



**Branding
New York**
**How a City
in Crisis was
Sold to the
World** Miriam
Greenberg

Branding New York

This book reveals how, at the height of the 1970s fiscal crisis, a coalition of New York elites came together to brand a new image for their embattled city. By the mid-1960s, lurid media coverage of New York's troubles generated an image crisis that exacerbated economic decline. This inspired public and private sector leaders to abandon old-fashioned city boosterism and turn to the coordinated, professional, and global strategy of urban branding. From the radical chic of *New York* magazine to the populism of "Big Apple," and culminating with the blockbuster "I♥NY" campaign, they created a new business and tourist-friendly image for New York featuring high-end shopping, Broadway theater, and a glittering city skyline. This image challenged longstanding representations of New York as a gritty, diverse, working class city, as well as its emerging reputation as the capital of punk and hip hop. And it helped package a controversial approach to economic recovery involving harsh austerity measures, corporate subsidies, privatization, and a polarized new economy. Ultimately, the branding of New York turned the city into a powerful if contradictory symbol of urban transformation. It ignited grassroots "counter-branding" tactics, from subway graffiti to the union-led "Fear City" campaign. And it convinced tourists, corporations, and conservative politicians, that this once "ungovernable city" was now tamed and ready for consumption.

Miriam Greenberg is an Assistant Professor in Sociology at the University of California Santa Cruz and, in 2008, a visiting scholar at the Center for Urban Research and Policy at Columbia University.

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by
Miriam Greenberg

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**For
Suzanne and Peter Greenberg,
Nathaniel and Simona,
with all my love and gratitude.**

All this is so vast, so impressive that a man cannot collect himself,
but is lost in the marvel . . . The sacrifices which all this has cost
become apparent later.

Frederic Engels, "The Great Towns," 1844

I was asking for something specific and perfect for my city,
Whereupon lo! upsprang the aboriginal name.

Now I see what there is in a name, a word, liquid, sane,
unruly, musical, self-sufficient,

I see that the word of my city is that word from of old,
Because I see that word nested in nests of water-bays,
Superb . . .

Walt Whitman, "Mannahatta," 1888

Contents

List of illustrations	xi
Acknowledgments	xiii
Introduction: New York, Capital of the 1970s	1
Prologue: From the Standpoint of the Out-of-Towner	3
Chapter 1 Branding and the Neoliberal City	19
Part I From Image Crisis to Fiscal Crisis: 1964–1974	41
Chapter 2 It's a Small World After All: Image Crisis and the End of New York City Boosterism	43
Chapter 3 Style and Power: The Common Sense of <i>New York</i> Magazine	71
Chapter 4 Selling the City in Crisis: Corporate Exodus and the Big Apple Campaign	97

Part II	The Battle to Brand New York: 1975–1985	131
Chapter 5	Welcome to Fear City	133
Chapter 6	From Big Apple to the Summer of Sam	161
Chapter 7	Purging New York through I♥NY	193
Conclusion:	The Legacy of the 1970s	225
Chapter 8	New York City as a Symbol of Neoliberalism	227
Epilogue:	Re-branding the Wounded City	253
Appendix		261
Notes		267
Selected Bibliography		307
Index		317

Illustrations

Tables

5.1	“Asphalt jungle” films, 1967–1976	156
5.2	“New York exploitation” films, 1976–1993	157
6.1	Changes in the New York City travel and tourism sector, 1969–1976	177
6.2	Changes in tourism and marketing in New York City, 1967–1977	179
7.1	Changes in the New York City travel and tourism sector, 1976–1988	215
A.1	New York City employment by economic sector, 1967–1982	262
A.2	Tourism, media, and marketing (select services) in New York City, establishments and employment, 1967–1982	263

Figures

P.1	Alitalia advertisement, 1971	4
2.1	1964–1965 New York World’s Fair poster	45
2.2	1964–1965 World’s Fair marketing brochure	46
2.3	Miss Summer Festival, 1967–1970	57
2.4	Early subway writers	65
2.5	Graffiti responds to advertising	67
3.1	<i>New York</i> and “new journalism”	75
3.2	<i>New York</i> and the slumming aesthetic	81

3.3	<i>New York</i> and “service journalism”	88
3.4	<i>New York</i> and the “power game”	92
4.1	Aerosol epidemic	105
4.2	Change in employment and establishments in tourism, media, and marketing in New York City, 1963–1972	107
4.3	Changing revenue of tourism and marketing in New York City, 1963–1972	108
4.4	Association for a Better New York advertisement	117
4.5	ABNY’s image clean-up: Times Square surveillance	120
5.1	City Hall confronts the Fear City campaign	136
5.2	Charles Bronson, the “New York vigilante,” 1974	154
5.3	Robert De Niro standing up to the asphalt jungle, 1975	155
6.1	Operation Sail and the US Bicentennial	168
6.2	The Big Apple rises above Lower Manhattan, 1976	172
6.3	The symbolism of Windows on the World	173
6.4	Mayor Beame and the Big Apple campaign	182
6.5	The Lower Manhattan skyline during the blackout of 1977	185
7.1	I♥NY and Broadway	209
7.2	The launch of I♥NY on Valentine’s Day, 1978	211
7.3	I♥NY and economic development	214
7.4	Change in New York City employment by economic sector, 1967–1982	219
7.5	Change in New York City employment, 1967–1982	220
7.6	Tourism and marketing spending for New York City, 1967–1987	221
7.7	Tourism and marketing spending for New York State, 1975–1981	221
7.8	Relative public expenditures for New York City, 1969–1983	222
8.1	Reagan loves New York	229
8.2	The I♥NY campaign of the 1980s	235
8.3	Individuals and families living in poverty in the United States and New York City, 1959, 1969, and 1976–1983	241
8.4	Homeless people sleep beneath the shelter of the Visitors Information Center, 1991	244
E.1	Milton Glaser’s response to 9/11	254
A.1	Major categories of public expenditure in New York City, 1961–1983	264
A.2	Total spending by New York City, 1967–1983	265

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INTRODUCTION

New York City, Capital of the 1970s

