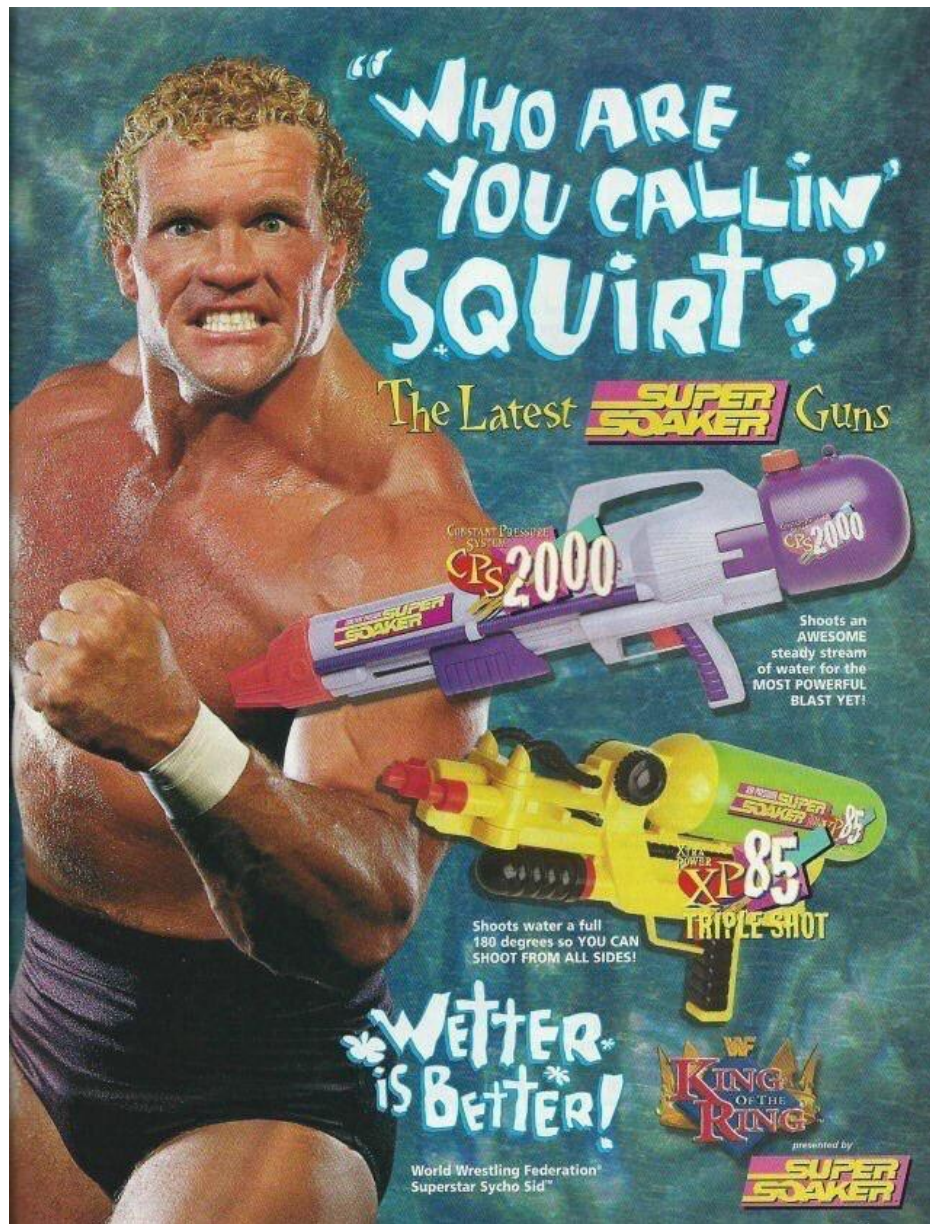


Connecting the Past to the Present Assignment



Here we see a poster depicting the Super Soaker, a popular water gun that started production in 1990 with a different name - the Power Drencher. It was invented by Lonnie Johnson, a NASA scientist, by accident a few years prior, but due to patents and the complications with finding someone who'd carry the product, the product only went into production in 1990, hence is considered a contemporary product. Advertising was kept at the bare minimum in the beginning for this product until it was rebranded shortly after, although it featured the same style of applying branding on the product as was seen earlier in the

19th century for some products. After the rebranding process was completed, advertising went up and the product was named the Super Soaker. The image I've attached above is one of the earliest posters marketing it.

This advertising style included elements of 19th century advertising in a few important aspects. The first distinct feature similar to earlier in the 19th century was bold, powerful text that captured people's attention and is the most integral part of the poster. This is similar to older posters which used text as their forefront to convey their message in a powerful way. This poster also used a clever caption (who are you calling squirt?) which was also another feature seen in posters towards the later parts of the 19th century. The logo has been integrated into the text of the poster, which again, was a feature of some earlier 19th century posters. This poster featured a celebrity figure (in this case it was a famous wrestler at the time - Sycho Sid) to create an association with the brand, which was a similar strategy to the ones that brands had adopted earlier with either pictures of a character, whether they were fictional or not (like in this case) or the inventor(s) of the product.

The products were also depicted as large and powerful, and the 'big is better' mentality was a prominent one during the earlier parts of the century. Although the depth and intensity of the illustration had grown by this time, and it was now a full color poster (which still would have been expensive at the time), the depictions of the squirt guns themselves were *actual* images of the product, which was also a distinct feature of some 19th century posters. These strategies were borrowed from the 19th century because the designers wanted to appeal to a very specific demographic of people, in this case, teenage boys, who had short attention spans, so they had to be creative, and integrate similar strategies to the ones that attracted the attention of the masses earlier but also built up an image about the brand with regards to the way it was portrayed to the target audience.