Wise, Patricia, Griffith University, Australia

Life, Style and the Capture of Code

In rapidly growing, 'young' cities, developers' narratives about the city, its style and the 'way of life' it offers, can become implicated in how citizens understand themselves. Focusing on Australia's Gold Coast, whose core business is to be a dream city for people from other cities, I draw on Deleuze and Guattari's ideas about the 'capture of code' to explore how residents engage with how the city sells itself. Since the advent of 'city branding', many cities have shown signs of believing their own spin – but citizens affected by such processes tend also to remain deeply aware of historical and community continuities. For Gold Coast residents, however, what they are currently telling others about themselves more readily becomes 'naturalised' as what they tell themselves about regional space, place and people. Codes and traces slide between tourism promotion, real estate marketing, regional cultural representations, the environment, material consumption and questions of identity.