-05 12:10:58	Movie	Chanel Boutique Sign in Beverly Hills Cop 2 (1987)
2021-02-05 23:47:58	Movie	Forbes Life Magazine, Chanel (Magazine Cover Ad), Powerade & Coca-Cola Vending Machines in Red (2010)
2021-05-24 11:17:09	Movie	Chanel Boutique in Casino Royale (2006)
2021-09-10 21:27:30	Movie	CHANEL N°5 Eau de Parfum in Run Fatboy Run (2007)
2021-10-01 13:37:35	Movie	Chanel in The Many Saints of Newark (2021)
2021-11-23 16:32:11	Movie	Chanel Blue Blazer of Kristen Stewart as Diana, Princess of Wales in Spencer (2021)
2021-11-23 16:33:18	Movie	Chanel Handbag of Kristen Stewart as Diana, Princess of Wales in Spencer (2021)
2021-11-23 16:34:56	Movie	Chanel Women's Sunglasses of Kristen Stewart as Diana, Princess of Wales in Spencer (2021)
2022-05-13 20:49:16	Movie	Chanel in Senior Year (2022)
2022-09-03 10:13:20	Movie	Chanel Handbag of Laura Hopper as Cassie in Love in the Villa (2022)
2022-09-03 10:40:29	Movie	Chanel Pearl Necklace in Mack & Rita (2022)
2022-09-16 18:13:39	Movie	Louis Vuitton and Chanel Store Bags in Confess, Fletch (2022)
2022-10-07 21:10:19	Movie	Chanel Women's Sunglasses in Luckiest Girl Alive (2022)
2023-01-27 22:30:42	Movie	Chanel No 5 Parfum Poster in You People (2023)
2023-02-07 19:32:00	Movie	Chanel Sunglasses of Naomi Ackie in Whitney Houston: I Wanna Dance with Somebody (2022)
2023-02-17 21:26:03	Movie	Chanel Women's Sunglasses of Julianne Moore as Madeline in Sharper (2023)
2023-05-19 20:58:23	Movie	Chanel Bag of Shailene Woodley as Elaine in Robots (2023)
2023-05-19 21:12:25	Movie	Saint Laurent, Gucci, Prada, Valentino, Chanel in Robots (2023)
2023-09-12 20:19:12	Movie	Adidas Boxing Boots and Chanel Bag in Barbie (2023)
2023-09-12 20:32:59	Movie	Chanel Bags in Barbie (2023)
2023-09-12 20:33:40	Movie	Chanel Earrings and Necklace Worn by Margot Robbie in Barbie (2023)
2023-09-12 20:34:15	Movie	Chanel Necklace of Margot Robbie in Barbie (2023)
2023-09-12 20:34:51	Movie	Chanel Pink Dress of Margot Robbie in Barbie (2023)
2023-09-12 20:35:50	Movie	Chanel Pink Tweed Jacket and Skirt Suit Worn by Margot Robbie in Barbie (2023)
2023-09-12 20:36:33	Movie	Chanel Red Frame Sunglasses Worn by Margot Robbie in Barbie (2023)
2023-09-12 20:38:05	Movie	Chanel Tweed CC Logo Button Skirt Suit Worn by Margot Robbie in Barbie (2023)
2023-10-03 18:33:30	Movie	Chanel Bag of Jaime Pressly in The Re-Education of Molly Singer (2023)
2023-10-13 19:34:12	Movie	Chanel Women's Sweater Worn by Amanda Warren as Gloria Gary in The Burial (2023)
2023-11-23 20:41:28	Movie	Clarin, Bloomingdale's and Chanel Bags in Genie (2023)
2023-12-16 10:22:01	Movie	CHANEL N°5 Eau de Parfum in Priscilla (2023)

2023-12-20 13:55:49	Animation Movie	Dior and Chanel in South Park (Not Suitable For Children) (2023)
2024-02-09 19:56:42	Movie	Chanel Gold Earrings Worn by Camila Mendes as Ana in Upgraded (2024)
2024-02-09 19:57:15	Movie	Chanel Gold Earrings Worn by Lena Olin as Catherine Laroche in Upgraded (2024)
2024-02-09 19:57:51	Movie	Chanel, Claudie Pierlot and Tiffany & Co. in Upgraded (2024)
2024-02-20 20:20:20	Movie	Chanel Earrings in Mean Girls (2024)
2024-04-08 19:46:26	International>Foreign Movie>UK Movie	Chanel and Google in Scoop (2024)
2024-04-08 19:46:29	International>Foreign Movie>UK Movie	Chanel and Louis Vuitton in Scoop (2024)
2024-04-08 19:46:31	International>Foreign Movie>UK Movie	Chanel Coat / Brooch in Scoop (2024)
2024-04-08 19:46:34	International>Foreign Movie>UK Movie	Chanel, Starbucks and Google in Scoop (2024)
2024-05-19 01:42:49	Movie	Chanel and New Balance Shoes in Challengers (2024)
2024-06-29 00:19:44	Movie	Chanel in A Family Affair (2024)
2024-11-06 15:00:21	Movie	Chanel Bags in Meet Me Next Christmas (2024)
2024-11-06 15:00:35	Movie	Chanel Purse (Verbal) in Meet Me Next Christmas (2024)
2024-11-06 15:00:57	Movie	Chanel Store in Meet Me Next Christmas (2024)
2024-11-06 15:00:47	Movie	Chanel Store (Verbal) in Meet Me Next Christmas (2024)
2024-11-27 20:48:04	Movie	Chanel Handbag in Here (2024)

Appendix C: Sample List Films

Figure	Title	Year	Director	Platform	Country	Language	Duration	Release Date	Timestamp
B1	<i>Barbie</i>	2023	Greta Gerwig	Netflix	US	English	114 min	21-07-2023	00:04:07
B2	<i>Barbie</i>	2023	Greta Gerwig	Netflix	US	English	114 min	21-07-2023	00:06:53
B3	<i>Barbie</i>	2023	Greta Gerwig	Netflix	US	English	114 min	21-07-2023	00:07:07
B4	<i>Barbie</i>	2023	Greta Gerwig	Netflix	US	English	114 min	21-07-2023	00:07:30
B5	<i>Barbie</i>	2023	Greta Gerwig	Netflix	US	English	114 min	21-07-2023	01:21:30
B6	<i>Barbie</i>	2023	Greta Gerwig	Netflix	US	English	114 min	21-07-2023	01:25:27
C1	<i>Meet Me Next Christmas</i>	2024	Rusty Cundieff	Netflix	US	English	104 min	06-11-2024	00:38:02 – 00:38:12
C2	<i>Meet Me Next Christmas</i>	2024	Rusty Cundieff	Netflix	US	English	104 min	06-11-2024	00:39:53
C3	<i>Meet Me Next Christmas</i>	2024	Rusty Cundieff	Netflix	US	English	104 min	06-11-2024	00:39:58 – 00:40:10
C4	<i>Meet Me Next Christmas</i>	2024	Rusty Cundieff	Netflix	US	English	104 min	06-11-2024	00:40:13 – 00:40:23
C5	<i>Meet Me Next Christmas</i>	2024	Rusty Cundieff	Netflix	US	English	104 min	06-11-2024	00:40:25
C6	<i>Meet Me Next Christmas</i>	2024	Rusty Cundieff	Netflix	US	English	104 min	06-11-2024	00:41:42
C7	<i>Meet Me Next Christmas</i>	2024	Rusty Cundieff	Netflix	US	English	104 min	06-11-2024	00:41:52
C8	<i>Meet Me Next Christmas</i>	2024	Rusty Cundieff	Netflix	US	English	104 min	06-11-2024	00:43:21
C9	<i>Meet Me Next Christmas</i>	2024	Rusty Cundieff	Netflix	US	English	104 min	06-11-2024	00:46:53
C10	<i>Meet Me Next Christmas</i>	2024	Rusty Cundieff	Netflix	US	English	104 min	06-11-2024	00:48:30
D1	<i>Challengers</i>	2024	Luca Guadagnino	Prime Video	US	English	131 min	26-04-2024	00:46:12
D2	<i>Challengers</i>	2024	Luca Guadagnino	Prime Video	US	English	131 min	26-04-2024	00:52:09
E1	<i>Sex and the City</i>	2008	Michael Patrick King	Prime Video	US	English	145 min	12-05-2008	00:01:14
E2	<i>Sex and the City</i>	2008	Michael Patrick King	Prime Video	US	English	145 min	12-05-2008	00:13:24
E3	<i>Sex and the City</i>	2008	Michael Patrick King	Prime Video	US	English	145 min	12-05-2008	00:59:04
E4	<i>Sex and the City</i>	2008	Michael Patrick King	Prime Video	US	English	145 min	12-05-2008	01:25:10 – 01:25:15
E5	<i>Sex and the City</i>	2008	Michael Patrick King	Prime Video	US	English	145 min	12-05-2008	01:46:22

E6	<i>Sex and the City</i>	2008	Michael Patrick King	Prime Video	US	English	145 min	12-05-2008	01:57:05
E7	<i>Sex and the City</i>	2008	Michael Patrick King	Prime Video	US	English	145 min	12-05-2008	02:02:15
F1	<i>The Devil Wears Prada</i>	2006	David Frankel	Disney+	US	English	109 min	30-06-2006	00:35:22-00:36:20
F2	<i>The Devil Wears Prada</i>	2006	David Frankel	Disney+	US	English	109 min	30-06-2006	00:38:04
F3	<i>The Devil Wears Prada</i>	2006	David Frankel	Disney+	US	English	109 min	30-06-2006	00:43:43
F4	<i>The Devil Wears Prada</i>	2006	David Frankel	Disney+	US	English	109 min	30-06-2006	00:45:20
F5	<i>The Devil Wears Prada</i>	2006	David Frankel	Disney+	US	English	109 min	30-06-2006	01:07:09

Appendix D: Coding Frame *Barbie*

Coding Unit	Category	Subcategory	Rule/Definition	Justification	Indicator
00:04:47	Physique	Signature/ Product/Logo	Chanel's tangible and recognizable visual cues such as logo, signature fashion items (e.g., tweed jackets, pearl necklaces, camellias).	Barbie's closet with multiple Chanel bags, clearly showing logos. Logos displayed big and small. Chanel heels (white) with gold logo and tweed outfit (pink).	Logo/bags/heels/tweed
00:04:47	Personality	Brand Personality/Traits	Traits conveyed through characters or settings, such as elegance, confidence, modern femininity, minimalism, or rebellion.	Barbie's closet arrangement and Chanel items signal elegance and modern femininity.	Elegant/feminine
00:04:47	Self-image	Aspirational Identity	The way Chanel enables characters or viewers to project empowerment, exclusivity, or refinement through association with the brand.	Chanel's presence in Barbie's closet suggests aspiration, exclusivity, and empowerment.	Empowerment/exclusivity
00:06:53	Physique	Signature/ Product/Logo	Chanel's tangible and recognizable visual cues such as logo, signature fashion items (e.g., tweed jackets, pearl necklaces, camellias).	Barbie's Pink Chanel tweed outfit with matching hat, necklace with Chanel logo.	Tweed/hat/logo
00:06:53	Personality	Brand Personality/Traits	Traits conveyed through characters or settings, such as elegance, confidence,	Barbie's confident, elegant persona, especially in the iconic tweed	Elegant/confident

			modern femininity, minimalism, or rebellion.	Chanel outfit in the oval office President.	
00:06:53	Self-image	Aspirational Identity	The way Chanel enables characters or viewers to project empowerment, exclusivity, or refinement through association with the brand.	Scene where Chanel is present during empowering moment between characters. Chanel as a marker of elevated self-image.	Empowerment
00:07:07	Physique	Signature/Product/Logo	Chanel's tangible and recognizable visual cues such as logo, signature fashion items (e.g., tweed jackets, pearl necklaces, camellias).	Barbie's Chanel tweed outfit (pink/white), Chanel earrings at Nobel Prize ceremony.	Tweed/earrings/logo
00:07:07	Personality	Brand Personality/Traits	Traits conveyed through characters or settings, such as elegance, confidence, modern femininity, minimalism, or rebellion.	Barbie's confident, elegant persona, especially in the iconic tweed Chanel outfit at Nobel Prize ceremony.	Elegant/confident
00:07:07	Relationship	Emotional Connection	Emotional or symbolic bonds between Chanel and characters/audience, such as gifting, status, aspiration, or transformation.	The Nobel Prize scene with Chanel accessories signals status and achievement between the Barbie's. Scene where Chanel is present during empowering moments signify emotional and aspirational connections.	Status/ Aspiration/ Connection

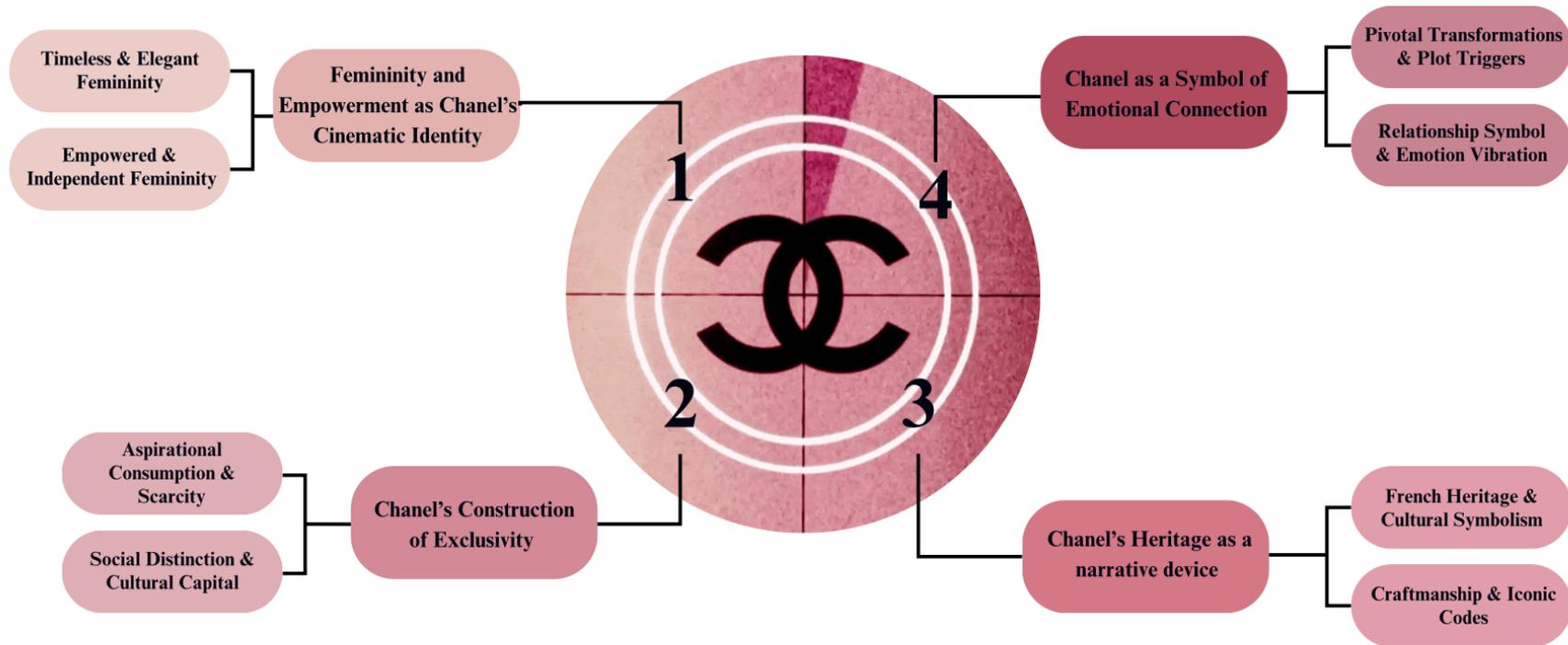
00:07:07	Self-image	Aspirational Identity	The way Chanel enables characters or viewers to project empowerment, exclusivity, or refinement through association with the brand.	Scene where Chanel is present during empowering moment between characters. Chanel as a marker of elevated self-image.	Empowerment
00:07:30	Physique	Signature/Product/Logo	Chanel's tangible and recognizable visual cues such as logo, signature fashion items (e.g., tweed jackets, pearl necklaces, camellias).	Barbie's Chanel tweed outfit (blue/white/black), Chanel earrings, brooch in courtroom scene.	Tweed/earrings/brooch/logo
00:07:30	Personality	Brand Personality/Traits	Traits conveyed through characters or settings, such as elegance, confidence, modern femininity, minimalism, or rebellion.	Barbie's composed and triumphant posture exemplifies Chanel's affiliation with confidence and professionalism in courtroom scene.	Confident
00:07:30	Self-image	Aspirational Identity	The way Chanel enables characters or viewers to project empowerment, exclusivity, or refinement through association with the brand.	Scene where Chanel is present during empowering moments signify emotional and aspirational connections.	Empowerment
01:21:30	Physique	Signature/Product/Logo	Chanel's tangible and recognizable visual cues such as logo, signature fashion items (e.g., tweed jackets, pearl necklaces, camellias).	Barbie's Chanel tweed dress (pink) with logo on the strap, Chanel heart-shaped bag (pink) with prominent logo (white), Chanel earrings, Chanel necklace.	Tweed/earrings/ bag/ necklace/ logo

01:21:30	Personality	Brand Personality/Traits	Traits conveyed through characters or settings, such as elegance, confidence, modern femininity, minimalism, or rebellion.	Barbie's empowering presence where she prepares to save Barbie World, signaling strength and modern femininity.	Confident/ Empowerment/ Femininity
01:21:30	Relationship	Emotional Connection	Emotional or symbolic bonds between Chanel and characters/audience, such as gifting, status, aspiration, or transformation.	Barbie's transformational scene wearing Chanel during a pivotal scene to save Barbie World.	Transformation/ Aspiration/ Connection
01:25:27	Physique	Signature/ Product/Logo	Chanel's tangible and recognizable visual cues such as logo, signature fashion items (e.g., tweed jackets, pearl necklaces, camellias).	Big Chanel bag (blue), displayed in Barbie's closet.	Bag/logo
00:04:47, 00:06:53, 00:07:07, 00:07:30, 01:25:27	Culture	Heritage & Craftsmanship	References to Chanel's heritage, craftsmanship, French luxury, or artistic legacy as expressed in setting, dialogue, or symbolism.	The Parisian-style luxury aesthetic is implied by wardrobe and setting.	Tweed
	Reflection	Ideal Consumer	The portrayal of the brand's target audience demographics, social class, lifestyle, or aspirational identity associated with Chanel.	Barbie embodies the aspirational consumer: wealthy, fashionable, influential. The multiple Chanel bags and outfits in Barbie's closet and on other female characters signal exclusivity and high social class.	Chanel as status symbol/ Exclusivity/ High Social Class/ Elegance/ Woman

				The elegance and refined style portrayed reflect Chanel's ideal consumer profile.	
00:04:47	Screen Placement	Creative Placement	Chanel is presented visually on screen through logos, products, or clothing.	Multiple Chanel bags and heels with logo clearly shown in Barbie's closet	Logo/products
00:06:53	Screen Placement	Creative Placement	Chanel is presented visually on screen through logos, products, or clothing.	Barbie's Pink Chanel tweed outfit with matching hat, necklace with Chanel logo.	Logo/products/ clothing
00:07:07	Screen Placement	Creative Placement	Chanel is presented visually on screen through logos, products, or clothing.	Barbie's Chanel tweed outfit (pink/white), Chanel earrings at Nobel Prize ceremony.	Logo/products/ clothing
00:07:30	Screen Placement	Creative Placement	Chanel is presented visually on screen through logos, products, or clothing.	Barbie's Chanel tweed outfit (blue/white/black), Chanel earrings, broach in courtroom scene.	Logo/products/ clothing
01:21:30	Screen Placement	Creative Placement	Chanel is presented visually on screen through logos, products, or clothing.	Barbie's Chanel tweed dress (pink) with logo on the strap, Chanel heart-shaped bag (pink) with prominent logo (white), Chanel earrings, Chanel necklace.	Logo/products/ clothing
01:25:57	Screen Placement	Creative Placement	Chanel is presented visually on screen through logos, products, or clothing.	Big Chanel bag (blue), displayed in Barbie's closet.	Logo/products

01:21:30	Plot Placement	Narrative Relevance	Chanel contributes meaningfully to plot or character development.	Scene where Barbie's wearing Chanel during her pivotal "saving the Barbie world" moment, symbolizing transformation and empowerment.	Logo/products/clothing
00:04:47 00:06:53 00:07:07 00:07:30 01:25:27	Product Placement	Brand Inserted	The brand appears briefly and functionally within a scene, primarily as a visual or verbal element without significant impact on the narrative. The placement supports setting or character identity but is not central to the plot or themes.	Chanel bags displayed in Barbie's closet; visually prominent but not driving the plot. Chanel accessories on background characters in various scenes. Tweed Chanel outfits worn during key narrative moments reflecting brand integration.	product without narrative impact
01:21:30	Branded Entertainment	Brand Integrated	The brand is meaningfully woven into the narrative, often playing a sustained role in the storyline, character arcs, or thematic development. The brand may influence the plot or be integral to the story world.	Barbie's empowerment scene where Chanel is central to her transformation and mission. Chanel logo clearly on screen for 3 minutes in this scene.	Chanel is key to plot or character transformation

Chanel's Elegance on Screen



Appendix F: Chanel presence in Sex and the City



Details...

Character: Carrie Bradshaw
Actor: Sarah Jessica Parker
Movie: Sex and The City
Item: Chanel Tweed Flap Bag

Figure F1. Carrie Bradshaw with Chanel tweed flap bag in Sex and the City (Jenn, 2024b).



Details...

Character: Carrie Bradshaw
Actor: Sarah Jessica Parker
Movie: Sex and The City
Item: Chanel Tote Bag

Figure F2. Carrie Bradshaw with tote bag in Sex and the City (Jenn, 2024a).



Details...

Character: Charlotte York
Actor: Kristin Davis
Movie: Sex and The City
Item: Chanel Bag

Figure F3. Charlotte York with white chain bag in Sex in the City (Jenn, 2024c).



Details...

Character: Carrie Bradshaw

Actor: Sarah Jessica Parker

Movie: Sex and The City

Item: Chanel Bag

Figure F4. Carrie Bradshaw with silver crossbody bag in Sex and the City (Jenn, 2024d).



Details...

Character: Miranda Hobbes

Actor: Cynthia Nixon

Movie: Sex and The City

Item: Chanel Silk Scarf

Figure F5. Miranda Hobbes with silk scarf in Sex and the City (Jenn, 2024f).



Details...

Character: Carrie Bradshaw
Actor: Sarah Jessica Parker
Movie: Sex and The City
Item: Chanel Flap Bag

Figure F6. Carrie Bradshaw with gold flap bag in Sex and the City (Jenn, 2024e).



Details...

Character: Samantha Jones
Actor: Kim Cattrall
Movie: Sex and The City
Item: Chanel Beach Bag

Figure F7. Samantha Jones with Chanel beach bag in Sex and the City (Jenn, 2024e).



Details...

Character: Charlotte York
Actor: Kristin Davis
Movie: Sex and The City
Item: Chanel Belt

Figure F8. Charlotte York with belt in Sex and the City (Jenn, 2024h).

Appendix G: Chanel's presence in *The Devil Wears Prada*



Figure G1. Anne Hathaway in black blazer, gold sweater, and leather boots in *The Devil Wears Prada* (Ogunnaike, 2014b).



Figure G2. Andy Sachs in black coat, short dress, and Chanel necklaces in *The Devil Wears Prada* (The Girl on TV, 2017).



Figure G3. Andy Sachs in black suit with white collar and Chanel accessories in The Devil Wears Prada (BuzzFeed, n.d.).



Figure G4. Anne Hathaway as Andy Sachs wearing a newsboy cap, layered sweater, and Chanel necklace in The Devil Wears Prada (Ogunnaike, 2014a).