

This message was paid for by Vitamin Water to sell their product. Vitamin Water is owned by Coca-Cola Company, under Energy Brands, a privately held subsidiary-marketer and producer of Vitamin Water.

It is geared towards a male centered audience especially those aspiring to be athletes, youth, and baseball fans and/or those who buy sports drinks to benefit their health. Images of bikini laden women getting drenched in Vitamin Water and water spilling on the men's chests suggest sexuality is being used to attract straight women and straight men. Secondary target audiences could include gay men and reality show fans who've seen Mike "The Situation" Sorrentino on MTV's current show "Jersey Shore" (a show that glamorizes party-going youth from New Jersey).

This online ad opens up with a press conference against a wire fence of a baseball field. At the forefront surrounded by microphones highlighted by a bright spotlight is David Wright, third baseman of the New York Mets, of Major League Baseball. His electronic major league stats used in professional baseball are displayed in front of him on the screen. Verbal commotion and flash photography is coming from behind the camera and David Wright takes a swig of Vitamin Water. A reporter asks, "Hey David last year was tough but the team looks good this year so far and YOU LOOK FANTASTIC, What did you do different?" David Wright replies, "You know I tried a few different things. so far I started by putting in a little more nutrients into my diet, trying to be a little more strict about what I put into my body and really just trying to stay disciplined as far as going to the gym and working on some situational training." The screen dissolves and a new scene appears in which David is running toward the camera, the background showing a baseball field and a scoreboard highlighting the logo of Coca-Cola and Powerade. To the right of the screen the camera pans out to reveal a sprinting Mike Sorrentino, aka "The Situation" a reality-show celebrity from MTV's Jersey Shore. At this point a montage of cross-training scenes are shown, highlighting Mike Sorrentino as a trainer, and Mike Sorrentino's sense of humor--specifically when David groans from

exhaustion, Mike declares, "That's what she said." A later scene shows Mike talking on a cell phone and ordering girls, saying "Yeah, four girls? Bring five" all this while David swings what appears to be a wooden bat to Mike's abs, with the sound of skin getting smacked--Mike laughing after each blow to his stomach. The next scene shows a split screen with Mike on top and David on the bottom as they both slide into home base, except Mike slides into a pool of bikini laden women soaked in water one of them later getting drenched in vitamin water by Mike. The scenes intensify with training including Mike asking David to hit him harder. They are next shown doing their dry cleaning, and lying in a tanning booth. Towards the end of the commercial a scene pans up from Mike's waist up to his mouth as he drinks purple colored Vitamin Water that he allows to spill over his shirtless chest and torso. A similar scene features David without his torso exposed. The final scene is of the two men silhouetted by a setting sun jumping into the air to give a final high-five after body-bumping.

4. What is the “subtext” of the message? (What do you think is the hidden or unstated meaning?)

Vitamin Water makes people successful, if you drink Vitamin Water bikini laden women will play on a slip-n-slide with you, Vitamin Water makes your body strong enough to withstand blows from a baseball bat to your abs by a professional baseball player, Vitamin Water is great to bathe and shower in, Vitamin Water is an essential part of effective athletic training, Vitamin Water is glamorous, all athletic men are straight, women are available solely for men's sexual pleasure, and straight men can only touch other men for training purposes. During training it is normal to grimace while touching another man.

5. What kind of lifestyle is presented? How?

The kind of lifestyle presented here between the baseball player and the reality show celebrity is one of glamour, athleticism, muscular male bodies, and heterosexuality.

6. What values are expressed?

Discipline, winning, and being “the best”.

7. What “tools of persuasion” are used?

Celebrities: David Wright, New York Mets third-baseman & Mike Sorrentino, reality show celebrity.

Association: Vitamin Water is associated with fame, athleticism, and glamour.

Simple Solution: You will be fit and famous if you drink Vitamin Water.

Intensity: The commercial exemplifies the painful sounding swat Mike Sorrentino receives from David Wright's bat, and the laughing that ensues from each swing Mike

receives suggests he likes it, is strong, and can take it.

Timing: This ad came out before the All-Star game.

Nostalgia: This ad uses the Rocky theme music recalling Rocky's epic successful training.

8. What positive messages are presented? What negative messages are presented?

Positive Message: David Wright says dedication to working-out and a healthy diet have helped him achieve success in his profession.

Negative Message: The montage of his training suggest that Mike Sorrentino's glamorous lifestyle is what aspiring athletes and youth should look up to. It shows that male friendships involve objectifying women, and that touching each other should only be in a training situation or a violent situation.

9. What groups of people does this message empower? What groups does it disempower? How does this serve the media maker's interests?

David Wright, Mike Sorrentino, and straight men are empowered. Women, queer men, and youth are disempowered. Vitamin Water's interests are served because they are playing into tired stereotypes to sell their product.

10. What part of the story is not being told? How and where could you get more information about the untold stories?

One untold story is that being hit with a baseball at to the abdomen can cause serious internal damage.

One second untold story is what happens to women when they are called on by wealthy men (like Mike Sorrentino did in this commercial). The reality is that most straight men do not mistreat women, although this commercial tells us otherwise. Many men actually work to end violence against women. For resources on this issue please visit these [resources](#) by Shira Tarrant. MLP is also working a responsible speech campaign to address how homophobia is used to sell products, define masculinity, and shape policy. For information on our campaign, visit [Siembra la palabra digna](#).

The use of homophobic "humor" between the two men in this ad calls attention to another untold story. When any individuals or communities are laughed at—such as gay men—they are dehumanized. Data has shown that there exists a clear link between jokes about gay communities, and the incidents of physical violence they experience simply for being gay. For further information read this article from [Science Direct](#).