



BRAND NEOLIBERALISM Introduction

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This cluster of articles looks at contemporary neoliberal brand formations by thinking through the unauthorized social lives of their surfeits: counterfeits, fakes, export-surplus goods, duplicates, and brand-inspired goods. Through a range of ethnographic cases—do-it-yourself fashion in urban Indonesia (Brent Luvaas), garment piracy and indigenous Maya brand production in highland Guatemala (Kedron Thomas), and contested nation-branding efforts in Macedonia (Andrew Graan)—the articles collectively suggest that to study the brand requires that we situate our analyses in moments when the brand is invoked but called into question, bracketed, refashioned, or negated. In such moments, new performative values, forms of politics, and social formations emerge through, but in constant tension with, the brand. In exploring these moments, the articles interrogate the neoliberal logics that are at play in this relationship between brand and surfeit, enabling both the spread of brand logics across the globe and the surfeits that trouble them. Ultimately, as I argue in my article, although legal and marketing logics exteriorize such brand surfeits in their efforts to constitute the brand as coherent, authentic, and authorized, the surfeit troubles such efforts not simply by pirating, faking, or co-opting particular brands but by residing at the very heart of the brand's own constitutive logics.