

Baker, Sarah, Griffith University, Australia; **McPhail, Ruth**, Griffith University, Australia; **Pavlidis, Adele**, Griffith University, Australia

Happy New Year!: The Business of Elite Celebration on Australia's Gold Coast

This paper draws on notions of masquerade and carnivale to explore a New Years Eve celebration organised for a specific cohort of the Gold Coast population, namely, elite residents and visitors. Drawing on an ethnography of a specific celebration that took place on 31 January 2009 at one of the Gold Coast's most exclusive establishments, the project looks at the way in which different cultural elements are brought together to produce an atmosphere of elite celebration. This will involve an examination of the event website which framed the celebration for prospective customers; the music which was chosen for the event; celebrity bookings and what they might say about elite structures; and the promotion of exclusive brands during the event. The objective of this paper is to provide a small scale analysis of the cultural aspects which come together to represent elite culture on the Gold Coast. The paper concludes by looking at media representation of the event to consider ways in which elite celebrations are used to frame Gold Coast life more broadly.