Brand, Citationality, Performativity

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ABSTRACT This article provides a semiotic account of the performativity of the brand. It argues that the brand's performativity is a function of its citationality: the ways in which (fractions of) brands are reanimated, or cited, while being reflexively marked as reanimations or citations. First the article argues that the intelligibility and coherence of brands turns on the calibration of a number of gaps in the brand's form: between brand tokens, brand types, and a brand ontology. Such calibration is achieved through moments of citing brand type and brand ontology. The article then discusses three forms of brand citationality that exceed the brand by situating themselves in, and exploiting, these gaps: brand counterfeits, "remixes," and simulations. The article concludes by discussing the relation between citationality and performativity, arguing that the performativity of brand turns on the (meta-)semiotics of citationality and the excesses it continually generates. [*brand, performativity, citationality, counterfeits, semiotics*]

RÉSUMÉ Cet article propose un compte-rendu sémiotique de la performativité des marques en affirmant que cette dernière est une fonction de sa citationnalité: comment les marques sont, à la fois, réanimées, ou citées, *et* caractérisées comme réanimations ou citations d'elles-mêmes. Tout d'abord nous soutiendrons que l'intelligibilité et la cohérence des marques dépendent de l'étalonnage d'un certain nombre d'écarts dans leur forme: entre leur occurrence, leur type et leur ontologie. Cet étalonnage est réalisé à travers des moments de citation de leur type et de leur ontologie. Ensuite nous examinerons trois formes de citationnalité des marques qui dépassent celles-ci en se situant dans et en exploitant ces écarts: des contrefaçons de marque, des «remix», et des simulations. Enfin nous conclurons en étudiant le rapport entre citationnalité et performativité, et soutiendrons que la performativité des marques dépend de la (méta-)sémiotique de la citationnalité et des excès qu'elle génère en permanence. [*marque, performativité, citationnalité, contrefaçons, sémiotique*]

> Laikwang Pang (2008:127) has said: "Brand at heart is performative."

Here is an instance of academic citation, marked as such by its punctuation (: " . . . "), reference format (Surname Year of Publication:Page Number), and sentence structure (Subject Verbum dicendi (that) [(in)direct quotation]). As a direct quotation, the signal form of the cited statement is preserved, its relevance to the current moment of citing indexed by the present perfect of the verb "to say." In this form, my "voice"—to use Mikhail Bakhtin's (1982) metaphor for those social perspectives and personae immanent in, and invokable through, discourse—is highlighted and differentiated from Pang's, as much as hers has been transported, re-presented, and maintained.

Pang's statement, it turns out, is also a citation, encapsulating Celia Lury's (2004:6) arguments about "the performativity of the brand": "As Celia Lury (2004) elaborates, brand is at heart performative" (Pang 2008:127). With this polyphony in mind, we might rephrase our citation:

> Lury and Pang claim that brands are fundamentally performative.

Here my voice is not kept discrete from Lury's and Pang's. In this indirect quotation—keyed by the complementizer "that," the lack of quotation marks, and the changed signal form of the cited statement—my voice has found its way into the cited proposition. The original form and propositional content of Pang's and Lury's discourse has been altered: the temporal relations of the cited event and the citing event

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have been obscured (note the shift in tense to the simple present in both verbs); the indefinite noun phrase "brand" has been pluralized; "at heart" paraphrased by the adverbial "fundamentally"; and, most importantly, rather than the verb "say," the main verb is "claim," indexing the writer's epistemic stance of distance from, and, perhaps, disbelief of, the cited proposition.

We might reiterate the citation:

> Brand is at heart performative.

Here our voices have been confounded and collapsed, the citationality of the proposition made totally implicit. Lury and Pang, to those who have read them, are reanimated through identities of form and propositional content. To know this as a citation (or, perhaps, more precisely, an allusion), however, requires a familiarity with an interdiscursive chain that leads us back to, or projects, some original enunciation that took place in another place and time. That familiarity is provided not in the citation itself but through the discursive acts that are brought to bear on interpreting it (e.g., our discussion above). Despite its form as a simple statement, then, we know that it is nothing but. Despite its seeming monophony, we know it to be polyphonic. Despite its seeming identity, we know it to be marked by a crucial difference.

Let's reformulate our citation once more, though this time as the thesis of this article:

> If brand is at heart performative, this performativity is to be found in its citationality.

Like our phrasing and rephrasings above, the brand is a mix of sameness and difference, contiguity and comparability, an identity that projects differences of voice, time, and space. It is citational, and this makes it able to be performative.

PERFORMATIVITY

The brand is citational, and this makes it able to be performative. But performative of what and how? Citational of what and how? In this section and the next, I provide preliminary answers to these questions, suggesting how something like a brand can be understood as performative and citational, as well as providing a sketch of the article's larger argument.

J. L. Austin (1962) introduced the concept of "performativity" to deal with a class of linguistic forms that trouble the analytical philosophy of his time's near-exclusive focus on the truth functionality of propositional statements (i.e., "constatives" like "brands are performative"). In contrast to a constative—whose "meaning" is tied up in the capacity of its denotation to be evaluated as either true or false—performatives like "I hereby name you man and wife" cannot solely be evaluated based on their truth content. Rather than representing a state of affairs, such linguistic forms, by the fact of their utterance (plus, crucially, some set of enabling "felicity" conditions), accomplish something. They bring social facts into the world, for example, of being married.

While canonical discussion of linguistic performatives focused on them as creating interpersonal obligations (promises, bets, invitations) or institutional or ritual states of affairs (marriage rites, naming), more contemporary discussion, following Judith Butler (2011), has focused on the ways in which performatives constitute the social facticity of subjectivity (Hall 2000; Kulick 2003; Livia and Hall 1997). The performative act doesn't simply transform the context of its performance, it transforms the subjectivity of its participants. "It's a girl!", as enunciated by a midwife for example, does not simply describe the newly delivered baby's sex. It performatively "girls" her, imputing to her a gendered subjectivity that will be continually reiterated, and sedimented, through subsequent events (such as "I hereby declare you man and wife") that cite this (presupposed) originary performative moment (Butler 2011:232).

Economic sociologists and anthropologists have also recently appropriated Austin's discussion of performativity as part of a rethinking of the market (Callon 1998; LiPuma and Lee 2002; Mackenzie et al. 2007). The operative insight is that contemporary markets are performatively constituted through the semiotic forms that circulate in, and attempt to reflexively construe, the market itself. Here the issue is less a question of conventionalized speech acts and the subjectivities they inscribe but, rather, how financial instruments, like derivatives, and discursive formations, like economics, entail the social facticity of "the market." In describing, defining, and measuring the market, such economic discourses and instruments constitute it.

Recent claims about the brand's performativity draw on both of these extensions of Austin's original discussion. Lury (2004) has argued, following the notion of "market performativity," that contemporary brands articulate moments of brand design, marketing, and commodity production to moments of consumer engagement in a mutually constitutive dialectic. Discourses of brand marketing inform and shape consumer engagements with brand commodities. These moments of consumption, in turn, feed back into that very branding process via reflexive marketing practice (e.g., "brandthropological" research with consumers; Sherry 2005:40). The brand, as the pivot that calibrates these moments to each other, enables this relationship and thereby reproduces itself across time and space. And to the extent that it does so, the brand performatively transforms market activity. Drawing on Lury, Pang (2008) in her discussion of mimesis and counterfeits has suggested that this dialectic also performatively constitutes a particular kind of consumer desire. And, yet, this consumer desire, to the extent that brands evoke them, can never be fully satisfied. By tracking consumers' desirous brand engagements, the brand's continually shifting form defers this desire to the next commodity iteration of the brand, continuously reconstituting itself and consumer subjectivities in turn.

" . . . *to the extent that* . . . " Indeed, a problem we immediately encounter is that brands and their consumers are simply not as docile as our description above would lead us to believe. They are unruly. Indeed, what are we to make of the fact that counterfeit brand goods are just as common across the world, if not more, than their authorized brand brethren? What are we to make, for example, of creative brand "remixes" in urban Indonesia, where local brands like EAT are stamped on top of, and in effect cannibalize, global brand logos like the Nike swoosh (Luvaas 2010)? What are we to make of young men in urban south India who desire to display branded garments—"real," "fake," and even fictive—but don't care what the (putative) brands are, where they come from or whether they are authentic (Nakassis n.d.)? Such cases trouble the brand's performativity. The seamless feedback of production to consumption is short-circuited in these peripheral markets. Such brand counterfeits, remixes, and simulations don't quite constitute the "right" consumer subjectivity or desire. And, yet, as we'll see later in the article, such brand engagements are performative—just not in the ways we might expect from studying the brand as it is enunciated in marketing and legal discourses.

So let us reiterate: if brand is at heart performative, this performativity is to be found in its citationality. Our brief discussion indicates that to substantiate this claim requires that we account not only for normative brand performativity (the "at heart" of the brand) but also for the wide range of creative brand engagements and forms that exceed such normative regimes. In what follows, I attempt just this. I argue that the brand's semiotic organization is made up of the fragile articulation of a number of layers (commoditized brand instances, brand images, and a brand ontology) and that the coherence of the canonical brand form is a result of the tight calibration of these various brand fractions to each other. Such calibrations, I contend, are citational in nature. From this point of view, we can see brand counterfeits, remixes, and the like as the dis- or recalibration between these various layers. Such nonnormative forms creatively exploit the brand's citationality. And, as I show, in doing so they generate novel performative effects.

To mount this argument, first we have to clarify the analytic notion of citationality and how the brand might be understood as citational in form. I do this in the following two sections, first focusing on the concept of citationality and then taking up the brand's (meta)semiotic organization.

CITATIONALITY

Citation—from the Latin *citare* "to move," "excite," "summon"—in modern English is canonically used to denote instances of (written) discourse that reference some other, usually linguistic, act. The citation, especially in legal usages, presents that which is cited as an authoritative or exemplary position in some proof or exposition. It provides a set of directions pointing to another event of discourse and appeals to its (authoritative) source. (Whether or not such an event or its source exist, of course, is another question.)

In addition to this colloquial usage is a more particular, though more general and abstract, usage of citation in contemporary philosophical discourse. In the work of Jacques Derrida (1988), and following him, Judith Butler (2011), citation(ality) bespeaks the property of iterability, the reproducibility of a form, and the norm that governs its intelligibility and producibility, over distinct discursive time–spaces. In such usages, citation is not particular to language but is a more general property of semiosis.

What do these two senses of citation have to do with each other? To begin answering this question, I suggest that we see citation(ality) as a kind of interdiscursivity (Silverstein 2005)—as a discursive act that links two or more events (minimally itself and another, or even itself and a figuration of itself) within the same frame. By linking together multiple semiotic events, citations weave together the multiple "voices" and identities that inhere those distinct events into one complex act. Citation is a form of reanimation, the breathing of life into an event of discourse through another discursive act that, in one way or another, re-presents it.[1] But more than this, the citation points to itself as a reanimation.

Citation, then, has an indexical and an iconic component. Indexical signs are, as Charles Sanders Peirce (CP 2.283) defined them, those sign-vehicles that, through time-space contiguity or causal relationship, "point to" their object of reference. Pointing ("index"-)fingers, smoke from fires, and pronouns, demonstratives, and the like are all examples of indexical signs. In canonical citations like the kind we began with—Laikwang Pang (2008:127) has said: "Brand at heart is performative"—matrix–subordinate clause relations, punctuation marks, and reference information all serve this indexical function by directing our attention, or "pointing," to the object of reference, in this case, some event of discourse. The proper name (Laikwang Pang) and reference information (2008:127) indicate to whom the discourse is attributed and where we are to look next to track down the event of discourse. That the subordinate clause—"brand at heart is performative"—is to be construed as reported discourse is indexed by the matrix-clause verb of speech to its left (has said [. . .]) and the colon and quotation marks (: " . . . ") that envelop and indexically bound it off on either side.

By indexing another semiotic act, citations calibrate two time–spaces that are at some level of spatial–temporal remove from each other, bringing them into a common relation of coevalness and contiguity (Silverstein 2005).[2] As such, the citation is based on an irreducible difference, or gap, between the indexical source and its target, the citing and cited events (Briggs and Bauman 1992; Derrida 1988). The collapsing of the gap between these two events is the dissolution of the citation. To construe a discursive act as a citation is precisely to maintain, at some level, the distance between these two time-spaces and the social voices (in this case, Pang's and mine) that they instantiate and presuppose.

At the same time, the multiple acts that are articulated through the citation are iconic with respect to each other. For Peirce (CP 2.276), the iconic sign is a relationship of a sign-vehicle to its object based on their similarity. Reanimating something re-produces it in some manner and to some degree, whether this be identity of signal form or propositional commensurability (Lee 1997:277–284). Like Peirce's example of the map of the island drawn on its beach (CP 2.230), the citation contains within it a replica of what it cites, re-presenting it even as it indexically calibrates the cited event to the citing event (just as on any such map there will be a point that coincides exactly with where the map is on the beach). As such, the citation is based on an irreducible sameness that makes the calibration between the citing and cited act possible in the first place.

In short, the citation diagrams the relationship between two events that, through the act of citation, come to share substance even as they are marked by difference. Through the management of this identity and difference, the various kinds of "voicing effects" that we began with become possible (Agha 2007; Lee 1997; cf. Boellstorff 2003 on "dubbing"). Drawing on Valentin Voloshinov's (1986) discussion of reported speech, we can note that maximally explicit citations, like the direct quotations in the opening discussion, reproduce the cited event with utmost fidelity—maximizing the iconicity between the cited event and a fraction of the citing event (the quotation in the subordinate clause)—even as it maximizes the indexical remove, and thus independence, between the two events and voices. By contrast, maximally implicit citations, as in the allusions in the opening discussion, bear no explicit indexical traces in the citational act, and the voices and events held in tension in the direct quotation are seemingly merged. And, yet, to ever construe such an act as a citation rather than as a simple statement requires us to understand it as a reiteration of another semiotic act, to reckon this act as distinct from, as noniconic to, some other act, even if, or precisely because, its signal form is exactly the same as that which is cited. In such implicit citations, the metacommunicative work that belies that this is, indeed, a citation is filled in in ways nonlocalizable to the signal in question. Being "in the know" is, however, always a discursive process.[3]

Citations are semiotically liminal, always somewhere in between, partaking of identity and nonidentity. And crucially, they reflexively diagram this liminality. The citation is no simple relationship of logical identity or material difference, but the metacommunication of that very duplex semiotic relationship. It is this that distinguishes citationality from mere classification or relations of token-type or identity.

Before moving on, two caveats. First, citationality is not necessarily linguistic in nature. (Indeed, even in our discussion above we noted the role of graphical signs like punctuation marks.) The general form for citation simply requires that some act be construable as a reiteration of some other act and as reflexively pointing to itself as a reiteration of that other act. This may happen in any semiotic modality. Second, citations are perspectival, interactional achievements, subject to failures, reclassifications, and tropes of various kinds: plagiarism or "ripping off" when the citation is not sufficiently explicit; taboo when one doesn't have the right to cite; falsity when the cited source is "wrong"; or ignorance when the reference is missed. There is no bird's-eye-view of citation, and citation cannot function as a metaphysical or ontological pregiven. To speak of citationality, then, is to speak of the construal and uptake of some act as a citation. As it turns out, some semiotic objects—like the brand—have such citationality prefigured in their very form, a fact that often motivates their construal and uptake as citations. There are, however, never any guarantees.

BRAND CITATIONALITY

To see how brands are citational, first we have to parse out the different semiotic layers through which brands are intelligible in the first place. As I will argue, these different layers are in citational relationships with each other. Further, this complex of citationality sutures together a number of gaps in the brand's semiotic organization.[4] By gap I am denoting those sites of fragility and potential indeterminacy in the brand's form that must be shored up in order for brands to be intelligible as such. I am drawing on Charles Briggs and Richard Bauman's (1992:149ff) discussion of the "intertextual gaps" that constitute the (in)stability of genre formations. In line with their suggestion that the coherence of any genre is a function of the management of the gaps between texts and genres (that is, instances of a genre and the genres they index), below I argue that it is through relations of citation that the gaps that constitute the brand form are bridged and thus that the brand seemingly maintains some degree of coherence and stability (cf. Nakassis 2009).

Brand (Meta-)Semiotics

Whatever brands are, they are classifications of a particular kind. To speak of brands is to reckon the sameness of and difference between commodities and their associated accoutrement (trademarks, packaging designs, advertisements, events, sponsors, etc.). This Reebok T-shirt is different from that Puma T-shirt. This Disney cruise is the same as this Disney film. Brands group together certain commodities (such that a film and a cruise are, in some sense, "the same," they are both Disney) while crosscutting other classifications (such that two T-shirts, one Puma and one Reebok, are, in effect, "different"). The (canonical) principle of sameness–difference governing the brand's commodity classification is the virtual commonality of production source, or "image" thereof, that is imputed to the classification's various elements (Coombe 1998). When we speak of brands, then, we are already talking about a metasemiotic relationship between some set of otherwise differently construed commoditized objects and a common formulation of them as members of the same class (e.g., as Puma, Reebok, Disney).

Put in semiotic terms, minimally the brand is a relationship between some set of brand instances, or *tokens*, and their (materialized) qualities (commodity objects and services, brand names, logos, events, spaces, advertisements, etc., and their associated qualities), and a brand identity, or *type*, and its (immaterialized) qualities (brands like Nike and their associated meanings, images, "personalities," etc.). This token–type relation, however, is a specific one. It is only intelligible with respect to a brand *ontology*—the cultural and legal notion that things such as brands exist and that they have such-and-such properties as specified, and policed, by institutions of trademark law and marketing practice (among others).[5]

Between the palpable and present and the abstract and absent, between the commodity and brand, and between the brand and the very idea of it, then, are a number of gaps that must be bridged. How is it, in fact, that any object could come to stand in for some brand type or that any brand type be reckoned as an instance of the more general category "brand" and not something else? When and why might we see this shoe, this cup of coffee, this computer program, or this country as instances of brand Nike, Starbucks, Microsoft, or Macedonia (Graan forthcoming) rather than some other? And why as brands at all and not, as is often the case, as some other ontological formulation (shoe, liquid, binary code, nation-state)?

Because the brand overlaps with, but is distinct from, other classifications that might apply to the commodity token in question, metasigns of brand—for example, trademarks like brand names and logos, labels, tags, or other co-occurring discourse ("It's a Nike!")—are necessary to distinguish this commodity token as like or unlike others vis-à-vis some brand type, and this brand type as like or unlike others vis-à-vis the more general category of brand. It is this co-occurrence of commodity sign and brand metasign that, in everyday brand engagements, makes the brand palpable and intelligible.

Such distinguishing marks function as what Saul Kripke (1972) terms *rigid designators*: indexical signs that refer to their objects across all possible worlds (Agha 2007:66–68; Lee 1997:67–90). Like proper names, rigidly designating diacritics like trademarks invoke brand identities by virtue of having been "baptized" (e.g., in a trademark registry) as instances of the brand (Durant 2008). For any brand commodity, there are many such baptismal events that are involved, each of which attempts to secure the commodity token's capacity to index its brand type across a commodity chain: its certification at the site of production (marked by the label), its distribution and sale through authorized agents (marked by price tag and receipt), the moment of brand design (which fix the name, logo, slogan, etc.), and the registering of the trademark with the state. The latter two involve baptizing the brand type relative to the brand ontology, and the former two involve baptizing particular tokens of the brand as authorized instances of that type. Together these different moments work to certify that this commodity is, indeed, an instance of some brand type and that this brand is, in fact, a brand at all. The intelligibility of any brand to its potential consumer, then, depends on her having been, at one time or another, inducted, or socialized, to the (authorized) "semiotic chains" that radiate outward from such baptismal events (Agha 2007:205). Every such brand token, so construed, functions as an indexical sign that points back to such presupposed baptismal moments and in so doing constitutes itself as a token of the type. The key institutional mechanism that coordinates these authorizing moments and ensures the sameness of these indexical moments with respect to each other is trademark law.

Brand tokens, however, do not only signify by rigidly indexing (an image of) their source. As Burleigh Gardner and Sidney Levy (1955:34) put it early on in a now-classic marketing article:

> A brand name is more than the label employed to differentiate among the manufacturers of a product. It is a complex symbol that represents a variety of ideas and attributes. . . . The net result is a public image, a character or personality that may be more important for the overall status (and sales) of the brand than many technical facts about the product.

Such "ideas and attributes" are, in effect, the immaterial qualities of the brand type, whole social imaginaries (Manning and Uplisashvili 2007), meanings, and forms of personhood that adhere to the brand and that are invokable by its tokens.

While these associations and meanings come to adhere to the brand in numerous ways—personalized consumer experience, word-of-mouth, product reviews—the key institutional mechanism for the attribution of such properties to the brand is marketing practice. Marketing is precisely that metasemiotic practice that strategically attempts to imbue brand token-types with the auratic essences that make the brand desirable and distinctive from its otherwise similar competition (Arvidsson 2005; Coombe 1998; Manning 2010; Mazzarella 2003; Moore 2003). While trademark law makes it possible for brand tokens to point to some coherent brand type (as indexical signs), marketing discourses, among other types of reflexive brand discourse, elaborate on the qualities of that brand type (as icons of brand image). And both practices presume upon and constitute the cultural and legal ontology of the brand itself—that is, the understanding of what a brand is, how it works or should work, its criterial features, its stereotypical qualities, and its prototypical exemplars.

From this point of view, a brand is the ongoing articulation between brand tokens, a brand type, and a brand ontology. Minimally, the brand relationship holds when there is a sufficiently tight calibration of these various levels (token–type–ontology). When these levels are coherently articulated and stably reiterated—that is, when the constitutive gaps at the core of the brand are regularly sutured together—we can meaningfully talk about brands. When they are not, we start to shade off into the world of counterfeits, generics, and other brand monsters of capitalism (see below). As I've suggested, the suturing that holds the brand together is accomplished by an ongoing reflexive project of brand management: product certifications, trademarks, and other diacritics typify certain commodity objects as authorized brand tokens; advertisements and marketing campaigns imbue particular types (and their tokens) with various associations and social meanings; and legal discourses stipulate and protect certain commodity classifications as protectable brand types and others as not.

But beyond merely being a relation of token–type–ontology, the brand is a diagram of this very relation and the gaps therein, making the brand not simply a relation of identity or classification but of citation. It is the reflexive diagramming of this reanimation that is central to the brand's coherence and intelligibility, and to its ability to generate surplus meaning and value. Below I consider the citationality of the brand and how its figuration in brand metadiscourses attempts to productively manage two gaps in the brand form: that of token to type and that of type to ontology.

Citing Brand Essence

As we noted, the brand conjoins a set of immaterial qualities to some set of commodity brand tokens, the latter offering a gateway to the former. This has long been the case, as is shown by mid–19th century notions in which trademarks were construed as communicating the producer's reputation, or "good will," across commodity instances (Bently 2008; Coombe 1998). As the Gardner and Levy quote above indicates, however, business practice starting in the 1960s increasingly recognized that rather than the commodity, its functionality, price, origin, or quality, what mattered for business practice were those immaterial qualities, the brand's image, of which the commodity was merely an instance and vehicle (Arvidsson 2005). This, in effect, turned the productivist ideology of earlier thought about trademarks and brands on its head.[6] Rather than the mark and its brand merely being a transparent index, or relay, of the commodity's production origin, the mark and its brand were increasingly seen by marketers as the source of value itself, the commodity simply being one among many marketing tools for the brand (Coombe 1998; Klein 2000; Lury 2004).

By the 1980s, this new ideological formulation located the value of the commodity not simply in the brand's "image" as such but in the affective cathexis that consumers develop with the brand, as a social relationship between a consumer and a brand (Foster 2007) through which consumers could fashion their selves (Arvidsson 2005; Hanby 1999). As Susan Fournier (1998:367), founder of the "brand relationships" subfield of marketing, writes: "Brands cohere into systems that consumers create not only to aid in living but also to give meaning to their lives. Put simply, consumers do not choose *brands*, they choose *lives*." By "choosing lives" through brand consumption, producers and consumers are imagined by marketers to "co-create" value and meaning (Prahalad and Ramaswamy 2004). Brands offer themselves up to us as tools for self-actualization and, thus, as the very context of sociality and community (Muniz and O'Guinn 2001). We consume a Macintosh computer, following this now-common marketing logic, not simply for the computer but for its ability to give us entrance into a lifestyle and consumer aesthetics (e.g., the "Get a Mac" ad campaign with its memorable "I'm a Mac. I'm a PC" brand-as-characterological portrait),[7] a social imaginary, a way of being in the world: to be a Mac ("I am a Mac") and be with other Mac(heart)s (see Figure 1).

And in forging such affective meanings and relationships through brands, "brand equity"—the added value of brand image to commodity price and corporate assets (Aaker 1991)—is generated. This value-added turns on externalizing brand image in moments of consumption that, through forms of consumer agency, create novel meanings particular to their consumptive contexts. And, yet, such brand relationality takes place only on the knowledge that every brand token, and thus brand type, is potentially, even necessarily, resignified and personally contextualized in the process. More than the "image" of Macintosh, every Mac-sponsored date is liable to develop into more than that, perhaps into a relationship between two individuals that exceeds a common love for the Apple brand. That is, such brand-mediated engagements cannot be easily contained by the brands that mediate them. Otherwise no novel social meanings or brand values can be generated. At least this is the idea.

The crucial point is that brand marketing—by articulating consumer–brand relationality in this way—attempts to prefigure this play between consumer agency and brand image in the open-endedness of the brand commodity. Brands—and, in particular, designer and lifestyle brands—are designed as yet-to-be-completed, ready-at-hand technologies to integrate a piece of the brand's aura into a personalized array of other such brand reanimations (Lury 2004). It is precisely this curatorial relationship to the self that makes such brand consumption citational (to the extent that consumers act in accordance with such marketing theory). Such moments of consumer engagement with commodities are citations of the brand image because their intelligibility turns on a play of identity and difference between an event of contextualized brand engagement, the self it fashions, the decontextualized brand image that both draw on, and the metacommunication of this play. Making a brand part of one's life is always a contextualized performance of self-image (or self–other relationality) that is like, but ultimately not, the brand's. Nike sneakers that can be ordered with personalized messages inscribed on them literalize this brand citationality in the commodity's material form, domesticating the brand form as part of a larger personal statement within which brand essence is cited and made relevant to a here-and-now of brand and self-performance (see Figure 2).

All such citationality has limits of course. Ultimately, such novel resignifications of the brand should conform to the integrity of the larger brand image, and certainly not "tarnish" it, under penalty of the law (Ginsburg 2008; Coombe 1998). The corporate–legal limits of citation, then, end with the threshold of the deviant contextualization (see below). As Lury (2004:118–121) reports, one cannot customize a pair of Nike sneakers with "sweatshop" inscribed on them.

This management of the semiotic space between brand token and type is what William Mazzarella (2003:194) has called the brand's "keeping-while-giving," the attempt by intellectual property owners to open the gaps between token

FIGURE 1. *Brand as lifestyle, brand as community: screen grab from Cupidtino.com, "the first ever "Mac-inspired" dating site," a social-networking community for Apple "fanboys" and "fangirls" to meet other "Machearts." Although dedicated to "Apple fans and lovers," Cupidtino.com is neither affiliated nor endorsed by Apple, Inc. (http://www.cupidtino.com, accessed December 1, 2011; image used with permission)*[8]

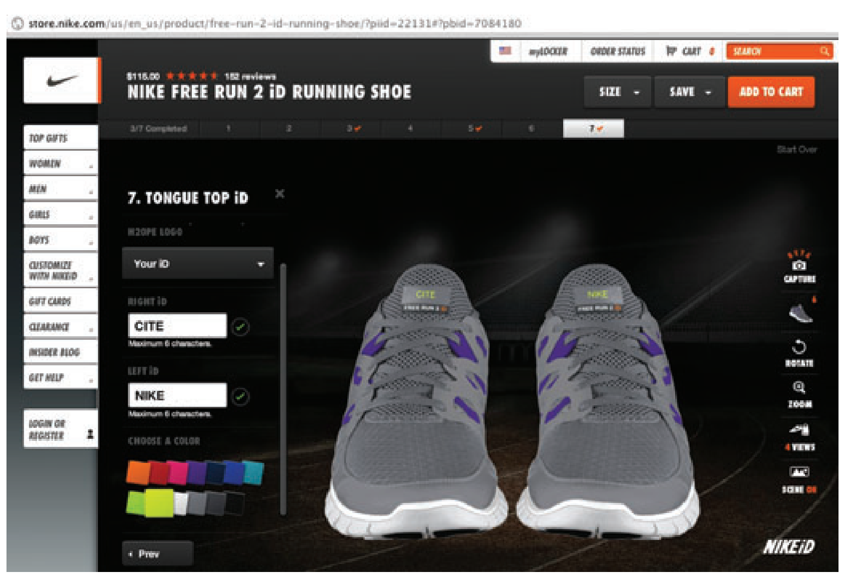

FIGURE 2. *NIKEiD: customizable "Cite Nike" (author's "personalized" iD) Nike sneakers (http://store.nike.com/us/en_us/?l = shop,nikeid, accessed December 1, 2011; screen grab)*

and type while foreclosing citational practices that deviate from their economic interests, instead channeling the novel meanings and affects produced in the process back into brand design (to whatever extent they are useful therein; Jenkins 2006). Within this feedback loop, the brand functions as what Lury (2004) calls an "interface," a technology to mediate the two-way relations between consumer's unwaged "consumptive labor" (Foster 2007) and (the production of) brand image.

Citing Brand Ontology

Such brand engagements always involve the citation of the brand ontology, and this is because any brand commodity necessarily participates in multiple classificatory schemas. Beyond simply being a token of Nike, a pair of Air Jordans are also shoes; they are youth emblems; they are composites of rubber, leather, and thread; they are tools of Western hegemony; et cetera. To the extent that Nike is construable as a brand, any instance of it falls under, and yet is always differentiable from, the brand ontology that reckons such instances as tokens of a brand type. That is, any brand token functions as a brand only on the condition that it is always construable as also not a brand.

This being and not being a brand is diagrammed in every brand (token-)type, thereby making this relation of brand type to ontology not simply a form of classification but a citation. While this is often highly implicit, it is not always so. Consider the trademark. In addition to enabling every brand token to index its brand type, the trademark has the unique function of acting as a citational relay for the brand ontology. The "TM" OR "®" symbol that co-occurs with trademarks is a certifying sign that puts the logo, and thereby the commodity to which it is appended, in a citational relationship—mediated through trademark registries and courts of law—to the brand ontology. Here we have the clearest sense of brand citation as the reiteration of authority, the brand (token-)type appealing to intellectual property law as a way to legislate its very being and thereby control the profits that flow from and through it. And it does so only because those very fractions that cite the brand ontology by contiguity with the quotative "TM" OR "®" are always already forms that stand under some other framework (e.g., as a Romanization of the Greek proper name Νικη, as a string of graphemes, etc.).

But this citationality is not only legal. In everyday linguistic usage, we can point to contrasts such as "I'm going to buy a xerox machine made by (the brand) Canon" versus "I'm going to buy a Xerox brand (copy) machine." Such contrasts belie the cultural ontology of brand as it crosscuts the genericity of simple common nouns ("xerox" vs. "Xerox"). The noun phrase $[[\text{Xerox}_{\text{propername}}\ \text{brand}]_{\text{adj}}\ \text{machine}]_{\text{np}}$ is multiply citational: the "machine" that is referred to is a token of the "Xerox" brand type (and only by also being a token of the types "machine" and commodity), whose ontological formulation is cited by the head of the adjectival phrase "brand." The point is that, as Robert Moore (2003) and Rosemary Coombe (1998:79–82) note, to not diagram this relationship to the brand ontology as alike but also always reanalyzable as not, is to either become a "generic" classification, and thus, not protected by the law as a brand, or to be a monopoly and, thus, be in violation of the law. To be construed as a brand (token-)type requires balancing identity and difference with the brand ontology, to fulfill some general schema of criteria (as being uniquely recognized in the market, registered with the state, etc.) plus some other criteria that are not exclusively part of that brand ontology (i.e., qualities that may comprise the brand commodity or image but that fall under other ontological frameworks as well). The brand ontology must come close to but never be isomorphic with any other (commoditized) classification.

MIND THE GAP

The brand, as idealized in marketing and intellectual property law, is intelligible when token–type–ontology are in lockstep and regularly calibrated. There are no certainties, however, that they ever are so tightly linked. Indeed, it is precisely the anxieties of the gaps between token–type–ontology that drives both marketing and intellectual property law. Concerns to stamp out counterfeiting (Pang 2008), fears of consumer's "brand blindness" and price-based consumption (Aaker 1991:15; Klein 2000:12–13), and worries about brand "genericide" (Coombe 1998:79–82; Moore 2003) are all anxieties about the potential disarticulation of brand tokens from types and of both from their brand ontology.

And, yet, as I've suggested above, these gaps, managed as they are through instances of citation, are also constitutive of the brand. Because the brand's (meta-)semiotics is marked by a tension between identity and difference, there is a productive, structural indeterminacy fundamental to the brand. Brand materiality, identity, and ontology are constituted by the requirement that there is an inherent instability between token–type–ontology and, further, that this instability is central to the brand's ability to circulate in the market and generate profit. The coherence and efficaciousness of the brand, then, is always an ongoing project of stitching and unstitching these gaps and differences.

But what are other ways that such gaps and differences might be expanded, bridged, or exploited through creative brand citations? How might the brand make possible social practices that exceed the very intelligibility of the brand through its own logics and forms? In what follows, I discuss the three kinds of creative citationality mentioned at the outset: brand counterfeits, remixes, and simulations. Such citations exceed the legislation of the brand even as they are implied and enabled by it.

Counterfeiting Brand Tokens

The brand counterfeit is precisely that material form that passes itself off as a token of a type to which, by law, it doesn't belong. The counterfeit indexes a brand type in order to siphon off profits, either through the misrecognition

FIGURE 3. *Citing the counterfeit: shop in Seoul whose "FAKE" Louis Vuitton handbags sell for more than the "real" thing (from http://news.cnet.com/8301–13641_3–9933046-44.html, accessed December 1, 2011; photo by Ravi Chhatpar, used with permission)*

of its identity or, just as likely, by partaking of sufficient likeness for consumers to warrant its use and display even if, or perhaps precisely because, they know that it's a fake (see Figure 3). The counterfeit cites the baptismal brand event without actually being part of the authorizing chain of production (and profit flow) that certifies the brand good (Nakassis 2012).

Here we might differentiate two types of counterfeit citationality. While the unknown counterfeit dissimulates the brand, and in this way cites brand essence like any other authorized brand good by acting "as if," the known counterfeit cites such citations (thus inscribing a clear distinction between the citing and cited voices). It puts itself in quotes as a token of a different type, even as it metacommunicates its distinctiveness from that authorized brand type. The "knowing wink" of the fake good is precisely the mark that metacommunicates that this is a citation (of a citation), that this isn't the "real" thing at all. The terms "counterfeit" or "fake" typify this citational relation—though usually to much different normative ends (fines, jail time, etc.)—and may themselves become the objects of citational parody. In Figure 3, it is the "so" that puts "fake" itself in quotes, reconverting being "fake" as site for value production rather than stigma, inauthenticity, or illegality. (Hence, the presumably higher prices for the "fakes.")

The counterfeit reveals the fundamental prerequisite of all brand formations: their ability to regiment the iconicity of brand tokens—that is, make sure that they are seen as "the same" while excluding the unauthorized and inauthentic—so as to reliably index a brand type. By exceeding the brand's very materiality, counterfeits function by troubling this iconicity, throwing into question what kinds of objects can function under the brand type.[9] And they do this by exploiting the brand's citationality, the gap between token and type.

Expropriating Brand Types

Brent Luvaas's (2010) work on "indie" fashion designers in Indonesia provides fascinating examples of creative citations of brand identity. Designing and producing their own branded clothing for the local youth "scene," the indie designers that Luvaas works with are part of a more expansive do-it-yourself community whose ethics and aesthetics turn on appropriating the means of artistic design and production. In designing their own brands, these entrepreneurs self-consciously appropriate existing global brand designs, reauthoring global logos as part of their own brand products (cf. Coombe 1998). A local brand logo EAT, for example, might be superimposed on top of a Nike Swoosh, cannibalizing the Nike logo as part of a humorous play on logos and, in the process, asserting their own EAT brand identity.

Luvaas tells us that the designers and consumers of this community don't see such practice as piracy. They aren't trying, in fact, to dupe anyone at all, nor are they simply riding the coattails of the Nike image. Such brand design is, rather, a form of homage, a citation of the Nike brand type that, while playful, also sincerely attempts to capture of something of the aura of this global giant. The EAT design co-opts and "remixes" the Swoosh, creating an interdiscursivity that diagrams a play of similarity and difference between a global "there" and a local "here," between an iconic brand identity and an upstart Indonesian company. It speaks through Nike. By possessing the logo and literally re-producing it on their own garments, these designers assert their own voice and brand identity, in effect creating a double-voiced design (Bakhtin 1982), or, following Tom Boellstorff (2003), what we might call a piece of "dubbed culture." Such designers put Nike "in quotes," dialogically engaging this global brand even while marking distance from it. These designers exploit the gap between brand (token-)type and its qualities, thereby inserting their own voices into the global circuit of brand circulation, generating new brand token-types (EAT T-shirts) and performatively constituting new markets (the so-called scene).

Bracketing Brand Ontology

While counterfeits cite and trouble authorized brand tokens and "remixes" cite and trouble brand types, we might also look to practices that creatively cite the brand ontology in ways that supplant and decenter it (Vann 2006). My own fieldwork with young men in urban Tamil Nadu, India has explored the ways that the brand ontology comes to be tooled with and simulated by nonelite young men through forms of brand display and citation (Nakassis n.d.).

Fashion aesthetics among these lower-middle- and middle-class college youth exhibit a curious tension between a palpable desire to display brands and a glaring indifference toward brand identity and image. Youth fashion is littered with branded garments, most of it export-surplus garments from regional factories, locally produced counterfeits, or brand-inspired fictive brand clothing (Nakassis 2012). And, yet, while these young men adorn their bodies in the vestments of global capital, they largely don't care (or, at least, communicate that they care) to know what the brands are, where they are from, or what they "mean." As I was told by these young men decked out in brand apparel, "no one really cares about brands." The value of such apparel turns not on their authenticity or authorization—indeed, most of these goods are neither authentic nor authorized—but, rather, on an "aesthetics of brandedness," looking like a branded good even if not a brand (see Figures 4–5).

Indeed, while brand garments are seen as "cool"—what these young men call "style"(Nakassis forthcoming)—for their ability to invoke "foreign" places, people, and their fashion, authentic brand commodities are dangerous items. Goods that too closely participate in brand-authorized regimes of value (i.e., that are reckoned by hefty price tags and authentic provenance) are likely to provoke envy and censure among one's peers. To wear such luxurious clothing risks being the target of teasing, claims that one is arrogant, or social ostracization. Getting too close to the "real" thing inscribes forms of class hierarchy that are disruptive to the otherwise egalitarian spirit of the peer group. Counterfeit goods, export surplus, and cheap brand-inspired goods, by contrast, entail no such risk precisely because their status as unauthorized, as nonbrands, is clearly communicated in their material form.

Indifference to brand and the brand's unauthorized materiality defuses it and makes it usable in the peer group. Through such brand-displaying disavowals, these young men

FIGURE 4. *Stylish brand-esque garment: "US395" fictive brand (Tamil Nadu, India; photograph by the author)*

bracket brand identity and authenticity, citing the brand ontology through tokens that fail to index any particular brand type. The brand in these contexts is simulated and abstracted even as the idea of it is kept in play. The intelligibility of such youth practice requires a delicate balance between being reckoned as like a brand but not a brand at the same time, a sameness–difference reconciled by their aesthetics of brandedness. The very idea of brand is put "in quotes," replicated in part, even as it is negated and exceeded by other vistas of social meaning. Such brand simulations enact youth concepts of "style," repurposing the brand as part of the performativity of youth subjectivity and sociality.

BRAND, CITATIONALITY, PERFORMATIVITY

In his critique of Austinian performativity and speech act theory, Derrida (1988) makes the observation that every sign can be cited, it can be put "in quotes" and thus transported from one context to the next. This means that every sign must abide by some principle of identity for it to be reiterable in a new context. There must be some "code" according to which this instance is a token of some type. This transportability implies, however, that any token is, at some level of construal, different from other tokens of the type and from the type in general. There is always a residual excess to every token sign and thus to every citation. This excess is both material (each token is unique in time-space extension) and immaterial (the citational "graft" produces new meanings in context).

FIGURE 5. *Stylish brand-esque garment: "The Emperor" fictive brand (although note the "Fubu" label; Tamil Nadu, India; photograph by the author)*

For Derrida, the "necessary possibility" (1988:15) of this gap, and the risky excess it entails, results from the tension of identity and difference that holds between a type and its tokens—in a word, what he calls its citationality. It is this tension, he argues, that is at the core of performativity. The citationality of the performative—its ability to instantiate two voices (the cited and the citing)—makes this tension productive, though only under particular conditions. As worked out by linguistic anthropologists (Agha 2007; Lee 1997; Silverstein 1979), the conditions under which performativity is productive depend upon a unique form of metasemiotic calibration, where some act cites a state of affairs that is instantiated by the act itself. The performative fulfills the very conditions that make its "description" true by its very enactment, reflexively diagramming, and blurring, the relations of token and type that it performs. In effect, the performative's semiotic form cites itself as a citation (even as we experience it in the moment as a relationship of identity), ascribing a social regularity and legislation—its norm or "illocutionary force"—to its particular context in the here and now. It makes the transcendent palpable, the general particular, and vice versa.

Butler (2011) has expanded the Derridean argument, noting that the performative is always only the leading event in a larger interdiscursive field or "chain" of signification: any performative cites a previous instantiation of the "norm" it brings into being, harkening back to some presumed original moment ("It's a girl!"). And, yet, this presupposed baptismal moment is only relevant to the extent that it can be cited, be made virtually present even though always kept absent and deferred. By bringing into being the conditions that the performative act presumed upon to be efficacious at all (its reflexive circularity), by reperforming the baptismal moment by citing it, the performative act stabilizes its own social normativity. When successful, every performative act is seemingly equivalent to its norm without residue. This requires, Butler argues, that the exteriorities of the performative's regime of intelligibility be continually excluded, or to, which amounts to the same thing, be continually included but kept in abeyance. The differences at the core of the citation—its unique materiality, contextual specificity, novel meanings—always remain, haunting the performative as its residual shadow, if only so that it can be abjected to shore up the norm that the performative instantiates.

If the brand is citational, as I have suggested, how are we to evaluate the claim that it is also, "at heart," performative? As we've seen, for Lury (2004), the brand is performative in the sense that it structures consumer–producer relationships and thus the market through its "interface": the feedback loops that link uniquely contextualized consumer enactments of brand identity to processes of brand design, manufacture, and marketing, and back again. According to Lury, the interface of the brand makes it an open-ended platform, an endless process of reiteration and "innovation" that continually reproduces its own normativity and identity by tracking and co-opting moments of continually differing consumer–brand appropriations. Hence its citational performativity.

Pang (2008) has built upon this argument by pointing to the constantly slipping metonymy between every commodity token and the "ultimate signified" of consumer desire. The brand's mimetic powers—whereby token replicas can invoke auratic brand imaginaries—never quite stabilize. The ultimate signified is never quite reached, for internal to the logic of the brand is the continual obsolescence of its tokens. Every brand commodity presupposes a serial relationship to an older and a newer version of itself. Consumption of a brand commodity, then, is not a final possession of its brand aura but a kind of time-share, an investment in a relationship with a range of temporally unfolding product lines all united by their common brand identity. Brand performativity is the ability to regulate this time series and in so doing regiment consumer behavior and desire. Each instantiation of the brand purports to satisfy a desire but only ends up reproducing itself as the desire for another brand commodity token. The brand always defers its promise to satisfy and thereby reproduces that very desire. In performatively reconstituting the consuming subject, and thus itself, the brand brings into being and regulates an unfulfillable desire for fulfillment.

This performativity harnesses and normalizes the brand's citationality. By folding consumer usage back into itself, the brand canalizes the inherent unruliness of consumptive semiosis. The brand form prefigures the gap at the heart of performativity. It presents itself as a general type—an image or timeless essence—through tokens of it that are meant to be cited and inhabited by the consumer precisely so as to produce fleeting, but perhaps recoupable, social meanings and affective attachments. In this way, it is precisely like the linguistic performative that opens up the gap between a citing and cited event and sutures them together through its autocitationality. It laminates the here and now of brand engagement to the general and decontextualized image of the brand (its "essence" or "personality"), making this moment an instance of the type, performatively bringing into being the brand, its modes of circulation ("the market"), and the very desirous subjectivities that consume through citing brand (token-)types. And what makes all this possible is the calibrative possibilities of the brand's citational structure—that is, that token–type–ontology relationships can be regularly regimented and kept in alignment with each other.

By taking the brand as an example, I suggest that we might expand Derrida's and Butler's discussions, emphasizing that performative citationality is based not on the tension between the iterability of a type and the distinctiveness of tokens of that type. Rather, it is a function of the reflexive figuration of that very tension. Even as, or precisely because, they work to decenter the concept of identity, Derrida and Butler tend to conflate relations of (semiotic) identity as relations of citationality. Put another way, while type–token relations might undergird all symbolic activity (including performatives), not all such symbolic acts reflexively diagram that fact. Some, like the brand, do. Others do not. And this matters. By not making this distinction, Butler and Derrida risk turning citationality into a pregiven and thereby essentializing difference (and identity) as inherent prediscursive possibilities, rather than conditions relative to historical and cultural contexts. To concede that, in fact, sameness–difference is only ever relative to moments of discourse—that is, to reflexive apprehensions as sameness–difference—is to turn citationality and identity into empirically investigable acts in context rather than as ideal types within some larger philosophic architectonic. This allows us to expand the import of Derrida's and Butler's essential insights by pointing to the necessity of empirically approaching performativity and citationality (not to mention brands) as reflexive and context-dependent phenomena.

Similarly, we might expand Lury's and Pang's account of the brand through our discussion of Butler and Derrida, noting that the brand's citational semiotic is always already based on two orders of exclusion. Most visible is the constantly spoken unspeakable of the "counterfeit," a label that defines and bolsters, by its illegality, the authenticity of the authorized brand (Nakassis 2012; Pang 2008). But beyond this, however, is a more important exclusion, totally unspoken in literatures that have theorized the brand: those forms that, through the brand, exceed and suspend its very conditions of ontological intelligibility and thereby open up new vistas of social action and meaning. The idea that contextualized moments of brand engagement might and often do, in fact, suspend the very ontological basis of the brand is not a proposition that appears in theories of the brand more generally. Indeed, virtually all such discussion—based as it is off of marketing and legal accounts—assumes the stability of the brand ontology, imputing a coherence and iterability to the brand that obscures its fundamental fragility. The excesses of the brand—that is, its structured instabilities—do not simply reach all the way down to the materiality of the brand (as Lury and others argue) but all the way up to its cultural ontology. There is an ontological excess—a possibility of being resignified as not a brand—which always has to be reigned in, but kept in play, in order for any brand to be performative.

But as I've emphasized, not all excesses are necessarily recoupable by the brand. The nonbrand always troubles the brand because it is its condition of performative possibility and of its defeasibility. This is not, however, a universal fact of semiosis but, rather, a cultural and historical fact about brands as citational forms. The very performativity of the brand depends on an instability and disruption that is prefigured in and entailed by its very logic. Existing theories of the brand depend on excluding this possibility, ironically reproducing the very ideological structuration that makes the brand possible in the first place. To simply assume the stability of such performativity is to naturalize the brand, ventriloquating those discourses whose very profitability and efficacy depend on keeping in abeyance the unruliness of its citationality. As this implies, however, any adequate account of the brand requires us to explicitly theorize the excesses of materiality, intelligibility, and ontology that haunt the brand and always threaten to defease its very being. If the brand is at heart performative, it is only because in its heart it harbors its own exteriorities.

CONCLUSION

In this article, I have offered an account of the (meta-)semiotic structure of the brand as the regular alignment between brand tokens, types, and ontology. I argued that the alignment between these different semiotic layers is accomplished through citational relations and that it is such citationalities that make the brand both performative and defeasible. This account also allows us to account for creative brand engagements (as materialized in counterfeits, remixes, simulations, and the like). Such nonnormative citations exploit the gaps at the heart of the brand, refunctioning its various layers in order to generate novel meanings, aesthetic forms, and social relations.

I have suggested that the brand, in all its complexity, can only be clearly apprehended, and thus theorized, once we begin to account for the moments when brands are denatured, when brands begin to shade off into that which they are not. Such an approach requires us to be committed, on the one hand, to the empirical (and I would suggest, ethnographic) study of the actual social lives of brands in their historical and cultural contexts and, on the other, to the ways in which such social lives always spill outside of the intelligibilities and performativities that (attempt to) normatively regiment them. To do otherwise is to risk misrecognizing and fetishizing that which we are beholden to explain: How and when are brands as culturally and historically specific forms (im)possible at all?

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NOTES

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1. My use of "reanimation" draws from Goffman's (1981) notion of the speech act's animator—that individual who performs, or animates, the act in question (as opposed to its author or its principal)—as developed within linguistic anthropological approaches to mass media (Spitulnik 1996). My usage highlights the ways in which semiosis may be complexly distributed, a fact that (as implied by Goffman's decomposition of the speaker) enables the appropriation and redeployment of signs across contexts (cf. Briggs and Bauman 1992).
2. We might think of statements such as "Right now I'm saying, 'Come here!'" as only involving one time–space. And, yet, to be so intelligible presupposes a logical individuation between saying "Right now . . . " and saying, "Come here!" even as it articulates these two events as part of one (con)text. Simultaneity involves the figuration of separate time–spaces whose end points are, for the purposes of the citation at hand, overlapping or the same.
3. This might take multiple shapes: the poetic structure of the text may provide the relevant metapragmatics to fill in the elided citation (Silverstein 1993) or interpretation may "discover" the citation, providing the relevant metapragmatics necessary for reconstructing it.
4. While I will be speaking in somewhat static terms, it is important to emphasize that this normalization of citationality into the semiotic organization of brand is a historically and culturally specific project made up of multiple social interactions whose achievements—to whatever end they have been achieved—are precisely the intelligibility of brand herein described.
5. Of course, (qualia–)token–type(–ontology) are relative relations. Brand names, trademarks, and the like are also types, and the brand ontology participates in higher-order commodity classifications that include, for example, (nonbrand) quality grades (e.g., for eggs) or locale classifications (e.g., for comestibles like feta cheese).
6. As Vann (2005, 2006) has shown, such productivist ideologies have not been supplanted everywhere. Indeed, this marketing turn to the consumer, while global in scope, is not universal, even in the United States, where commodity construal—and consumer politics (Klein 2000)—often turn on the production origins of commodities.
7. The advertisements feature personifications of the PC (an uptight, nerdy male in an ill-fitting suit and glasses—"I am a PC") and the Mac (laid back, cool, and attractive hipster in fashionably ill-fitting informal clothing—"I am a Mac") in conversations that reveal the characterological qualities of their respective token-types. The advertisements can be viewed at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v(C5z0Ia5jDt4, accessed July 1, 2011.
8. Cupidtino is a (citational) pun on Cupertino, the California town where Apple's headquarters are located. (Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for elucidating the interdiscursvity necessary to get this inside joke.)
9. While the difference between the "fake" and the "real" is often based on material form, it need not be, as with digital piracy, or even products made in the same factories with the same materials by the same makers but off the books. These are all counterfeits because the profit from their sales do not go back to the "right" people (Nakassis 2012). What this shows is that the brand token's ability to be part of its type is not based on any simple notion of iconicity (though this is how it often appears to us) but, rather, on a whole authorizing framework distributed across multiple social sites. Our folk intuitions and legal frameworks reanalyze these structures of authorization under an ideology of authenticity, thereby superposing a brand fetish on top of the commodity fetish (cf. Coombe 1998: 41–87).

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