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# Critical and Cultural Studies

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The contemporary café: a hospitable space for thinking

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ABSTRACT

This paper reports on a piece of exploratory research looking at why cafes offer a space that appears to be hospitable for thinking. The increasing popularity of cafes is well documented and there is an extensive and growing literature on the role of cafes in the renaissance of urban living. There is also a growing literature reporting on the types of activities people engage in when using cafes. From this literature one thing is clear - people visit cafes for much more than the food and beverage offer, indeed one of the conclusions of this research is that for some café users the coffee and cake is regarded as a ‘bonus’. Much of the literature that looks at cafes in their historical context discusses their role in civic life, in particular their importance in the development of philosophical, cultural and political ideas. In this paper we start to explore what it is about the contemporary café that provides a space, a spectrum of thinking that ranges from reading to one that inspires creativity.

KEYWORDS

Cafes, thinking, hospitable space, coffee, contemporary.

‘THE CONTEMPORARY CAFÉ: A HOSPITABLE SPACE FOR THINKING’

INTRODUCTION

Walking into work, I pass Costa and wave to a colleague who is obviously involved in marking students’ assignments. I continue to my favourite Café, order English breakfast tea and a toasted teacake and settle down to read a draft PhD thesis. An hour later it's time to move on. I walk along Abbeydale Road to another independent Café and another hour passes reading and reflecting on the PhD thesis. Then it's time to move on to yet another café for further coffee, reading and reflection and - yes - thinking. Against the backdrop buzz of conversation, I write my last comment and close the thesis. I reflect - three cafes, and why have I managed to do three times the work I would have done in the office?

Passing a coffee chain outlet I see a colleague is sipping coffee, the table strewn with students' scripts. Later in the day I wander around the corner from my office for my afternoon coffee, book in hand, looking forward to a drink and a read. I go upstairs and nod to a colleague (incidentally one of the co-authors) engrossed in rewriting an academic paper. I pick up my book, begin to read and then stop, and think, and the idea for this paper is born. The book’s title is “The Thinking Space. The Café as a Cultural Institution in Paris, Italy and Vienna” edited by Leona Rittner, W Scott Haine and Jeffrey H Jackson and the question that forms in my
mind is this: I work a lot in cafes, but it is when I need to think and reflect, so what is it about cafes and their hospitality spaces that I and others find so conducive to thinking in its widest sense? Cafes, to the authors at least, not only provide spaces to write, read and reflect academically but at times can also provide spaces where thinking can be enhanced, or can be more creative.

**CAFES AS THINKING SPACE**

Interest in cafes as social and hospitable spaces has had a renaissance in the academic literature in recent years, particularly amongst sociologists and geographers. There is a wealth of material on the emerging role of the café in contemporary culture, comprising the study of a dozen cafes of contrasting types, drawing on commercial and other categorisations "i.e. 'greasy spoon', 'internet' and also 'neighbourhood', 'city centre' and 'youth cultured" (Laurier & Philo, 2005: 5). They provide a fascinating insight into café culture and also, incidentally, into the hospitality to be found in what the US sociologist Oldenburg (1997) has described as the 'the third place' - somewhere between work and home, these 'great, good places' that, according to Oldenburg (1997), help to get us through the day. Cafes are an increasingly important part of urban life, recognised as a key part of the renaissance of city living (Zukin, 1998; Bell, 2007). Indeed, it could be argued that they are the archetypal example of hospitable consumption identity (Neal, 2006), cafes being places of 'occasioned conviviality with familiars, friends, family and other customers produced in having "breakfast out", going for coffee, lunch, low key dinners and various treats ( e.g. cake, hazelnut Frappuccino's)' (Laurier, 2005: 4 ). Academic authors from outside Hospitality Management see a key part of the attractiveness of cafes as the hospitableness of the café, for instance Bell (2007) and Laurier & Philo (2005), where an explicit aim of the research was to observe how staff provided or 'failed to provide hospitality to customers in turn and customers in their turn being accommodating of other customers; to the regular being an important form of belonging and taking responsibility for third places, which can then become a basis for getting to know other regulars' ( Laurier & Philo, 2005: 4 ).

At the same time there is another totally different dimension to the café experience; as Tjora (2013) so succinctly puts it: 'However the cafes are much more than meeting places, in fact they are places not to meet, not to talk, not to be social, at least explicitly: they might be places for solitude' (Tjora, 2013: 103). In "Design for Solitude" Holm (2013) explores a whole spectrum of solitude, postulating that 'the majority of customers come, sit and leave on their own' (Holm, 2013: 174). Holm finds a whole range of experiences of, and needs for, solitude; he identifies one group as seeking silent company (Holm, 2013), as being alone but not alone in a space that is hospitable and is undoubtedly part of the hospitable experience. It could be
argued that the author and his colleagues were searching for solitude to find a time and space for thinking.

At this point let us consider the history of cafes and note the ongoing debate as to whether cafes still provide their past role in 'civic life'. Indeed, the ESRC funded a major research project in 2005 by the University of Glasgow (Laurier & Philo, 2005, “The Cappuccino Community: cafes and civic life in the contemporary city”). Of particular note is Laurier's observation that 'It is not just university researchers that work in cafés of course, from their very outset cafés have been places of work for many others' (Laurier 2004: 2.) Other authors have also noted that the cafe is a place where people go not merely to drink but also to think (Scott Haine, 2013).

…The Odeon, one of the great world cafes, whose speciality is not listed elsewhere - indeed it has never been pinned down. Lenin, Trotsky, James Joyce, Dr Einstein all sat at these tables. Whatever it was they all had in common: whatever they'd come to this vantage to score … perhaps it had to do with the people somehow, with pedestrian mortality, restless crisscrossing of needs or despirations in one fatal piece of street … dialectics, matrices, archetypes all need to connect once in a while, back to some of the proletarian blood, to body odors & senseless screaming across a table to cheating and last hopes, or else all is dusty practicality, the West's ancient curse … (Thomas Pynchon, Gravity's Rainbow)

Underlying much of the work on cafes in civic life are Habermas's (1989) spaces of calm, rational debate. Emery (2012) suggests that, along with other social institutions such as clubs, 'the coffee house is said to be a space that 'European bourgeoisie had begun to carve out for itself in the eighteenth century - a sphere in which private individuals gathered for free, equal exchange of rational "enlightened" discourse' (Emery, 2012: 170). Indeed, the café as the space of the enlightened middle classes is a common theme amongst the authors in "The Thinking Space."

It is arguable that the concept of the literary café is the image of a gathering place for artists. Hattstein (2012) notes that Auguste Renoir, Edgar Degas, Toulouse-Lautrec, Vincent Van Gogh and Pablo Picasso have produced masterpieces inspired by coffee houses. However, it is the men of letters - ‘authors, critics and journalists - who met regularly in coffee houses and read newspapers, indulged in people-watching, discussed current affairs, drank coffee, smoked and enjoyed heated debates. Satires, plays and novels, even poems, have been conceived and created in coffee houses' (Hattstein, 2012: 13). The most renowned café
thinker is Jean-Paul Sartre, who wrote the majority of "Being and Nothingness" in Café de Flore, using the scenes of the cafe to illustrate his ABSTRACT ideas.

Laments about the end of the "real" coffee house and its role in civic society abound, most notable being Habermas (1989) who saw little residue of the eighteenth century coffee house in contemporary cafes. Oldenburg (2013) is equally downbeat about the future role of the café in civic society. Such laments about the end of "real" coffee houses are as old as the coffee house itself. In terms of physical numbers, types of and users of contemporary cafes we are in a period of boom, not decline. Undoubtedly, the role of the café has changed and is changing, reflecting a changing society.

In this paper we consider what attributes cafes possess that make them places where people want to go to think. We also begin to explore the concept of "thinking" - the spaces provided by cafes are used by people for a range of "activities" which can be perceived as thinking.

In contrast to "The Thinking Space" (Rittner et al, 2013), which looks to the past, "Cafe Society", by Aksel Tjora and Graham Scambler (2013), reflects the contemporary use of the café. This book reveals cafes as spaces used by the full range of society in a multitude of ways and purposes. A perusal of these diverse writings leads one to the conclusion that the modern café is still very much a place for thinking, although maybe in a different form from the bourgeoisie cafes of Vienna. Modern cafes have become multiple café communities - the thinking is there, but it is driven largely by a desire/need for "space" (time and physical) to do things that are part of thinking, reading, reflecting, planning, gazing into space watching the world go by, working … Author after author in "Cafe Society" notes these behaviours in passing. A key part of the new, emerging thinking space is the availability of Wi-Fi (Hampton & Gupta, 2013).

Key elements in the literature are social space, solitude and discipline. A mother describes how she reads the newspaper, works on the family budget and plans out her day when visiting a café alone (Henriksen et al, 2013). When asked why she doesn't do these things at home she replies 'I do these things at home as well. But I have become this kind of person that like to see other people. To see others have a soothing effect on me’ (Henriksen et al, 2013: 95). Another describes how the social qualities of cafes enables him to be more disciplined - if he's alone at home he finds it very difficult to concentrate on reading, but the 'public solitude of the café' helps him focus - 'I try to read a book a week, and this is my motivation for coming to the café. I can't do it if I'm not sitting in a café in solitude, I can't find the time'. (Henriksen et al, 2013: 95).

Thinking is a spectrum. There is the obvious example of J. K. Rowling, who used the Elephant House for inspiration.

Why do people go to cafes to think?
METHODOLOGY

As already noted, this research is still at an exploratory stage and it was hoped that, by adopting three independent approaches, insights into the nature and meaning of thinking might be gained as a basis for a more in-depth of research. The first approach involved building on previous research by the authors using the modern novel, specifically the books of McCall Smith, to see how the author perceives cafes being used as thinking spaces. The second element of the research was to interview two poets who use cafes as places to write poetry. Lastly, two of the authors decided to use themselves as the sample and self-reflect on how and why they use cafes as thinking spaces. It should be pointed out that these two authors have been avid users of cafes as places to think for a number of years, in this case the thinking is in a work context and both the authors in question are lecturers who are research active. This latter point is of importance to note as the vast majority of our thinking in cafes is related to either writing, or reading for our own research or that of our PhD students, although at times marking is also undertaken in a cafe environment. In both cases a series of prompts were identified from the literature and used independently, with the aim of identifying themes and understanding & defining these themes in order to move towards an understanding of the underlying concepts.

EMERGING THEMES

From the review of the modern novel one clear theme emerges and is perhaps unsurprising, and that is of the café space as somewhere to read but where the reading is also an escape, a rest, a reward; reading provides a justification for solitude; implicit in this there seems to be a suggestion that reading in a café is a way of cleansing the mind. For example:

The delicatessen had three or four tables at which people would sit, purchase a cup of coffee, and read out-of-date continental newspapers. There was always a copy of Le Monde and Corriere della Sera and sometimes Spiegel (McCall Smith, 2006: .42).

She wanted to sit quietly with a cup of coffee and one of Cat's continental newspapers - Le Monde perhaps. It never seemed to matter quite so much if foreign newspapers were out of date; yesterday's Scotsman rapidly began to seem stale, but a newspaper in a foreign language remained engaging. Le Monde had been taken by somebody, but there was a three-day old copy of Corriere della Sera which she appropriated and took with her to a table. 'Do you mind, Cat?' she said. 'Sometimes one wants to think or' - she flourished the paper in the air - 'or read this' (McCall Smith, 2006: 168).
Why do people like to go to a café and read? Traditionally it was an important part of the café environment. Samuel Johnson (1755) defined a coffee house as 'A house of entertainment where coffee is sold, and the guests are supplied with newspapers'. Indeed, bookshops now incorporate a café within their walls. Suffice it to say, there is a relationship between space to read and a café.

Our two poets identified the importance of the café "buzz" in stimulating creative thinking as one of the reasons they used café spaces. Of interest to academics may be that they preferred university cafes because of the 'academic vibes' (Poets A & B), the "buzz", which they both found inspiring, invigorating and stimulating.

'University cafes - academics; you feel an energy around you, an "electricity" of peoples' brains working and intellectual discussion' (Poet A).

Both poets identified "buzz" as essential, but it had to be of the 'right kind' (Poet A). You don't want people laughing or shouting out - there should be an ambience. Also the poets didn't want to feel hassled to buy another drink or to feel that they were in the way of other 'paying guests' (Poet A). There were also hints about being there, but not being noticed - to be left in peace, but at the same time appearing to desire human contact.

The other common theme was the need to be in a social space with people, 'the smiles; beautiful people in beautiful spaces' (Poet A). When asked to expand, Poet A described the inevitability of a voyeuristic people-watching element to sitting in a café.

Lastly, but of particular importance to the poets, was the fact of being a part of the historical tradition of cafes and writing, of 'walking in the footsteps of former writers' (Poets A & B).

Turning to our two academics, the first thing to note is that both of us independently came to very similar conclusions and reflections. We both prefer independent cafes, returning to the same ones - they are somehow more welcoming and the staff are friendly. As with the poets, thinking in cafes is always a solo activity. Reading we conceive as thinking, and thinking is actually "thinking through" ideas, rather than just random thinking. Both of us identified the 'feeling of a place' (Academics A & B) that is right for thinking - almost a haven, somewhere safe to think, 'aside from every day but an integral part of it' (Academic A). The concept of neutral space led both academics to reconsider this concept, coming to a different perspective of a place 'where a certain activity takes place ……thinking!' (Academic A) The "buzz", the feeling of being alone but social, the café providing the atmosphere to ponder, reflect, debate with yourself - 'cocooned in your own head but in a social environment so you don't feel alone' (Academic A).
Other themes that come out strongly are the perception of being more productive and, last but not least, the reward of coffee and cake - both the poets and academics saw the coffee and cake as a bonus!

**CONCLUSION**

Although exploratory in nature, this research clearly identifies several themes on how people use cafes as thinking space. At the same time it raises questions about the nature of hospitality and hospitable spaces. Firstly - and this is also reflected in the literature - is that the food and beverage offer is only part of the attraction; indeed, for those people using cafes as thinking spaces they are perceived as a bonus. Of particular note is that cafes are seen as hospitable spaces for thinking - in this paper we have included reading, writing and reflection as thinking. A key part of the attraction is the environment, the "buzz", but also the concept of solitude, of being alone but not alone in a social space appears to be an important environmental consideration.

Cafes as spaces to think provide a different perspective of what we mean by hospitable - thinking is only one of the activities undertaken by a range of people in café spaces. The traditional food and beverage is part of that hospitality, but there appear to be multidimensional aspects of these hospitable spaces. Perhaps the food and beverage is the perceived purpose, or the "glue", that holds the hospitable space together, but these spaces provide a hospitable welcome to a range of people to undertake a range of activities. In this exploratory research we have started to explore the nature of one specific activity - ‘thinking’. There are implications for the design of café businesses. Cafes are much more than a cup of coffee. Indeed, a recent hospitality innovation is the AntiCafe, [http://anti-cafe.cz/en/](http://anti-cafe.cz/en/) whose strap line is ‘because you feel at ease’. They say of their concept, ‘we create wonderful and convenient places to make you feel at home. You pay for time and we provide you with unlimited coffee, tea, snacks and fast Wi-Fi’. Interestingly, the very first London cafes charged 1 penny for entry and the coffee was on tap!

**Footnote:** With many thanks to the reviewers, both for their constructive comments & for providing useful ideas

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Performative hospitality: an opera in six acts as a transformative methodological approach for researching hospitality environments

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Keywords: methodology, food and beverage service, theatricality, performance, servicescapes, hospitality experience, gender.

Prologue - Setting the Context, Justifying the Plot and Designing the Set

This paper presents the rationale and justification for the presentation, structure and outline of a PhD thesis at Cardiff Metropolitan University. It aims to justify the application of theatrical language, and more specifically the language of Opera, to present an alternative, transformative methodological approach for researching the management, construction and delivery of hospitality experiences in hospitality environments. It will be argued that the analogy of theatrical and performance language to the hospitality experience is becoming commonplace, yet this theatrical language has not yet been applied as a methodological approach for researching these hospitality environments.

It has been suggested that the "schizophrenia of the hospitality industry" (Hemmington, 2007: 747) and the associated fragmented problems with defining the hospitality industry (Jones, 2004) has led to multiple ways of researching this 'schizophrenic' industry. The authors will argue that it is not possible to have one specific set method or methodological approach to researching the hospitality experience as there is not one specific set definition of what constitutes the hospitality experience. It is suggested by the authors that this schizophrenic and fragmented nature of the industry allows for the transformation and reconstruction of fluid and alternative methodological approaches to researching in hospitality environments.

The overall aim of this research is to explore the motivations and perceptions of staff working in food and beverage servicescapes in order to contribute to theoretical debates on: gender, sexuality and physicality; natural hospitableness (including cultural and social influences); servicescapes (the physical nature of the service environments) and theatricality (the influence and application of theatrical analogies to the service encounter).

The interest for this research began with a previous undergraduate study which focused on the role and importance of food and beverage staff in the construction and delivery of meal experiences. A deep personal passion combined with a determination and drive to make a
difference to the lives of food and beverage staff by raising both the status and profile of food and beverage staff underpins the raison d’être of this research.

In its conceptual stage, the focus of this research was concerned with exploring both staff and consumers’ perceptions of the important components of the meal experience. As time progressed, however, it soon became apparent that the researcher’s passion and interest lay in what motivates food and beverage staff to enter and then stay in the food and beverage industry.

Food and beverage staff are both providers and consumers of hospitable experiences but their unique perception of, and their potential contribution to, the construction and delivery of hospitable experiences has thus far not been explored. It was this driving force and personal passion that helped narrow the scope of this research to focus solely on the motivations and perceptions of food and beverage staff. It was felt by focusing on staff alone, and not concentrating on consumers, that this research could make a real difference both to the lives of food and beverage staff and to the hospitality industry and hospitality management education.

As the research continued (which will be reflected on later in the paper) it soon became apparent that the researcher was interested in the tri-partite connection between the key stakeholders in the food and beverage sector - namely staff, customers and managers. The research then naturally emerged into three key phases of data collection with each of those stakeholders to establish and identify any key issues, common language and themes which are pertinent for each. What began therefore as research focusing on the role and contribution that staff exclusively play in the hospitality experience, soon became research comprised of three phases (or three ‘acts’) with the three identified key ‘players’ in the sector.

There is a growing body of writers (for example, Wood, 1994; Ellis and Boucher, 2000) who are establishing a naturalistic approach to research which acknowledges the researcher as a key element in the research process and further identifies the self-disclosure of that researcher as a critical element in the research process itself. This form of progressive, naturalistic and emergent research acknowledges the writers voice, allows use of the first person tense, adopts an autobiographical style and allows the inclusion of personal experience. These developments in research have contributed to the emergence of autoethnography.

Wood (1994) argues that autoethnography enables both the creation and extension of relationships which form the mechanism of hospitality to be examined. Ellis and Boucher (2000) describe the process of autoethnography as:
Starting with my personal life. I pay attention to my physical feelings, thoughts and emotions. I use what I call systematic sociological introduction...then I write my experience as a story.

(Ellis and Boucher, 2000: 737)

My personal experience and my life story as a primary school teacher, theology student, hospitality student, food and beverage manager, amateur actor and gay man is therefore the starting point of my autoethnographic research. In this research journey, I attempt to intertwine my life story with that of the emerging research in order to make a difference to the lives of those working at the operative level within the food and beverage sector.

My experience of gaining a teaching qualification enabled the development of good interpersonal and communication skills, together with an increased self-awareness and self-confidence. A recurring theme throughout my previous training, both for my Bachelor of Education Degree and my Bachelor of Theology Degree, has been the importance and consolidation of observational skills and techniques. In my training to be a primary school teacher, I was trained to observe children and these fundamental and intuitive observational skills bore fruit later in my Theological training, which then bore much inevitable fruit in my hospitality training and career. I am now comfortable observing people because previous life experience has made this a natural part of my training and personality trait.

In my current role as an emerging academic (who is constantly integrating his research into his teaching and learning strategies), the importance of the service encounter between customer and server is one that I believe to be fundamental. It is also paramount both for the relative success and enjoyment of any meal experience and also for the reputation of any hospitality outlet. The combination of my life experience and my professional experience comes together most forcibly when I dine out in public, as I often do. As both a consumer of hospitality products and a person employed to manage and deliver those hospitality products, I am all too aware of the vital connection that exists between the service one receives and the meal experience which one enjoys.

As Linstead has observed:

*Managers are constantly embedded in fruitful research settings in their own everyday working lives, yet they only very infrequently take advantage of this situation. They find it difficult to interrogate that which surrounds them, similarly, they all have*
ethnographic skills to some extent and are all capable…with the right support…of developing them.

(Linstead, 1996: 25)

It is my intuition that this piece of “emergent research” (Belk et al., 1989) will confirm this belief, as I seek to explore the importance of the service encounter for the whole meal experience. It is intended that this piece of research will begin to fill the gap of academic literature which exists that seeks to relate managerial training and managerial observation with ethnographic research.

I highlighted above my status as a gay man and the role that this plays in my emerging journey and in discovering my identity and my voice. Autoethnography recognises the integral role of researchers in the social world that we study, and acknowledges that our own socio-historical context has an influence on our world as a researcher. Ellis and Boucher (2000) argue that rather than trying to eliminate the effects of the presence of the researcher in the research, the researcher actually endeavours to understand and use her or his experience to gain a deeper understanding.

Therefore I am employing Queer Theory as a means through which to make the connections between my story and the research I’m conducting. The justification for Queer Theory in this research methodology relates back to the original aim in which the author was seeking to explore the impact of gender difference on the delivery and construction of hospitality experiences. The perceived impact of this gender difference is referred to later in this paper in Act One where the author conducted interviews in six food and beverage servicescapes with a waiter and a waitress in order to explore the impact of the gender of the service staff on the food and beverage experience. The importance of this gender difference at the outset of this research journey was a presumption on the part of the author which dictated the framework of the original methodological approach. The methodology was then transformed as the research was conducted and evolved. Queer Theory was applied to this methodology due to both the identity of the researcher and its relation to the aim of exploring the impact of gender difference on the hospitality experience.

‘Queer’ is a relatively recent concept which derives from a 1960s reversal and reappropriation of an established idea. Where homosexuality had previously been described as either a
perversion or as ‘queer’, the term was provocatively appropriated to describe a liberated refusal of normative heterosexuality. Introducing the word ‘queer’ into the world of academic research and discourse suggests both a rupture with, as well as continuity with, the older categories of ‘gay’ and ‘lesbian’.

Queer is by definition whatever is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant. There is nothing in particular to which it necessarily refers. It is an identity without an essence. ‘Queer’ then, demarcates not a positivity vis-à-vis the normative...Queer describes a horizon of possibility whose precise extent and heterogeneous scope cannot in principles be delimited in advance.

(Halperin, 1995: 62)

Research informed by queer theory can utilise many established social science research methods, although most research is “multi-methodological”. Because queer theory is primarily interested in how particular orderings of sexuality and gendering have been given primacy over others, the questions that guide queer research methodology focus on both the constructions of and the experiences of personal and collective identities. The outcomes of research informed by queer theory can be presented in what are now considered to be traditional qualitative research forms. In keeping with the queer theoretical imperative to interpret status quo discourses and practices, the use of literary, narrative, journalism and other creative non-fiction that are able to more fully represent the complexity of human identities is positively encouraged.

As a critic of ethnographical approaches to methodology, Lambevski (1999) attempted to write a queer experiential ethnography. Indeed it can be argued that few researchers have ever been so honest regarding the tensions that infuse their lives and the wider chains of connection that inevitably shape their work.

Queer methodology often means little more than literary theory rather belatedly coming to social science tools such as ethnography and reflexivity...queer theory does not seem to me to constitute any fundamental advance over recent ideas in qualitative inquiry – it borrows, refashions and retells.
Halberstam (1998) argues that the most commonly preferred strategy of queer theory is therefore an employment of and engagement with textual analysis – films, literature, television, opera and musicals. It is therefore from this premise that I intend to employ a form of textual analysis and use the framework and structure of an opera as a means to present an alternative hospitality methodological approach.

I have identified my voice in this research journey and my identity(ies) as an academic, a gay man, a hospitality professional and an amateur actor. I therefore combine these multiple identities, together with some of the key themes of performance, gender and theatricality that are evident in the aim of my thesis in order to offer and present a transformative and fluid methodological approach for researching the management of hospitality experiences in hospitality environments.

**The Overture - Setting the Scene**

The word Overture simply means "opening" (Oxford dictionary, online, 2016), and is the term originally applied to the instrumental introduction to an opera. In the overture, the composer seeks to identify the musical themes and tones which will recur throughout the whole of the opera. Each of the musical themes is introduced in the overture and then later explored in more musical depth throughout the rest of the opera itself. The overture can be described as a musical foretaste of what is to come.

It has been stated that the purpose of a literature review is to help the reader understand how the study fits into a broader context (Oliver, 2012). By identifying and contextualising the relevant themes and topics to be explored, the literature review can "help us identify something of the sequence and growth of knowledge" (Oliver, 2012: 6). In the literature review, the author seeks to identify the academic themes and tones which will recur throughout the whole of the research. Each of these themes is introduced in the literature review and then later explored in more academic depth throughout the rest of the research journey. The literature review is, as it were, a literary foretaste of what is to come. The analogy between an overture and
literature review is therefore apparent as I seek to employ and make links between theatrical language, hospitality performance and methodological approaches for researching the management of hospitality experiences in hospitality environments.

The themes of Act One originated from the authors' original aim and questions were asked around the existing body of academic literature that was delineated at the start of the research process. The literature explored in the overture was concerned with themes of gender, natural hospitableness, the food and beverage servicescape and theatrical metaphors for the food and beverage experience.

At the start of this paper, the authors state that it is not possible to have one specific set method or methodological approach to researching the hospitality experience as there is not one specific set definition of what constitutes 'hospitality'. Hemmington (2007) describes the "schizophrenia of the hospitality industry" (Hemmington, 2007:747), whereas Jones (2004) argues that the hospitality industry is so fragmented that it is this fragmentation which is limiting the growth and development of the industry. Questions of definition arise as to the very nature and essence of the hospitality industry, whether it is a service industry, or entertainment, or art, or theatre? (Gillespie, 1994: Jayawardena, 2000: Slattery, 2002; Hemmington, 2004). It has been suggested that defining hospitality as "behaviour and experience" (Hemmington, 2007:746) offers a new perspective for the management of hospitality businesses which focuses on the importance of theatre and performance in the host-guest relationship.

Furthermore, it is argued that many studies into service encounters take a functional view. Some studies review the physical environment or servicescape (Wall and Berry, 2007), whilst others focus on issues such as organisational citizenship behaviour, the nature of hospitableness (Telfer, 2000; Lugosi, 2007), emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983; Erickson, 2010), aesthetic labour (Nickson, 2007) and worker identity (Nickson et al., 2005). Some studies focus on the importance of the host-guest relationship as the key distinguishing characteristic of hospitality (Lashley and Morrison, 2000). Other academic research investigates the creation, construction, delivery and management of experiences as part of the 'experience economy' (Pine and Gilmore, 1999). Further academic research identifies the theatricality and performance of food and beverage workers and servicescapes (Jayawardena, 2000; Darke and Gurney, 2000; Winsted, 2000; Kivela et al., 2000; Morgan et al., 2008; Gibbs and Ritchie, 2010).

It is this focus on the importance and application of theatrical and performance language for both the performers and receivers of this performance in a hospitality experience that underpins the rationale for presenting an alternative, transformative and fluid methodological
approach for researching the management, construction and delivery of these theatrical hospitality experiences in a range of hospitality environments and servicescapes.

**Act One - The Staff**

The first phase of the PhD research comprised of twelve semi structured interviews in order to investigate the thoughts and opinions of a variety of food and beverage staff in differing contexts and servicescapes with reference to the motivations and perceptions of food and beverage staff.

These twelve interviews were conducted in six food and beverage servicescapes with a male and female operative member of food and beverage staff interviewed in each of these six servicescapes. The decision to choose a male and female operative staff member in each servicescape was made deliberately to see if there was a gendered nature to the responses, and if the gender of the person being interviewed had any part to play in how they perceived or altered the way in which they performed their role. The following table illustrates how these food and beverage staff have been coded for the purposes of presenting the results of this preliminary research:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coding</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Servicescape/Job Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1M</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Independent Tea Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1F</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Independent Tea Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2M</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Fine Dining Restaurant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2F</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Fine Dining Restaurant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3M</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Boutique Hotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3F</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Boutique Hotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4M</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Sommelier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4F</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Sommelier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5M</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Chain Hotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5F</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Chain Hotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6M</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Golf and Country Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6F</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Golf and Country Club</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The main results of the first study phase of the PhD research can be delineated under the following eight key headings

1. The attraction of the hospitality industry
2. The perception of the hospitality industry
3. Hospitality workers as hospitality consumers
4. Training and natural hospitableness
5. Personality types and skills
6. Scripting the experience
7. Performing the experience
8. Performing and flirting

Act Two - The Customers

The second phase of the PhD research comprised of a pilot focus group followed by five age based focus groups with customers. The age brackets which are used by Mintel for consumer research purposes were adopted for this research phase. This phase of research is concerned with finding out the thoughts of the consumers of food and beverage experiences in order to compare and contrast the thoughts of staff and consumers.

The pilot focus group was held in the authors' home for aid of convenience as the author knew each member of the pilot focus group personally. Subsequently, each of the other focus groups were held at the lead contact's house. Meiselman (2011) argues that primary research should, as far as possible, be taken out of the laboratory setting and into natural situations. This also made it easier for the lead contact of each of the focus groups to liaise and plan with the members of the focus groups. The following table illustrates how the consumer focus groups have been coded for the purposes of presenting the results of this preliminary research:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Focus Group Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PFG</td>
<td>Pilot focus group - mixed ages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FG1</td>
<td>18 - 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FG2</td>
<td>26 - 34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FG3</td>
<td>35 - 44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FG4</td>
<td>45 - 54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FG5</td>
<td>55 +</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The main results of the second study phase of the PhD research can be delineated under the following seven key headings:

1. Hospitality workers as hospitality consumers
2. The perception of the hospitality industry
3. Training and natural hospitableness
4. Personality types and skills
5. Scripting the experience
6. Performing the experience
7. Performing and flirting

**Act Three - The Managers**

The third and final phase of the PhD research will comprise of six semi structured interviews in order to investigate the thoughts and opinions of food and beverage managers in differing contexts and servicescapes.

It is intended that these six interviews will be conducted in the same six food and beverage servicescapes that were identified and used in the first phase of research. Thus far, the author has made contact with five out of the six servicescapes from the first phase of research. The following table illustrates how these food and beverage managers will be coded for the purposes of presenting the results of this preliminary research:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coding</th>
<th>Manager</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1M</td>
<td>Independent Tea Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2M</td>
<td>Fine Dining Restaurant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3M</td>
<td>Boutique Hotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4M</td>
<td>Wine Hotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5M</td>
<td>Chain Hotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6M</td>
<td>Golf and Country Club</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The themes/questions/issues to be explored during this phase have arisen from the thematic analysis of the previous two phases with operative staff and consumers. Six
areas/themes/topics have been delineated for inclusion in this third and final study phase of the PhD research, namely:

1. Recruitment and selection
2. Motivation
3. Training and skills
4. Natural hospitableness
5. Emotional performance
6. Commercial hospitableness

**Epilogue and Curtain Call**

It is envisaged that the purpose of this chapter or 'act' will be to identify the connecting themes/issues/language identified as common ground by the three separate stages of research. This act will revisit the aim and objectives identified in the Prologue as it attempts to bring the strands and themes of the whole Opera together in a unified Curtain Call.

The connection between these acts and how the acts fit together has been visually represented in the following 'model' which I offer here as a visual representation of presenting a transformative methodological approach for researching the management, construction and delivery of hospitality experiences in hospitality environments:
Performative Hospitality:
An exploration of the way in which food and beverage service staff perform and embody hospitableness. A PhD as an Opera in Six Acts.

Prologue:
Setting the Context

Act One:
The Staff

Overture:
Setting the Scene

Designing the Set:
• Common ground
• Shared language
• Identifiable issues

Act Two:
The Consumers

Act Three:
The Managers

Epilogue:
Curtain Call
References


The origins of hospitality are current and contemporary: hosting pilgrims

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines hospitality in a postmodern pilgrimage setting: specifically, World Youth Day, held in Rio de Janeiro/Brazil in 2013. World Youth Day is a contemporary pilgrimage, and highlights the interconnections between the domestic and public spheres of hospitality. These two dimensions of hospitality are under-researched, with most research to date focusing on commercial hospitality. Mixed methods were used to collect the data. Quantitative data was collected from 974 pilgrims during the event. In addition, qualitative data was gathered over the 18 months of preparation leading up to and during the event. This included participant-observation of the hosting of the religious event and interviews conducted with pilgrims, volunteers and host families. The findings reveal that the hospitality dimension of pilgrimage can influence directly the pilgrim’s experience and hospitality within a non-commercial setting is a vital part of negotiated meanings of contemporary pilgrimage.

Keywords: domestic hospitality, public hospitality, hosting the stranger, pilgrimage.

INTRODUCTION

Most hospitality research reduces hospitality to its commercial function (Lashley, 2015; O’Gorman, 2010). There is little research on the role of hospitality in the pilgrimage experience, or its place in the modern pilgrim’s quest for meaning when they are in someone else’s - the host’s - centre (Clifford, 1989). In the hospitality field, initiatives such as Woman welcoming Woman, Servas, CouchSurfing and Kosher Couch bring up the forgotten domestic dimension of hospitality providing a balance to the assumption that hospitality is just a commercial transaction (Morrison, 2002; Wood, 1994). This paper examines domestic and public hospitality conceptualizations in the context of World Youth Day (WYD). The paper commences with an overview of WYD, followed by the literature review on pilgrimage and hospitality, the third section that delineates the methods employed, and a section that presents the findings in three themes: that of preconceptions of hosts-guests relationships, reasons for hosting and an overview of hosting in both the domestic and public spheres. This is followed by the discussion and conclusion.

BACKGROUND

World Youth Day (WYD), first held in 1986, is a gathering of young Catholics that is promoted and organised by the Vatican every two to three years, taking place in a different host country.
each time. It is the largest religious event addressed to youth attracting thousands – and at times millions of participants (Singleton, 2011). At the 2013 WYD event in Rio de Janeiro, 612,000 pilgrims officially registered for the six day event (415,000 from Brazil and 212,000 from 175 countries) and many more participants who did not register. The event culminated in a final mass – a religious ceremony. Presided over by the Pope, it was attended by 3.7 million participants (Brazilian Ministry of Tourism, 2013).

WYD is comprised of a range of sacred and secular activities. WYD is focused on youth, the aim of the Catholic Church being to renew its image and attract young people to participate in this contemporary religious pilgrimage (Pyfdenhauer, 2010). The target audience generally has limited financial resources to travel abroad, thus the Catholic Church, in what now has become a tradition, offers attendees accommodation with host families or camping facilities in schools on the days before, during and after the event. In 2013, pilgrims were charged US$35 for six days accommodation. Most were not charged for attending extra days before or after the event. Some groups of pilgrims came a week before WYD and left two weeks after it, with no extra charges for their accommodation. This fee in most instances did not go to the host family and contributed to the costs for organizing the event (IJMJ, 2013).

The Catholic Church launched a campaign to convince people of the host country to receive the pilgrims for free in their homes and schools. To access accommodation, pilgrims had to subscribe on the World Youth Day website, presenting a letter from their home parishes asking for accommodation through schools or families. Attendees chose from the different types of packages that offered a variety of specific activities, types of accommodation, food and public transportation. Most foreign pilgrims opted for the all-inclusive package which cost US$190 (IJMJ, 2013). The pilgrims were informed a week before the event, or in many cases on arrival at Rio, where their accommodation was located; they received a bag with scheduled activities, a food debit card which allowed them to purchase meals in different food establishments and another card to access the available forms of transport: buses, trains and ferries.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

The aim of the paper is to explore domestic and public hospitality and if and how it gives meaning to pilgrimage. This paper is framed and inserted in a Christian and Western context of pilgrimage, understood as a *performance of religion in action* (Turner, 1969; Delfem, 1991) and specifically applied to World Youth Day (WYD), whereby the Catholic Church as an institution that encourages specific pilgrimages (Liutikas, 2015; Ambrosio and Pereira, 2007;
Carneiro, 2013) organises WYD (Mason, Weber, Singleton; 2008; Rymarz, 2008, 2007a, 2007b) and encourages its members to host the stranger (O’Gorman, 2010).

The common definition of pilgrim is the one who leaves their own place on a difficult journey to the unknown, the stranger who comes along from far away looking to meet the sacred (Stausberg, 2011; Carneiro, 2003; Turner, 1973). This journey can be an obligatory act prescribed by religious rules or a voluntary journey undertaken by those who search for the transcendent, to visit a holy place or where a spiritual leader has lived, to experience adventure or to contemplate the landscape (Liutikas, 2015; Margry, 2009; 2008; Fernandes, Pimenta & Gonçalves, 2012). To many, the motivations of a pilgrimage encompasses the search for a reward of an transcendental experience away from ordinary life gained through the physical and spiritual attitude of pilgrimage and the search for identity (Liutikas, 2015; 2012; Margry, 2009; 2008) or even “with the aim of achieving a step toward holiness and wholeness in oneself, both of body and soul” (Turner, 1973:32).

Research acknowledges a link between the acts of pilgrimage and hosting. However, the relationship between these phenomena has not been developed. What has not been researched in depth is how domestic hospitality is associated with the pilgrim-tourist experience. In examining the concept of hospitality, we acknowledge the figure of the stranger - the foreigner or exile at the centre. O’Gorman (2010: 13) claims that the word “hospitality” in classical Greek means “love of strangers”. Derrida in his work “of hospitality” (2000) examines this question: who is the stranger/foreigner who shows up - the one who comes from abroad, from a foreign land or the “one who puts the first question or the one to whom you address the first question” (2000: 3)? Derrida was concerned about the political and juridical situation of the foreigner who seeks hospitality in a strange land and in a strange language, in a strange nation and this encompassed both domestic and public hospitality.

The emergence of the pilgrimage phenomenon and hospitality in a Christian context are interrelated not just in action, but also philosophically and culturally. The pilgrim demands hospitality. Although receiving the other, the stranger can be quite complicated (Melville, 2007), since the first and obvious place for doing this is in one’s home. The stranger/foreigner can be a liberator or a parricide, an enemy or a friend (Derrida, 2000; Grassi, 2011a, 2011b; Camargo, 2011; O’Gorman, 2010). In its origins in Indo-European times, the word “guest” meant “strange” - one who could be an enemy (O’Gorman, 2010). In Greek, the words “host”, “guest” and “stranger” have the same origin: “xenos” (O’Gorman, 2010; Grassi, 2011). Grassi elaborates on the origins of the word “xenos” as enemy or host in the Ancient World (2011b). In many religious traditions, caring about and for the provision of food, drink, shelter and all the needs of guests were the ideal of a good host (Lashley, 2015). We recognise here the
unconditional hospitality concept presented by Derrida (2000) which, it has been argued, is difficult (if not impossible) to achieve (Boff, 2005). The act of welcoming someone in your own place is, in this context, the basis of domestic hospitality and can be defined as “the social relationships that happen between host and guest in the domestic environment” (Camargo, 2004).

Pilgrims by definition do not require luxury accommodation or food; their journey needs to be a tough one that involves sacrifice, thus facilitating the achievement of their spiritual goals (Fernandes, Pimenta & Gonçalves, 2012; Egan, 2010; Carneiro, 2003). Traditionally, the practice of pilgrims asking for and expecting to receive food and shelter was common, with acceptance of aid seen as a sign of humility and resignation (O´Gorman, 2010; Turner, 1973). The pilgrim’s interests are not focused on the quality of the accommodation that is provided free of charge in most instances. O´Gorman (2010) explains that in a Judeo-Christian context, hospitality is the process of transforming the stranger into a guest and then into a friend. In the majority of cases, the reciprocity of hospitality is not expected, as it is an action addressed to strangers. Heal (1984: 2), cited by Lashley (2015) highlights that “Whilst hospitality was often expressed in a series of private actions and of a particular host, it was articulated in a matrix of beliefs that were shared and articulated publicly”. It has been argued that “hospitality” is a social construct in itself (Lashley, Lynch and Morrison, 2007; O´Gorman, 2010). Assuming hospitality as a “gift”, the writings of Mauss (1989) and Lévi-Strauss (1969) mark this as a characteristic of the social relationships that occur without the exchange of money and as a way of creating and consolidating social ties in what is a non-monetary social interaction.

On another level, pilgrimage and hospitality are interrelated phenomena when one considers their public dimension. As pilgrims, people are received into homes and into the wider context of nations, cities and municipalities. Derrida (2001: 22) argues that hospitality includes “the public nature of the public space”. In this respect, our paper also focuses on the hospitality of urban spaces and public infrastructure. Chavez and Rest (2014) argue that the studies on hospitality in public spaces are rare and have not been connected or integrated. For Bell (2007) and Lugosi, Bell and Lugosi (2010), a city that seeks to provide public facilities and services to outsiders can be considered hospitable.

Lashley and Morrison (2000) and O´Gorman (2010) argue that hospitality must be understood in its different dimensions: domestic, civic and commercial. Bell (2007) believes that the studies of hospitality are divided into two separate components -philosophical and managerial, yet he claims that the two spheres cannot be separated. In Lashley’s (2000) view, social hospitality can be seen as the social relationships carried out in domestic or commercial spaces. In our context, the public sphere encompasses both these spaces, as we have
measured the perception of public sphere of hospitality as represented in and by its food services and transport. According to Bell (2007), eating and drinking are important parts of social life that shape the whole experience of being in a city and contribute to its regeneration and to the improvement of its image. For Mand and Cilliers (2013), food services and their connection with the public space play a remarkable role in the public life of cities that create hospitable public spaces where food, at one and the same time a necessity and pleasure, is experienced as both an individual and a social action.

The research aim is to provide empirical evidence of the relationship between domestic and public hospitality and pilgrimage. The literature review here has explored - rather than critiqued - notions of ‘pilgrim’, ‘pilgrimage’, the relationship between hospitality and pilgrimage and that of the domestic and public spheres of hospitality: concepts that inform this study.

METHODS

For this study, a mixed methods approach was used, combining qualitative and quantitative data to provide depth and breadth (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2008). This research is both inductive and deductive (Creswell & Plano-Clarke, 2011). The study adopted a sequential, embedded mixed methods research design. This commenced with the qualitative research that then informed the quantitative research design. From this, further qualitative data was collected.

The first stage of the qualitative data comprised of 11 months of participant observation of the lead author during the preparation activities of the WYD organizing committee. The promoting of the event saw host communities seeking both volunteers and host families, raising funds and working with local youth groups in parishes in Rio in preparation for WYD, 2013. This was followed by seven months of daily participant observation which involved working as a volunteer in the accommodation department of the WYD organizing committee. During the actual WYD event, both quantitative and qualitative data was collected. Fifty semi-structured interviews with pilgrims were undertaken and focused on their WYD experience, their accommodation and their experiences in Rio. Interviews had an average duration of fifteen minutes. The interviewees were mostly young, and interviews were conducted at events or in the street where the nature of activities and surrounds precluded the longer investigations that characterized the twenty three interviews with host families. The latter interviews averaged ninety minutes each and questions focused on the domestic hosting experience. All qualitative data were analysed using thematic analysis.

The quantitative research entailed a survey undertaken with 974 registered pilgrims WYD Rio de Janeiro, 2013. The questions used to inform this paper were a component of a larger survey. Pilgrims were asked nine questions concerning hospitality and tourism. They were
asked about the quality of their reception and accommodation in Rio? How they felt they were received in Rio and in their accommodation; they were asked to evaluate the food services, transport and positive and negative aspects of WYD as part of the public sphere hospitality. These quantitative questions were analysed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) descriptive statistics.

**FINDINGS**

The findings are divided into three categories: preconceptions of host-guest relationships in a pilgrimage context reasons for hosting strangers and an overview of hosting in the domestic and public spheres. The first category - “host-guest relationships in a pilgrimage context” - encompasses the expectations of host families and pilgrims regarding their accommodation experience to understand the binary classical view of hospitality: role of hosts and pilgrims before, during and after WYD.

For the hosts, there were numerous doubts; their main concerns related to how they should receive the pilgrims, what to do - or not to do - while the pilgrims were with them and what kind of behavior they should or should not accept in their homes. Safety was the major preoccupation of the hosts and was a common reason given by people who chose not to receive the pilgrims. Among the families that registered themselves to host the pilgrims, the safety issue was the focus of the majority of questions they raised with the WYD accommodation organizing committee. However, after the pilgrims’ arrival, most families realised that they had been overly concerned about security issues. There was no record of theft from host families during the event.

Host families were also preoccupied with providing a proper bed and transportation for the pilgrims. This was in spite of the “host family’s campaign” clearly stating that the only duties of the host families were to provide floor space for the pilgrims to sleep in their sleeping bags and the use of bathrooms. Many hosts could not accept these terms. Hosts continually commented that a good host would never deny food or a comfortable place for rest to their guests. Most families offered beds and food to their pilgrims. Many wanted to drive the pilgrims to WYD activities. The only time that the family were expected to pick up the pilgrims was at their arrival to the parishes, when the families met them for the first time and drove them to their homes. After this, pilgrims were to arrange their own transport to WYD events. Yet host families went beyond the expectations and standards required by the WYD accommodation organizing committee. With respect to the pilgrims, safety was not a major concern for them in regards to their host families, although some expressed concerns about staying in a dangerous neighborhoods or getting robbed when commuting.
The second theme was “reasons for receiving strangers”. The host families in this study had a range of reasons to receive the pilgrims, the most common being the desire “to help”. By “help”, was meant responding to the request for assistance or collaborate with the “young pilgrims”. Some families explained that they were accustomed to receiving guests and they enjoyed it a lot, or that they had a large house so that the guests would not disturb them. Other reasons cited were: to meet people from other regions or countries and to make friends.

The third theme “overview of hosting” encompasses the perceptions of host and guests about their WYD “accommodation experience”. One experience that was mentioned by families and pilgrims alike was “feeling part of a universal community”. Knowing that people from quite different backgrounds shared beliefs, values, common practices and rituals was reportedly the best aspect of the “WYD experience” for some.

Many of the pilgrims anticipated that difficulties would be part of the pilgrimage’s experience. In the survey, the response to the food services question was that 52.9% were “satisfied”, 27.5% “very satisfied”, 6.4% were “dissatisfied” and 0.2% “very dissatisfied”. In regards to transport, the “satisfied” category scored high at 45.8%. However, the dissatisfaction with public transport was also high in comparison to the other aspects questioned. The transport question scored the highest percentages with 7.4% in total of pilgrims “very dissatisfied”. The same survey revealed that “lack of organisation” was the worst aspect of WYD for 43% of participants followed by “public security” for 16.9%. When questioned, many pilgrims commented on the “long queues” or “no hot showers” but said these were an acceptable part of the experience, as they were not there for relaxation but for a religious reason, “to undertake a pilgrimage”. This confirms (Egan, 2010; Fernandes, Pimenta & Gonçalves, 2012) reflections that suffering is understood as part of the pilgrimage’s process. In terms of positive experiences, the survey indicated that “hospitality of people from Rio” was the highest 44% of people reporting this positive observation.

**DISCUSSION**

Both host families and pilgrims were worried about the social expectations regarding their roles as hosts and guests. Fears concerning security reflected a view of the guest as an enemy (Derrida, 2000; Grassi, 2011a, 2011b; Camargo, 2011; O’Gorman, 2010) and was present for host families. “Being a good host” was a strong concern; almost all the families offered at least a meal per day to their pilgrims, despite the recommendations of WYD team that the pilgrims had meal vouchers. They stated that they knew that they “didn’t have to do it”, but they demonstrated pleasure with this action and they highlighted that it was a moment of
socialisation with pilgrims. Lashely (2015) reminds us that providing food, drink and shelter was a moral obligation on the part of the host in many cultures.

Reciprocity was something essential in the host-guest relationships in antiquity, where the host was supposed to protect the guest and introduce him or her to society, while the guest owned his or her loyalty and the obligation to reciprocate it when needed (Grassi, 2011; O’Gorman, 2010). Lashely (2015), comments on the non-reciprocity mentality as the normative behavior in hospitality relationships in Christian cultures. O’ Gorman (2010) argues that in this context, the hospitality relation doesn’t expect remuneration, as it is addressed to strangers who were transformed into friends by the hospitality relationship. O’Gorman (2010) and Boff (2005) argue that transforming the stranger into a friend was the main goal of the hospitality relationship in Judeo-Christian context and this was clearly evidenced in WYD.

Lévi-Strauss (1969) and Mauss (1989), in theorising about the “gift”, argue that non-monetary exchange between people has as its goal the creation of social relationships. The assertion that human beings are always searching for social ties by exchanging “gifts” without financial interest is supported by these findings. The reasons for hosting, for attending WYD and the results of this experience reveal that WYD is an expressive social exchange.

CONCLUSION

This paper examined hospitality- both domestic and public -in a postmodern pilgrimage context. The findings show that concepts of pilgrimage and hospitality are intertwined in the case of WYD, an event that invites youth to go on pilgrimage and as an event encourages people to host the stranger, in this case pilgrims. However, this hospitality context is under-researched. The findings demonstrate hospitality has a way of turning the stranger into a friend (O’Gorman, 2010). The hosts we studied expressed concerns in regards to the stranger coming into their domestic environment, but these fears were alleviated by the relationships that were formed with the pilgrims. The hosts, asked only to provide a space for pilgrims to sleep, largely wanted to extend warm hospitality and to go beyond what was required of them. The main reasons for hosting strangers was: the desire to experience a communal bond and the trust in others that membership of the Catholic Church facilitated In the context of a host obliged to care for a pilgrim stranger.

Domestic hospitality is another important dimension of this pilgrim phenomenon since it enhances the experience of both the pilgrims and the host community. Given the limited research, it could be argued that domestic hospitality is outdated. This research and the WYD experience provides evidence to the contrary. People are searching for new social experiences and personal encounters; domestic hospitality as a phenomena and its role and importance in daily life and travel experiences requires more attention.
This paper also provides evidence of public hospitality and the role it plays in both the pilgrim and visitor experience. Providing infrastructure and amenities to facilitate the pilgrim’s journey and their encounter can boost their experience and the tourist influx to these places (Shinde, 2015, 2011; Griffin, 2012). However, cities and public spaces also provide hospitality and have an impact on the pilgrim’s and the visitor’s experience. Future research needs to explore public hospitality (Lugosi et.al., 2010), its impact on the visitors and hosts alike and the importance given to this space by public officials.

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ABSTRACT

The present paper reports on an ongoing doctoral study that aims to investigate the self-perceptions of quality of life (QoL) held by lifestyle entrepreneurs (LsEs) who own small accommodation businesses. Firstly, it looks into the lifestyle entrepreneur label, based on relevant studies in the tourism and hospitality sector. Secondly, it considers relevant literature on quality of life and the challenges of measuring a concept that is intrinsically related to individual self perceptions. Afterwards, based on a literature review, it highlights the issues that are accounted important for QoL from a LsEs angle. The paper ends by presenting the methodology that is going to be used, as well as the contributions the study aims to bring to both theory and practise.

Keywords: lifestyle entrepreneurs, lifestyle, quality of life, hospitality, commercial homes, accommodation

INTRODUCTION

It has been acknowledged that tourism and hospitality entrepreneurs’ most significant reasons to start a business are non-economic, value based, centred on the lifestyle they aspire to achieve, and related to their perception of quality of life (Hall and Rusher, 2004; Ateljevic, 2007; Chen and Elston, 2013). However, despite the identification of the most relevant motivations to engage in entrepreneurial ventures in the sector, knowledge is lacking on how and if those non-economic goals are achieved (Thomas et al., 2011). This paper aims to close that gap through the investigation of the self-perceptions of QoL held by lifestyle entrepreneurs that own commercial home enterprises (CHE) (Lynch, 2003, 2005a, 2005b). A deeper knowledge and understanding of QoL from LsEs perceptions is important because of the interest by tourism scholars as well as governmental and non-governmental bodies in the small accommodation sector. Particularly given the current concerns over the issues of lifestyle and QoL that are illustrated by, for example, a motion presented in UK Parliament reminding the importance of recognising that “there is more to life than money” and need to focus not only on GDP but also on general well-being (Swinson, 2010:1), and the UK Parliament discussions on how to use the results from well-being research in policy making (NEF, 2014; UK_Government, 2014).
This conceptual paper first looks into the LsE label, based on relevant studies in the tourism and hospitality sector. It then considers the concept of QoL and the challenges of measuring a concept that is anchored in individual self-perceptions. Afterwards, based on the literature, it draws some insight into aspects that LsEs consider important to achieve their desired level of QoL. Finally, the methodology that will be used in the research and its potential contributions are presented.

For the purpose of this paper, the following definitions are used:

*Lifestyle entrepreneur* is someone who considers family, lifestyle and commercial concerns equally significant for business management (Saxena, 2015).

*Quality of life* is based on “individuals' perception of their position in life in the context of their culture and value system and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns. It is a broad ranging concept affected in a complex way by the person's physical health, psychological state, level of independence, social relationships, and their relationships to salient features of their environment” (World Health Organisation Quality of Life Group, 1998:1).

**BACKGROUND**

Owners of small accommodation firms are often described as LsEs (Ioannides and Petersen, 2003; Lashley and Rowson, 2010) and it is argued that they consciously choose a particular lifestyle over profit and business growth (Skokic and Morrison, 2011) in order to have more control in their lives and accomplish a certain level of QoL and personal happiness (Heelas and Morris, 1992; Lashley and Rowson, 2007; Lundberg and Fredman, 2012). The lifestyle label seems to be related to an ambition of achieving a certain QoL, which may in turn be associated with the possibility of living a pleasant life guided by personal preferences and values (Ateljevic and Doorne, 2000). Despite the growing interest in LsEs among academics (Marchant and Mottiar, 2011), studies on the understanding of this complex concept are lacking, whether in regards to its conceptualization or research content (Carlsen et al., 2008). Whether LsEs applies to a group of entrepreneurs who share a common ground – life philosophy and principles - or whether it is a stereotype label created and nurtured by scholars to facilitate the categorization and understanding of small businesses within the tourism sector, is still open to debate. Furthermore, given the agreement that seems to exist in the literature regarding QoL as one of the main drivers to engage in such an entrepreneurial venture (Shaw and Williams, 2004; Getz and Petersen, 2005; Ateljevic, 2007), it becomes relevant to understand how this particular group perceives QoL and how they self-assess their own QoL. It becomes even more important in a society that is supporting the ideal of living a more healthy
and fulfilling life (Rapley, 2003), and where QoL is a global desired result of service delivery for economic, social and political reasons (Galloway et al., 2006).

The aim of the present study is to explore how this group of entrepreneurs view and define their chosen way of life, perceive their QoL after engaging with a home-business that operates in the accommodation sector, and the impacts of that choice on their own QoL and business management.

**LIFESTYLE ENTREPRENEURS**

The theoretical construct of LsE is complex, in the sense that it embraces two different concepts: lifestyle and entrepreneur. These two concepts, from a general perspective may seem contradictory. On the one hand, lifestyle tends to be conceptually related to personal values, personal preferences and leisure (Marcketti et al., 2006; Holland and Martin, 2015), and as such seems to possess a more subjective nature. On the other hand, the notion of entrepreneur is normally associated with business, profit, work, and through the lens of the profit driven capitalist society there is a desire to make it measurable (van Praag and Versloot, 2007; Audretsch, 2012). Lifestyle and entrepreneur concepts combined form the descriptor LsE that brings to life the co-existence of these two apparently incompatible realities. The label LsE is complicated. The words that compose it, on their own, suggest that the style of life is something of importance to this group of entrepreneurs. Binding the concept of entrepreneurship with the term lifestyle makes the focus shift to lifestyle choices related to the decision of starting a business, although it is not clear to what degree nor what it encompasses. Adding more complexity to the label LsE is the variety of studies that contribute to its understanding and definition, and although there is no space to deepen this discussion in the present paper, it is essential to acknowledge the diversity of studies that give body to the concept of LsE, such as family businesses (Getz and Carlsen, 2005; Robinson and Stubberud, 2012; Harms et al., 2015), female entrepreneurship (Bensemann and Hall, 2010; Lockyer and George, 2012), migration (Benson and O’Reilly, 2009), and ethical economy (Arvidsson, 2010; Arvidsson and Peitersen, 2013), among others.

**LIFESTYLE ENTREPRENEUR | EXISTING DISCOURSES**

Authors agree in relation to the importance of LsEs in tourism literature (Marchant and Mottiar, 2011). However, knowledge about the group is scarce and tends to be focused on the motivations to open a small tourism business (Thomas et al., 2011), being relatively consensual that LsEs main motivation is not profit nor desire for growth (Shaw and Williams, 1998; Ioannides and Petersen, 2003). This assumption, as obvious as it appears, does not do
justice to the relevance this group of entrepreneurs has in the tourism and hospitality sector. Instead, the lack of understanding of LsEs goals, intentions, lifestyle, and perception of QoL, allows the creation of discourses that tend to portray stereotypes. It is thus important to analyse the discourses that emerge from the limited comprehension of the concept, although it should be kept in mind that the discourses presented are based on partial knowledge and tend towards simplification.

**THE NEGATIVE DISCOURSE**

The discourse that depicts LsEs image as negative finds some supporters in the tourism industry, and economic and political spheres. The negative discourse is linked with the idea that LsEs are not able to cope with the pressures imposed by day-to-day modern life (Scase and Goffee, 1980). This idea becomes even more evident in hospitality companies, where employees are expected to work long hours, be flexible and committed to the company, but where the wages and job security offered are low (Fallon and Rutherford, 2007; Blomme et al., 2010). From this perspective opening a lifestyle business is seen as a behaviour of non-ambitious people who prefer to work in isolation to avoid the pressure (Baines and Robson, 2001; Lashley and Rowson, 2005).

Economists tend to embrace this negative discourse claiming that this type of endeavour is not professional, not entrepreneurial and is constrained (Gray, 2002). Deakins and Freel (2009) go even further arguing that LsEs apply socio economic models that are perceived as a prejudicial threat to economic models, leading to practices that jeopardise competitiveness. Stakeholders more focused on return of investment, like bankers and investors, tend to be dismissive of this group, based on the assumption that LsEs tend not to be driven by business growth or profit, therefore not showing growth propensity (Beaver, 2002). From an economic stand, lifestyle businesses achieve sub-optimal results (Peters et al., 2009), possibly because profit is not regarded as essential beyond providing a comfortable living (Kuratko and Hodgetts, 1998). The non focus on growth and profit has led to the classification of lifestyle business as a bounded economic activity (Andrew et al., 2001) since they tend not to create employment nor innovate (Peters and Weiermair, 2001).

Even in the political sphere this negative discourse towards LsE’s can be witnessed. Lifestyle is used as a pejorative label to illustrate the type of businesses that constrains tourism development (Williams et al., 1989; Shaw and Williams, 1990, 1998). Goulding et al. (2005) found that LsEs were considered problematic within destination areas, and Mottiar’s (2007) findings strengthen this idea suggesting that LsE’s do not participate in formal cooperation, losing the opportunity to take an active role in decision-making. Possible reasons for LsEs non
cooperation may include their apparent focus on lifestyle, and not being seen by the local bodies as part of the “established business community” due to operations’ size (Mottiar, 2007:73). More practical aspects related to daily business management and the perceived added value of the cooperation may also be explanations for their non participation. Nonetheless, less involvement with formal groups limits their influence on important decisions and reinforces a negative label. An obvious consequence is the marginalisation of LsEs in political discourses, based on the assumption that they are not worthy of public sector support, since their contribution to local economic development is compromised by the focus on lifestyle issues instead of productivity, performance and growth (Nilsson et al., 2005).

Within the literature the less positive discourse seems to dominate and find more supporters (Thomas, 2004; Landström, 2005). Still, despite being less dominant, the positive discourse opens doors to a broader understanding of this group and their positive implications for the tourism sector.

THE POSITIVE DISCOURSE

The positive discourse is supported by the argument that LsEs have the courage to choose the kind of life they want to pursue (Spence and Rutherfoord, 2001) and, sometimes consequently, live somewhat outside of society’s capitalist expectations in order to achieve their lifestyle preferences (Scase, 2000). This discourse values LsE’s personal motivations, and their will to look for alternatives which enable an alignment between the life they aspire to live and preferred values. On the one hand LsEs live the lifestyle they have chosen, on the other, and as a result of the first, lifestyle entrepreneurship is also a way of challenging the norms that dominate society, the economy, work practices, and social values (Inman, 2000; Walker and Brown, 2004). LsEs can therefore be considered agents of the new economy that combines together economic and social purposes, a sharing economy that empowers citizens to get more out of their own assets (Stephany, 2015). This perspective may be linked to some kind of idealism, that emerges almost as a response to the capitalist society that pushes people to consume more than they need, to aspire to more than they can achieve, to live with more quantity and less quality, ultimately to have more and be less. LsEs challenge the capitalist driven society with their choice to earn just enough to be able to live the life they want to (Morrison, 2002). By doing that, they communicate the idea of sufficing, of earning enough for their needs, avoiding life-waste production, while adopting a more sustainable approach to business and life itself.

The desired lifestyle assumes a relevant role in the way they manage their businesses, it is not something to be accommodated by the business; instead it assumes a leading role and
conditions the business (Lewis, 2008). Being intrinsically rewarding, the business is not seen only as a way to support the lifestyle, it is part of the lifestyle itself (see for example Donkin, 2009; Holland and Martin, 2015). Particularly in the accommodation sector, LsEs have the benefit of not having to go to work, since work and home are one and the same (Lashley and Rowson, 2005), the possibility of achieving a work life balance seems simplified (Spence and Rutherfoord, 2001; Getz et al., 2004). Despite the importance QoL seems to play in their lives and in the way they create, develop and manage the product they offer, research on the topic is very limited (Peters and Schuckert, 2014).

QUALITY OF LIFE
Theoretical discussions on the importance of having a better life can be traced back to the classical Greece period (Hughes, 2010). Since then the concept that has been adopted by scholars from several disciplines, by public and private organisations, and is used in multiple contexts. The literature is vast and confusing given the use of different labels, perspectives, and meanings when discussing the theoretical concept of how good one’s life is.

The construct of QoL first emerged in the late 1960s, following Maslow's (1962) hierarchy of needs, in the sense that after reaching physiological, safety, belonging, and self esteem needs, people would start seeking personal growth and searching for meaning and happiness in life (Veenhoven, 2009; Pukeliene and Starkauskiene, 2011). From a general perspective QoL it is related to a person’s sense of well being, and degree of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with life (Dalkey and Rouke, 1973). Some years later it was introduced with the aim of assessing the impact of health problems on people’s lives (Power, 2003), and later it has become an umbrella term that embraces multiple aspects of human life, from physical and emotional states to social life (Efklides and Moraitou, 2013). Since early 2000s, framed within the multidisciplinary positive psychology field (Binkley, 2007), the influential works of authors like Richard Layard (Layard, 2005) and Martin Seligman (Seligman, 2002) have prompt governments of countries like the United Kingdom, United States and Australia to include the concept in policy discussions, and individuals to achieve a better and happier self (Binkley, 2011).

QoL is used interchangeably with other concepts such as happiness (Seligman, 2002), subjective well being (SWB) (Binkley, 2007), and life satisfaction (Puczo et al., 2011). This alone gives some insight to the challenges of defining and operationalizing such a subjective concept (Andereck and Nyaupane, 2010). An analysis of the literature regarding the definition of QoL allows highlighting some shared assumptions: it is determined by the individual whose life is being evaluated (Rajeski and Mihalko, 2001; Seligman, 2011); it is related to the level of overall life satisfaction (Rodriguez, 2011; Woo et al., 2015); it can be based on both objective
and subjective indicators (Oort et al., 2005; Costanza and Fisher, 2008); is grounded in the relation between what is positively assessed and what is negatively assessed in one’s life (Sirgy, 2012). Taking into consideration the shared assumptions, QoL definition can be considered dependent on the person assessing it, and determined by internal and external factors associated with each individual, hence can be “subjectively defined by each individual” (Di Domenico, 2003:28). Intrinsic characteristics like personality and expectations impact on the way people perceive their own QoL. Conversely, extrinsic aspects like the culture in which the person is contextualized, the value system, and relationships also influence one’s QoL perception, adding complexity to its definition and measurement.

Recent research on the topic of QoL tends to fit into one of two categories. The first category is characterized by the use of objective and quantifiable criteria to measure aspects that have an impact on different things such as health-care systems or ecological state of countries in the world (Yonk and Reilly, 2012). The second one is perceived QoL and capitalizes on subjective indicators, being related to self-reported levels of happiness, life satisfaction and well being (Costanza et al., 2008). Given that the present study aims to understand how LsEs define QoL, and if and how QoL influences their own lives, product construction and management, the research will follow the subjective line of research.

**QoL OF LsE**

In order to have some insight into the QoL of LsEs, a review of literature within the tourism sector was conducted, and the following topics emerged as important to enhance the QoL of this particular group of people: 1. The place chosen to develop the tourism related business seems to be of major importance, and the location by itself is pointed to by LsE’s as an important aspect to enhance their QoL (see for example Getz and Petersen, 2005; Morrison, 2006; Mottiar, 2007; King and White, 2009); 2. The possibility of balancing work and life is pointed as a reason to adopt such a lifestyle, this balance between work and life apparently allows spending more time with the family and at the same time have more time to personal activities such as hobbies (see for example Komppula, 2004; Morrison and Teixeira, 2004); 3. The opportunity of managing one’s own time, being one’s own boss are also factors mentioned in regards to becoming a LsE, since it provides increasing autonomy and flexibility (see for example Lashley and Rowson, 2010; Pechlaner et al., 2012); 4. The chance to do what LsEs consider to be interesting work (Page et al. 1999); 5. The possibility of fulfilling lifetime aspirations or accomplish a goal (Dredge and Jenkins, 2007; Lashley and Rowson, 2007). These themes, however, are far from providing a deep understanding of how LsEs perceive QoL and the implications it has in their businesses and personal lives.
METHODOLOGY AND CONTRIBUTIONS

With the aim of filling the identified gap, the present study will use a mixed methods approach. In order to gain understanding of the perception of QoL held by LsEs, in-depth interviews will be conducted with LsEs owners of CHE in Portugal. The purposive sample will be selected from a bed and breakfast online booking website, using filters regarding the type of accommodation and region. Snowballing will also be used to identify more suitable participants. To ensure participants are eligible it becomes necessary to engage with them before the interviews. The initial contact will be made through a posted letter containing general information about the research, an invitation to participate in the study, and information about a phone call that the researcher is going to make following the reception of the letter. The phone call follows with two objectives, selecting participants that consider themselves LSEs, and scheduling the interviews. In-depth interviews will take place in the commercial home setting so that additional information can be gathered through informal observation (Liamputtong, 2009) to feed the line of questioning.

On a later phase, based on thematic analysis of the data gathered in the interviews and literature review, an online survey to assess QoL of LsEs will be constructed and conducted among LsEs owners of CHEs. The purposive sample for the survey will be composed by participants from the first phase, together with participants selected through bed and breakfast online booking websites that own a commercial home and consider themselves LsEs.

The present research aims to contribute to both theory and practice. On a theoretical level it will provide greater understanding of LsE concept and LsEs perceptions on QoL, allowing a categorisation of LSEs from a QoL stand. Regarding its contribution to practice, the survey can be the ground to develop tools to inform decisions, such as: assisting people in determining whether to open a small accommodation business based on lifestyle motives; providing additional information regarding bank lending processes; and enabling a deeper insight into the guest/host match.

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Exploring hospitality within hospital meals by means of visual methodologies

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ABSTRACT

This paper reflects the application of visual methodologies adapted in an explorative study on hospitality and hospital meals. It takes point of departure in a multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork placed at a general hospital in 2012. Visual methodologies were applied in multiple ways. This includes visual methodologies as part of observation and interview strategies. The paper presents and discusses how the application of different visual methodologies can contribute to the construction of ethnographical knowledge on hospitality and hospital meals. Finally ethical considerations as well as limitations of visual ethnography are presented and discussed.

KEYWORDS

Visual ethnography, hospital meal experiences, visual methodologies, hospitality.

INTRODUCTION

Existing literature on hospital meals has been criticized unilaterally to focus on intrinsic food qualities and for being built on linear causality thinking. A way of thinking that considers patients as static agents, and meals to take place at a specific physical time and place (Justesen 2015:17, Cardello, Bell & Kramer 1996). This leaves out possibilities to consider aspects outside the physical surroundings and the physical time as part of an experience, and it neglects the opportunity to consider the meal experiences as temporally and spatially constructed (Johns, Hartwell & Morgan 2010, Morgan 2006, Ek, Hultman 2007:20). Existing literature on hospital meals has further been criticized for being built on an epistemological position in which knowledge is gained from verbal or written discourses. This is materialized in terms of verbal interviews or satisfactions surveys in which meals often are described through functional properties (Justesen 2015:17, Johns, Hartwell & Morgan 2010). This epistemological position tends to emphasize rational and cognitive responses to experiences and downplays emotional and non-reflexive responses, and favors informants with an ability to express themselves verbally (Justesen, Mikkelsen & Gyimóthy 2014, Pink 2007:119). It can be argued that introducing other epistemological positions such as visual methods might bring
forward another kind of knowledge which emphasizes emotions and memorable experiences more intensive to written or oral methods (Harper 2002, Rose 2012:298, Pink 2007:124). Thus introducing visual methods as means to explore hospital meals might provide new knowledge on hospital meal experiences which again might address existing challenges regarding undernutrition in hospitals.

The term “visual methodologies” emphasizes the diverse ways of using visual methods in ethnography; this includes visual methods as part of an observation- and interview strategies. The idea of adapting visual methodologies in research is based on images’ abilities to underpin reflective comprehensions, to trigger memories and to open up spaces for creativity than to words. Further, images can provide access to embodied interaction, temporal experiences and include the agency of materiality as well (Pink 2007:91, Rose 2012:305, Harper 2002).

Recently the acceptance and application of visual methodologies have increased within a wide range of disciplines; these include cultural studies, cultural geography, and the field of tourism studies (Harper 2012:5, Rakić, Chambers 2012). The application of visual methodologies within the scientific field of public health and meal sciences has also been reported. This is reflected in the use of Participant Driven Photo Elicitation (PDPE), a visual method that is based upon the idea of inserting images into a research interview and to renegotiate these images within the interview. The images thus become interviewing tools to facilitate verbal exchanges (Justesen, Mikkelsen & Gyimóthy 2014, Johansson et al. 2009, Lachal et al. 2012, Maley, Warren & Devine 2010). However, while PDPE as a research approach is well described, an explicit PDPE methodology is not extensively described (Rose 2012:314, Power 2003) and has been criticized for lacking consensus about appropriate approaches; as arguments for choice in relation to interview method, selection of participants and descriptions on how images are used in the interview, either vary or simply lack extensive descriptions (Justesen, Mikkelsen & Gyimóthy 2014). The lack of consensus makes it difficult to evaluate and to consider this visual method as a stringent and developed method within the research filed of health and meal science. Further, a reflexive way of adapting PDPE has not yet been reported within the area of health and meal science (Justesen, Mikkelsen & Gyimóthy 2014) but Radley and Taylor (2003) have adapted a reflexive visual approach in a study on hospital experiences in general. Nine patients were asked to produce twelve images of objects and spaces significant for their experiences of being hospitalized. The researcher observed each patient’s engagement with the camera and together with the patients they negotiated how different objects or spaces represented experiences of being hospitalized. The study concludes that a reflexive visual method provides an opportunity for patients to express their engagement with the physical hospital environment and not at least to explore hospitals as an imagined space (Radley, Taylor 2003).
Different epistemological perspectives on hospital meals were point of departure for this study on hospital meals. Inspired by Ellingson’s (2011) idea of crystallization underpinning the scientific value of exploring a phenomenon through different epistemological positions (Ellingson 2011), visual methodologies became a part of the research strategy. Furthermore it was inspired by the visual ethnographer Sara Pink. She introduces visual ethnography as partial, situated and reflexive, and advocates for using visual methods reflexively in the process of exploring a phenomenon and in this process to invite the informants to become co-researchers themselves (Pink 2007:109). As a result a conceptual framework of Hospital Foodscapes based upon a socio-material dynamic ontology of situated practices and relations was defined (Justesen 2015:20). The study aimed at exploring the construction and practices related to hospitality and hospital meals. Being able to reflect on the entire study I realized that visual methodologies contributed substantially to the process and the outcome of the study. By sharing this experience it might motivate others to adapt visual methodologies to future research.

Therefore, this paper aims at presenting and reflecting on the use of visual methodologies in an ethnographic explorative study on hospitable meals.

**APPLYING VISUAL METHODOLOGIES**

The study was based on six month’s explorative ethnographic multi-sited study located at a Gynecological and a Cardiac Medical Ward in a general hospital in Denmark. Here a range of different ethnographic research methods were applied. This included visual methodologies. The access to the hospital was generated through the region hospital’s Executive Board at a time where undernutrition had become a growing political agenda. From the Executive Board I was referred to the hospitals foodservice organization, and based upon a clear research question, I was invited to conduct the ethnographic study. The kitchen organization announced the project; this included the idea of adapting visual methodologies, to all wards at the hospital. The Gynecological wards responded. The second ward came later. A research protocol was designed for each ward with a description of different observations and interview strategies, which also included visual methods. With reference to the Helsinki Declaration and the Danish Code of Conduct of Research within Social Sciences 2002, ethical considerations were presented. This included a clear agreement with the hospital management on how to use visual methodologies. As such; informants and I were not allowed to frame any identifiable persons at all, and I was not allowed to disturb daily medical practices and routines as such.
**VISUAL ETHNOGRAPHY AS PART OF THE OBSERVATION STRATEGY**

During the first period of field work, I realized that visual ethnography could become a part of the participant observation strategy in different ways. I adapted an open observation strategy where I allowed myself to engage with the wards and where interactions with the camera and with informants became a space for reflections. The act of photographing served as a means to explain my presence and provided me with an identity as a researcher. As such I became the researcher “doing meal photographing”. The act of photographing was also justified by my presence as a researcher, as the process of photographing was perceived as a way of collecting “real data” in contrast to “just observations” as it was expressed by a HCP. Further my identity was bound to my professional identity as a food scientist in the field of nutrition and health. Along with this identity, the act of photographing became a “can opener” to the field. The image presented in figure 1 represents such a “can opener” experience.

![Figure 1: Photographing roses as a “can opener” and as narrative representation of hospitality.](image)

This image was produced on a day were I was exploring the ward organization’s hospitality approach. In the process of framing the images, an elderly lady approached me. She was nodding towards the roses and soon we were reflecting and negotiating the different representation the roses added to the hospital experience. My embodied act of photographing became as such a “can opener” to this patient.

As part of the observation strategy, I renegotiated images with HCP, in order to give the images new meanings. Thus, the rose image became a narrative representation of a hospitality event, as it awoke a memorable and emotional episode for a HCP and helped her to articulate her ABSTRACT understanding of hospitable meals as well.
With tears in her eyes, the HCP retold a story about how she one morning got the idea of arranging a rose on a breakfast tray to a seriously ill patient, she thought needed encouragement. When the patient returned several years later, the patient turned to the HCP and emphasized the importance of this hospitality event for her recovering process and her experiences of being hospitalized. This story helped me to understand how such disruptive micro events create hospitable meals in a setting otherwise challenged by efficiency and medical routines and rationales (Justesen, Gyimóthy & Mikkelsen 2014). Further, it underpins images’ ability to trigger emotions and memories as well as to articulate ABSTRACT reflections, such as hospitality.

“Collaborative photography” was also part of the observation strategy. In “collaborative photography”, images are produced collaboratively with informants. This provides an opportunity to combine and negotiate both the informants and the researchers own intentions and representation of the co-produced images (Pink 2007: 75). Thus “Collaborative photography” provides insight into informants’ first order of meaningful representation and allows informants to experience how they act as social embodied elements of their environments (Pink 2007:75). The images presented in figure 2, represent such a “collaborative photography” process.

![Figure 2: Two images of a “collaborative photography” process in which a patient, a HCP and I negotiated the aesthetic expression of a welcoming and nice looking meal and meal tray.](image)

The images in figure 2 were produced collaboratively with a patient and a HCP. We were negotiating the aesthetic expression of a meal. Firstly, we looked at the plate expression. They agreed on the importance of arranging the meal components in defined areas on the plate, but meanwhile agreed to frame the image as a meal tray. Subsequently, we continued discussing the use of different colored napkins resulting in the second image. This episode
created a reflective space in which I could consider different ways of appreciating the welcoming plate aesthetically; and it resulted in an introduction to different colorful napkins at the ward. This episode underpins “collaborative photography’s” ability to let informants become co-creators of knowledge, and to help making decisions and to change their everyday life.

**VISUAL METHODOLOGIES AS PART OF AN INTERVIEW STRATEGY**

In the initial phase of the study I was inspired by adapting Participant Driven Photo Elicitation (PDPE). I was interested in exploring whether PDPE as a research methodology applied in a hospital meal context could contribute towards a richer insight into hospital meal experiences.

In addition, I was inspired by Pink’s reflexive approach towards informant produced images in which it is the participants’ first hand intentions and engagement with the act of photographing that are explored and not as a renegotiated second hand intentions and meanings as in the traditional PDPE interview methodology (Pink 2007:88, Larsen 2008).

I decided as such to expand the traditional way of adapting PDPE with a reflexive approach and observed how nine patients engaged with the camera for one day. This was followed by an open-ended interview the day after, letting patients themselves renegotiate and be in control of their own meanings and intensions of their produced images (Scarles 2012, Justesen, Mikkelsen & Gyimóthy 2014).

The subsequent first analysis strategy was inspired by Rose’s description of a reflexive content analysis (Rose 2007:237). A reflexive content analysis is based on a content analysis which is clustered with the informants’ engagement with the camera and the images. As a second analysis strategy, I decided to explore the transcribed interview text through a Semiotic Analysis with inspiration from Barthes’ systems of signification (Echtner 1999). The choice of two different analysis strategies contributed to strengthening the credibility of this PDPE study. It was found that PDPE, as a research method, revealed the significance of the meal context, materiality and memories beyond food per se (Justesen, Mikkelsen & Gyimóthy 2014). The images in figure 3 represent images framed by two informants.
Figure 3A represents an image framed by a female patient. In the interview she reflected on her intentions of presenting a situation of conviviality. The image in figure 3B is framed by a male patient. In the subsequent interview he reflected on his intention to frame a situation of hospitality with a reference to the fruit bowl. These two images represent images ability to represent and convey ABSTRACT situations such as conviviality and hospitality and revealed how meal experiences are experienced all day long, and not only during a specific time or place. Further, it helped me to recognize images ability to consider how artefacts could gain agency in a co-created hospitality space.

PDPE is a methodology where an ability to handle a camera is important. However, being situated in a hospital context this was not an option for all informants. Therefore, in order to give voice to patients who were not capable of handling a camera, I decided to adapt a form of collaborative interview method, where I, in collaboration with informants, produced several images together while interviewing them on the basis of a semi-structured interview. The image in figure 4 is an outcome of such a process. Here a partially paralyzed dysphagia patient asked me to frame the currently most valuable spoon especially designed for him while he was in the process of eating.
In photographing this process, the patient enabled to negotiate the socio-material and embodied way of eating as a symbolic representation of taking back his own life in being able to eat by himself again. In addition it created space for discussing the implication of different embodied ways of eating.

**VISUAL METHODOLOGIES AS PART OF THE ANALYSIS PROCESS**

The images also became part of the analysis process. More than 100 images were printed out and posted as wall paper at my home office and was used in the process of drawing messy- and situational maps. Messy- and situational maps are inspired by Adele Clarke’s way of doing Situational Analysis (Clarke 2005:83) and provides a reflexive space where I could get around the data and sort the data while examining relations between humans, artefacts and situations alike the socio-material approach on this study. This analytical exercise helped me to understand the importance of meal processes, in particular the processes of serving meals around a buffet trolley. The printed images helped as such to evoke situations, to underpin the agency of artefacts into meal experiences and they served to recall memories and imaginations from the period of fieldwork, this included reencountering the sensuous and emotional reality of situations and events. The images helped as such to revitalize different sounds at the wards as part of different co-created atmospheres (Justesen, Gyimóthy & Mikkelsen 2014).

One of the most valuable questions to put forward in exploring my own engagement with the images was the question of what was left out of the images. This question helped me to reflect on the tendency to leave out meal-processes. Figure 5 represents an image of my home office,
and as viewed, the images have been rearranged several times as part of my reflections and analysis process.

Figure 5: Patients images placed on wall paper at my home office.

Another way of creating reflective spaces with images was to renegotiate the images with other persons outside the hospital context (Pink 2007:125). Here, images were re-represented and re-negotiated several times. In particular the images in figure 4 became part of this process and allowed me to reflect on the aspect of medicine as part of hospital meal experiences. Further, it helped me to understand the power of images and the importance to articulate the difference between images explored through a realist or a reflexive scientific approach.

**ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND POTENTIAL LIMITATIONS**

Conducting ethnographic research among patients of which some are seriously ill, causes substantial ethical considerations and approval from the hospital organization (Tjørnhøj-Thomsen, Whyte 2007:109). I signed an agreement with the hospital organization where I agreed on not to photograph identifiable persons, leaving only half bodied places and objects to be framed. This limitation challenged the effect that images might trigger in relation to embodied sensuous reflections, especially in relation to social practices and social interactions, but conversely I realized that these limitations contributed to a trustworthy relationship with informants as it reduced informants concerns of participating in the research process. Another part of the ethical consideration was the necessary and continuing daily consultation with the HCP in order to make sure which patients were capable of participating in the study.
Inspired by Pink’s research methods (Pink 2007:109), where informants become co-researchers, my research focused on equalizing the power relations between the researcher and the informants, especially the patients. I often articulated my own position as not being part of the hospital organization and consequently I did not have any access to patients’ journals either. This allowed an open space for empowering patients themselves to articulate their identity as more than patients. Eventually, I was very clear about respecting patients’ privacy in their rooms, considering myself as a guest visiting the patients. Further, I joyfully, as a guest, accepted chocolates and grapes that were offered to me allowing the informants to become the host and in charge of the situation and the conversation.

**POTENTIAL LIMITATIONS**

Not everyone is capable of using cameras at a hospital due to either lack of familiarity with a camera or medical or physical conditions. Even though informants were capable of using a digital camera, the condition for carrying a camera might not be possible. This was the case for both HCP as well as kitchen professionals. Instead I employed collaborative visual and sensory methods (Pink 2009:23).

By raising informants’ consciousness there is a potential possibility that they artificially generate false or selective memories of hospital meal experiences in order to suit their current identity. Furthermore there may be possibilities that informants are influenced by what they believe the researcher wants them to say or do in order to present themselves in a positive way. Also within the situation of co-construction and negotiated images, informants might feel unsure and scared of showing emotions and as such might become unwilling to fully convey their meal experiences. This issue does also count for adopting written or oral research methods and it is difficult to say to what degree this has happened in this study. However, adapting visual methodologies only became a success as most of the informants, HCP and the hospital organization allowed me to engage with the camera and with the wards.

I also find that photographing in contrast to video recording limits the ability to frame processes. This became clearly visible during the interviews based on PDPE. Many images often represented artefacts connected to situations rather than processes.

Finally, even though I worked reflexively in the process of producing images collaboratively, other qualitative methods like participant observation and semi structured interviews are still required as part of the visual methodologies. Further, there is a future challenge to articulate
consensus about appropriate visual approaches and currently it is difficult to evaluate and to consider visual methodologies as stringent and developed research methods.

CONCLUSIONS

In this study visual methodologies proved to be a valuable tool in the process of exploring hospitable meals. Visual methodologies contributed to open up the ethnographic field and justified my presence at the wards and became a part of a collaborative observation strategy which helped to explore every day situation of hospitality and hospital meals with emphasis particularly on contextual and situational experiences. Collaborative methods also empowered informants by inviting them to become co-researchers in the process of co-constructing new knowledge within hospitable meals. Further, it provided an opportunity for informants to reflect on ABSTRACT matters such as conviviality and it underpins the aspect of materiality and the co-creation aspect of hospitality events as well. Thus visual methodologies provided new insights into how hospital meals were constructed all day long and brought forward another kind of knowledge which emphasizes the emotional and memorable aspect of meal experiences, this include meals as an imagined space. Visual methodologies created several reflexive spaces for considering my own engagement with the field, and by questioning my preunderstandings of phenomena such as hospitality and hospital meals and it generated some tools to sort and analyze the data. However, visual methodologies need to be connected to traditional verbal worded methods and there is still a need for developing the methods into stringent research methods. Visual methodologies can be deployed elsewhere in other institutional meals settings. However, there is a need for considering the ethical issues related to a given setting, and to agree on the conditions for working with these methods. Finally, visually research can only become a success if the informants and the organizations invite the camera to become part of a research process.

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Celebrity chefs and the construction of taste: from über macho to culinary crusader

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ABSTRACT

Food is an essential part of our lives and is clearly more than simply a physiological requirement. As such, the study of food is a useful means to help us understand important social and cultural factors that influence the way we live our lives. Taste is intrinsically linked to food, both from a gustatory aspect as well as from an aesthetic perspective. Aesthetically, taste can serve as a social discriminator because it implies notions of choice. Within this arena, the celebrity chef has become an important part of contemporary British society as an arbiter in transmitting concepts of taste and distinction through television and other media. The celebrity chef is now a modern cultural figure that embodies notions of contemporary shifts in attitudes towards cooking, ethics, consumption, culinary taste, gender and cultural capital. This work in progress will seek to determine links between the construction of taste and celebrity chefs. The proposed methodology is qualitative content analysis through the scrutiny of chosen television shows and cookbooks. The conclusions may suggest that the chefs have some influence in conveying messages of public health, lifestyle and food choices through their television shows, cookbooks and internet presence and therefore may be players within a wider sociological phenomenon.

Keywords: food, taste, celebrity chef, television, media, lifestyle

INTRODUCTION

Food is essential to our survival and it is said that ‘food indicates who we are, where we came from and what we want to be’ (Belasco 2002: 2). Counihan and Van Esterik (2008: 2) further suggest that ‘food links body and soul, self and other, the personal and the political, the material and the symbolic’. As such, the study of food choices and practices offers a unique lens with which to explore the significance of food in the changing structure of social life (Johnson and Baumann 2015). Furthermore it has been said that food choices reflect social and cultural belonging and therefore act as important markers of social differentiation (Naccarato and LeBesco 2012).

Within this context, the concept of taste is fundamental as it is linked to the formation of identity, choices and consumption (Bourdieu 1984, Harvey et al. 2011). Whilst taste has both physiological and gustatory aspects, it also has an aesthetic quality and has become an all-encompassing term which implies that taste acts as a classifier as well as a marker of identity and difference and implies discrimination (Bourdieu 1984, Finkelstein 2014, Hyman 2008, Mennell 1996, Milne 2013, Short 2006, Strong 2011). Other theories posit that taste exists as...
a way to relate to food as well as a system of reflecting preferences that are socially
constructed (Albon 2005, Arsel and Bean 2012, Ashley et al. 2004). Taste is therefore used
as both a measure to judge others as well as a way to position people within sociocultural
contexts (Finkelstein 2014, Wright et al. 2000). The sociological treatment of food has debated
the role of social class in the construction of taste (Bourdieu 1984) and Atkins and Bowler
(2001: 5) conclude that ‘taste is culturally shaped and socially controlled’.

The aim of this research project is to examine the role of today’s celebrity chefs and then
explore their significance to the construction of taste within contemporary British society. As
such it is first necessary to consider definitions of celebrity chefs. For the purpose of this study,
the following definition best captures the essence of celebrity chefs (Henderson 2011: 617)

Someone with a professional background who enjoys a certain element of recognition
- domestically and possibly globally, unconfined to the world of professional
restaurants. They exercise popular appeal in a market that comprises diners,
television viewers, book readers, internet users and consumers of food and food
related products.

However, it should be noted that in this study, the chef is both one who has run a professional
kitchen as well as the ‘domestic cook’, such as Delia Smith and Nigella Lawson, as both
groups are referred to as ‘celebrity chefs’ in the general public’s perception.

The phenomenon of the celebrity chef has flourished in the United Kingdom (UK) in the past
20 years, partly due to the growing popularity and increase of interest in food in the media,
both on and off-line, as well as increasing anxieties in relation to what food should best be
consumed (Rousseau 2012). In order to link celebrity chefs to taste, the role that they play in
contemporary society must be understood (Ashley et al 2004, Barnes 2014, Bell and Hollows
2010, Hollows 2003, Hollows and Jones 2010a and b, Scholes 2011). It appears that from the
three star Michelin chef to the popular television (TV) chef, and, from the über macho to the
culinary crusader (Scholes 2011), these celebrities have now become household names and
their first names often suffice to place them within our ‘food’ reality (Barnes 2004). It has also
been suggested that celebrity chefs are no longer simple media ‘stars’, distributing various
messages and campaigns through their shows but that they have placed themselves as
arbiters of taste (Hansen 2008). Research suggests that there appears to be a growing effect
of such media personalities on the attitudes of UK consumers towards food, with celebrity
chefs stated as having an important role as judges of ‘good’ taste (Euromonitor 2012).
Celebrity chefs would seem to have gained a form of cultural power that can be seen through their commercial activities and their involvement in food governance, ethics, food politics, health, entertainment and consumption (Barnes 2014, Hollows 2003, Hollows and Jones 2010 a and b, Lewis 2014, Stringfellow et al. 2013). Arguably celebrity chefs transmit a message of public pedagogy and lifestyle that may be of broader social concern (Brownlie et al. 2005). Much of the academic interest in celebrity chefs has focused on contemporary gender roles in and out of the home, cooking, culinary and ‘cultural capital’, and lifestyle as well as understanding the sociocultural role that they may play (Caraher et al. 2000, Hollows 2003, Hollows and Jones 2010 a and b, Lewis 2008 and 2014, Lewis and Huber 2015, Piper 2012 and 2013, Swenson 2009). However, little attention has been paid to the specific link between celebrity chefs and taste which is the aim of this research.

TASTE

Food studies is a hybrid discipline that spans anthropology, sociology, politics, tourism and geographical studies and as such many theoretical paradigms frame the study of food. For example, a structuralist approach would suggest that taste is socially and culturally constructed, where food serves as a code to structure and reflect the stratification of society (Albon 2005, Barthes 1973, Bourdieu 1984, Douglas 2008, Warde 2016). This approach has been developed by socio-anthropologists such as Levi-Strauss (1963) and more extensively by the sociologist Bourdieu. His seminal text, ‘Distinction’ (1984), whilst set within the context of French society in the late 1970s, is still referred to as the foundation to any study on the construction of taste. As a Marxist he suggests that taste is socially conditioned, learned through education and intrinsically linked to social class. He posits that different social classes behave in conventional and established ways with regards to their choices of music, art, clothes, decoration and food and acquire and replicate cultural capital. He argues that taste is an expression of social differences and contends that taste functions as a way to maintain strict social classes (Warde 2016). Thus he concludes that taste is socially rather than individually constructed and is slow to change partly because it is deeply meaningful to the individual as it reflects a sense of belonging within a system of rigid social boundaries. Nonetheless, Bourdieu’s theories have been criticised, more specifically in the field of class inequalities in education (Goldthorpe 2007). Goldthorpe (2007) takes objection to Bourdieu’s use of cultural capital in the theory of social reproduction. He further suggests that Bourdieu
does not take the theory of socialisation into account in his discussion of habitus and the transmission of cultural capital.

Despite the relevance of Bourdieu’s theory, the notion that the main influence on the construction of taste is social class has come under criticism. The developmental paradigm posits that individuals take responsibility for their choices based on micro and macro-environmental changes rather than relying on institutional organisations and that this has had an effect on issues relating to food (Beadsworth and Keil 2002). Mennell et al. (1992: 6) suggest there was ‘first functionalism, then structuralism and more recently, developmental perspectives’, and that ‘each of these fashions have been associated with research into different substantive aspects of food and eating’. Mennell (1996) and Mintz (2008) consider that attitudes and behaviour around food is now less structurally determined and that the significance of class to taste is waning and instead highlight the importance of economic and political change to the development and acquisition of taste. Such writers prioritise how there have been dynamic changes in consumption patterns over the years and argue that contemporary tastes in food are increasingly shaped by changes to the supply and variety of foods due partly to the growing trade and industrialization of food supply. Mintz (2008) considers how the industrialisation of food production and the increase in food availability and choice had an impact on food consumption through the centuries. People produced less and less of their own food and ate more food produced by others. The types of food eaten have changed as has the availability of food linked to economic and political forces. Certainly, Mintz (2008) clearly argued that taste fluctuates and is influenced by outside events as illustrated in his discussions around sugar. He contended that the increase in the availability of sugar, due to political and economic charges, had a profound effect on altering tastes of the Western working classes. In addition, such theorists prioritise how social changes, including the changing role of women both in the workplace and at home, and changes in family life and structure, have also had a significant impact on patterns of consumption and ‘taste’. (Chiaro 2008). Ritzer (2013) goes so far as to suggest that the standardization within modern society is leading towards a levelling of tastes and, with the emergence of patterns of mass consumption, social class no longer plays a dominant role in the construction of taste.

and identifies a trend of informalisation where taste is increasingly a matter of individual autonomy. For example, Warde (1997) and Fishler (1988) prioritise the importance of distinctive lifestyles and individualised eating habits to personal identity as the era of mass consumption declines. As such, the increase in lifestyle TV programming, including the plethora of celebrity chef shows which appeal to a highly diverse audience, has led some key writers to adopt a more postmodernist approach when considering how notions of taste are currently being constructed (Ashley et al. 2004, Holt 1998). Holt (1998: 1) outlines how postmodernist thinkers argue that:

*The massive proliferation of cultural meanings and the fragmentation of unitary decisions...have shattered the straightforward correspondence between social categories and consumption patterns*

It appears that taste no longer reflects strict social structures and is in a state of flux as consumers have increasingly become ‘cultural omnivores' (Arsel and Bean 2012, Holt 1998, Warde et al. 2008, Warde and Gayo-Cal 2009, Wright et al. 2000). Indeed it has been suggested that contemporary Western food cultures are characterised by an increase in novelty and choice that have brought about an erosion in the relationship between class and taste (Ashley et al. 2004, Holt 1998, Mennell 1996 and Warde 1997). It could be suggested that the celebrity chefs of today can be seen to be agents of cultural change (Piper 2013) through their influence on taste.

**CELEBRITY CHEFS, MEDIA AND LIFESTYLE**

Arguably, there are several interpretations of the role of the celebrity chef in the wider sociocultural context. On one hand, the influence of celebrity chefs may have led to the broader public becoming better ‘food citizens’, with people becoming more aware of ethical and health issues (Barnes 2014). It may be suggested that changes in British society have elevated the chefs to the status of media superstars, and, undeniably, the celebrity chefs have entered UK households through TV, cookbooks and other media and may have become an influence on lifestyle choices and notions of taste (Chiaro 2008). Lewis (2014: 135) contends that celebrity chefs are of particular interest as:

…cultural figures today, to the extent that they have come to exemplify and embody a variety of contemporary shifts and tensions around work and leisure; branded, performative modes of selfhood; gendered regimes and hierarchies of cooking;
questions of ethics and consumption; and cosmopolitan forms of culinary taste and cultural capital.

An important part of the cookery TV programmes is the ability to entertain as well as to educate (Piper 2012) and whilst it is interesting to note that we seem to be watching, thinking and talking about food more and more, evidence suggests cooking is being engaged with less and less (Euromonitor 2008, Pollan 2013). However, it has been argued that while celebrity chefs may have influenced broader cultural trends, including notions of taste (Caraher et al. 2000, Bell and Hollows 2005) and have become a subject of academic and popular debate (Caraher et al., Gatley et al. 2013, Hansen 2008, Henderson 2011, Hollows and Jones 2010a and b, Lang and Caraher 2001, Parasecoli 2008, Short 2006, Rousseau 2012), they have in fact, little influence on actual culinary behaviour (Caraher et al. 2000, Mintel 2002).

It does appear therefore that celebrity chefs have catalysed a growing and broad interest in food through their involvement with media, at least among their followers (Bonner 2005, Hansen 2008). As our culinary experience has become highly mediated, cooking shows and celebrity chef shows continue to proliferate (Jackson 2013). Undoubtedly, food television has gained in popularity in recent years with more and more networks dedicating numerous hours to different sub-genres of cookery programmes which service different types of lifestyles (De Solier 2005). An example of the popularity of cookery shows is illustrated by the Broadcasters Audience Research Board (BARB) which reports that ‘Eat Well for Less' appeared in the top 20 viewings on BBC1 in the week ending 1 February 2015 amongst a plethora of popular soaps and news programmes (BARB 2015).

Within the genre of food television, it has also been suggested that celebrity chefs exercise an influence with regards to lifestyle (Ashley et al. 2004, Lewis 2014). Scholes (2011) suggests that by watching TV shows and buying cook books, people are buying into the lifestyles of the likes of Jamie and Nigella. It can also be argued that celebrity chefs represent an unattainable ideal and portray an idealised view of domesticity (Scholes 2011) and simultaneously appear to have broken the link between cooking and labour (Euromonitor 2008, Hansen 2008).

In order to remain relevant to the mundane task of everyday food preparation and public interest in food more broadly, celebrity chefs need to retain the link between traditional domestic cooking and the institutional (Scholes 2011) and connect with their audience. Celebrity chefs must therefore develop a style of communication that their audiences can relate to (Sloan 2004a and b). Food programmes must remain entertaining as well as maintain the professionalism of the chef (Ashley et al. 2004). In her discussion of Jamie Oliver’s School
Dinner show, Talbot (2007: 110) describes it as: ‘a combination of docu-soap, celebrity biopic and makeover.’ She goes on to comment that it is essential for Oliver to put forward his persona as a ‘celebrity chef’ to ensure credibility. Hence, celebrity chefs enter public consciousness not only as ‘keepers of culinary culture, but also as charismatic and compelling leaders in terms of changing lifestyles’ (Brownlie et al. 2005: 14).

There is evidence in the literature to suggest that the popular food media may also have changed attitudes towards civic and environmental responsibilities as well as developed a possible relationship between media, culture and governmental concerns (Talbot 2007, Lewis 2008) and that, as such, lifestyle TV may link models of citizenship with wider public concerns (Lewis 2008). Indeed celebrity chefs appear increasingly involved in various moral, political and environmental debates around food. This has been principally illustrated by Jamie Oliver and Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall in TV shows such as Jamie’s Ministry of Food, School Dinners and River Cottage (Hollows 2003, Hollows and Jones 2010a, Bell and Hollows 2010, Scholes 2011). On the Jamie Oliver Food Foundation website (2014), the chef is quoted as saying:

> My charity aims to inspire people to reconnect with food. It’s all about raising awareness and individual responsibility, resuscitating dying food culture around the world and, ultimately, keeping cooking skills alive.

In addition to television, the study of cookbooks is an associated medium that may give insight into the influence of celebrity chefs on lifestyle and taste (Bell and Hollows 2005). Brownlie et al. (2005: 8) suggest that studying culinary culture through texts, and more specifically through ‘good’ cookbooks, shows how ‘we create ourselves as an industrial society, our identities, our social affiliations, our lived everyday practices.’ They notably quote Tobias (1998) as saying that ‘cookbooks contain hidden clues and cultural assumptions about class, race, gender and ethnicity.’ Furthermore, Humble (2005) notes that cookbooks offer a valuable insight into tastes and aspirations, whilst Warde (1997) posits that recipes are messengers of taste and an unobtrusive means by which to study people and concerns.

**PROPOSED METHODOLOGY**

Because celebrity chefs exist largely through media, it is appropriate to adopt a methodological approach that investigates the way in which the chefs portray themselves through two interrelated media: TV and cookbooks. Bell and Hollows (2005) give weight to the analysis of both these media as they transmit notions of taste, lifestyle and cultural identity. It is through narrative and images that meanings come to be understood and interpreted (Tonner 2008).
The proposed methodology for this research is principally qualitative content analysis (Hseih and Shannon 2005, Arsel and Bean 2012, Johnston and Baumann 2007, Bryman 2016, McQuail 2010). Qualitative content analysis is concerned with describing and interpreting meaning in context. In media studies, the term discourse analysis has become preferred to ‘qualitative content analysis’ (McQuail 2010). It is associated with how beliefs and social structures are communicated through words and images (McQuail 2010, Hodkinson 2011).

Piper (2012) posits that there is an interest in analysing the cultural significance of celebrity chefs through content analysis of their media. Other examples of the use of media to examine the social implications of shaping taste and influencing food choices and lifestyle can be seen in the work of Wright and Sandlin (2009) who use the term ‘bricolage’ to describe the methodology used in their work which seeks to consider the forces behind television cooking shows and their associated cookbooks. In their analysis of American gourmet magazines, Johnston and Baumann (2007) adopt discourse analysis in order to discuss democracy and distinction in food writing whilst Ketchum (2005) viewed television shows to understand their influence on aesthetics and consumer culture. Swenson (2009) also used textual analysis of food network programmes in her analysis of cooking television shows.

Data will be collected through the sustained and multiple viewing of chosen television shows and reading of the associated cookbooks. The research may also include the analysis of social media such as food blogs and websites which may be indicative of the public’s interaction with the celebrity chefs. In order to sample these media, the chefs and their shows have been provisionally classified into typologies based on the initial findings from the literature (Table 1) however this may still be further developed as the study progresses. The proposed typology illustrates the personas and images that the chefs have portrayed through their TV shows and associated cookbooks. These personas demonstrate certain character traits and attitudes that, although they may be exaggerated, show how the chefs may be understood by the viewing public (Bell and Hollows 2010, Scholes 2011, Piper 2012). Of course, any such typologies are not fixed, as the chefs appear to migrate across the categories which can be seen by the changes in the themes and focus of their shows and books over the past 10 years. Therefore, any classification will need to be fluid and may evolve over time. Alternative scenarios could include a focus on female chefs who are underrepresented in the world of professional chefs. It is expected that the sample will include chefs that have both a market prominence as well as commercial success, as they will have the most influence over viewers and readers of their cookbooks. Selection criteria may include the popularity of the shows as well as the years in which the shows have been produced. Initial research will seek to extract themes from the material and build a coding frame to analyse the data. In addition a
quantitative approach may also bring further breadth to the research by producing findings that are numerically verifiable (Hodkinson 2011).

Table 1: Proposed Typology

| Moral entrepreneur (Bell and Hollows 2010) | Jamie Oliver (*Jamie’s Ministry of Food*) |
| Culinary Crusader (Scholes 2011) | |
| Food Revolutions (Scholes) | |
| Public Pedagogue (Piper 2012) | |
| Instructional Matriarch (Scholes) | Delia Smith (*Delia through the decades*) and Nigella Lawson (*Nigellisima*) |
| Vocational expert (Bell and Hollows) | Gordon Ramsey (*The F Word*) |
| Uber-Macho (Scholes) | |
| Aspirational Wizardry (Scholes) | Heston Blumenthal (*Heston’s Fantastical Food*) |
| Adventurer (Scholes) | Jamie Oliver (*Jamie’s Italy*) and Rick Stein (*Mediterranean Escapes*) |
| Real Food (Scholes) | Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall (*River Cottage*) |

**CONCLUSION**

This research is concerned with understanding the role that the celebrity chefs play in contemporary British society, specifically with regards to the way in which they mediate taste. The celebrity chef has gained recognition and superstar status as an arbiter in the construction of taste. Three broad paradigms can be used to frame the approach to the construction of taste. The first is the structuralist paradigm which emphasises the importance of class in the construction of taste and suggests that taste is socially and culturally constructed. The materialist approach proposes that taste is connected to external influences such as economic and political changes. Finally, postmodernist thinking gives weight to the individual in the acquisition of taste. The initial exploration of the literature has shown that there is evidence to suggest that celebrity chefs may play a part in influencing taste and lifestyle choices in contemporary British society. The chefs seem to have created one, or serval personas, that display certain behaviour and beliefs. It could be proposed that the wider public then identify with these personas whilst projecting an image of themselves and their culinary know-how. Although the studies of celebrity chefs appear to attract more and more academic attention, the specific link between the celebrity chef and the construction of taste remains under
explored as does the use of qualitative content analysis in this context. The findings of the research may lead to a better understanding of the chefs as agents of social change and could perhaps have wider implications for current government health messages related to food.
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Accommodating new age interests
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ABSTRACT
The New Age phenomenon is an under-examined research topic in tourism and hospitality. According to Moore (2005), around three out of four Americans believe in paranormal phenomena, which are closely aligned to New Age beliefs (Chauvin, Hermand, and Mullet 2008), and indicates a unique and potentially untapped market segment. Prior research has examined only the views of providers of New Age products and services (Poulston and Pernecky 2014), perhaps because the heterogeneity of the New Age phenomenon makes it difficult to determine their needs. This study therefore explores the accommodation, food, and leisure services preferences of those interested in New Age ideas, to identify potential products and services to meet their needs.

Keywords: New Age, accommodation, experience, customisation, meditation, yoga.

INTRODUCTION
This study explores the way expectations of hospitality may change to fit consumers' lifestyles, interests, and values. Specialization (or theming) is common in service, and increasingly common in hotels (e.g. for skiers, swimmers, cyclists, Buddhists (Hung, Wang, and Tang 2015), under 30s, seniors, travellers with disabilities etc.). Travellers' interests may influence their accommodation choices, so by understanding the needs of a specific group, this research examines the New Age phenomenon in the context of hospitality to determine the scope for customising products and services to meet their needs.

Because the New Age phenomenon encroaches on cultural and religious beliefs, it has the potential to influence the way people go about their daily lives, and therefore, how they approach travel and leisure. Furthermore, as travel and tourism can be seen as a ‘quest for meaning or spiritual refreshment’ (Mansfield and McIntosh 2009: 157), it is important to explore the influence of spirituality on products and services sought while travelling. Outcomes of this study are therefore expected to inform on-going research on hospitality provisions, as well as provide insights into how providers can best meet the needs of New Age guests, alongside mainstream tourists tolerant of or seeking alternative hospitality products and services.
LITERATURE REVIEW

UNDERSTANDING THE NEW AGE PHENOMENON

Making sense of the New Age phenomenon is a complex task requiring a broad understanding of the different approaches to the topic; disputes about New Age even extend to discourses on whether or not it is an identifiable movement. For example, Sutcliffe (2003a: 13) argued that when portrayed as a movement, ‘New Age is an inadequate category; represented as an historical period, the formulation simply assimilates practitioners’ agendas: astrological, millennialistic and utopian’. He therefore suggested removing New Age from the field of movement studies and relocating it within debates on group practice, identity construction, and popular discourse on spirituality. New Age can therefore be defined as

...popular or vernacular religion: that is, the necessarily incomplete and ambiguous – but no less potent – practices and beliefs of ordinary, lay practitioners as they are expressed, negotiated and contested in everyday life settings (2003a: 13).

More recently, Chauvin, Hermand and Mullet (2008) observed a close relationship between those believing in the paranormal, and those identifying as New Agers, noting however, that New Age also implies an ideological or philosophical framework. Mansfield and McIntosh (2009) described New Agers as those seeking to awaken their inner spirituality, and agreed with Sutcliffe and Bowman’s (2000) view that the New Age phenomenon has become mainstream. While Hess (1993) opposed the idea that New Age is a religion, other scholars (e.g. Kyle 1995; Sutcliffe 2003b) find parallels between the New Age phenomenon and religion, although there is ‘no agreed group formation, nomenclature, or set of practices’ (Pernecky and Poulston 2015: 2).

Various researchers (e.g. Pernecky and Poulston 2015; Possamai 2005) have catalogued interests popular with the New Age culture, such as yoga, visualisation, neuro-linguistic programming, Feng Shui, re-birthing, sacred song and dance, prosperity, and alternative healing techniques such as Reiki, polarity bodywork, Bach Flower Therapy, aromatherapy, homeopathy and reflexology. These interests, even though diffuse (Urban 2015), help define the New Age phenomenon and begin to determine the likely needs of New Age travellers.

RELIGION AND TRAVEL

The influence of belief on travel is well documented. Western commercial hospitality has its
origins in the provision of food and shelter to strangers as an expression of a Christian duty (e.g. Heal 1990; White 1968), and is therefore historically linked to religious buildings and beliefs. In 10th century Europe, the common people frequented monasteries and religious houses when travelling, and it was not until the dissolution of the monasteries in the 16th century that hospitality became truly independent of the church. Having worked with Christians for over 500 years in Europe, Western hospitality is therefore well placed to cater for mainstream travellers, but not necessarily for other spiritual groups, such as New Agers. Hung, Wang and Tang’s (2015) research into Buddhist themed hotels in China notes the lack of research and conceptual understanding of themed hotels, particularly those with a religious theme, which arguably applies to New Age themed accommodation. Weidenfeld’s (2006) study also noted the lack of research identifying what consumers want from a religion-themed hotel, and aimed to fill that need for Christian travellers. This study aims to fill that space from the perspective of New Age travellers by seeking to understand their accommodation preferences.

METHODS
The study used an online survey to explore New Agers’ views on hospitality, their accommodation preferences, selection criteria, and the kinds of activities they wanted to engage in while away from home. Defining the New Age segment presented problems, as the variety of interests and sources of inspiration of New Agers tends to militate against identifying a reliable set of characteristics (Pernecky and Poulston 2015). Although an instrument was recently developed by Irwin and Marks (2013) for measuring beliefs in the paranormal, because of New Agers’ resistance to technology (Chauvin, Hermand, and Mullet 2008), and implications of this for their hotel choices, it was decided to use Cultural Creative identifiers (see Ray and Anderson 2000) to filter out participants without New Age interests. Cultural Creatives are interested in ethics, spirituality, alternative ideas, and sustainability, all of which are reliably associated with the New Age phenomenon (Ray and Anderson 2000), and arguably also describe the LOHAS (Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability) segment. These consumers are interested in ethics, spirituality, and sustainability and comprise around 16% of the American adult population (French and Rogers 2010), 26% of the Australian adult population, and 32% of the New Zealand adult population (Baker 2008).

Basic demographic data were solicited to identify common themes, and the questionnaire included both fixed and open-ended questions, enabling participants to choose their own words. Open-ended questions included (for example) ‘If you could design a hotel or other accommodation in keeping with your beliefs, philosophies and practices, what features would it have?’ Fixed questions were scored according to certainty of view, with 5 being given for
‘agree’, 4 for ‘probably’, 3 for ‘possibly’ 2 for ‘unsure’, and 1 for ‘don’t know’.

The survey was advertised globally in New Age magazines and websites (such as Newagetravel.com) and relevant blogs and forums (e.g. http://visionary-forum.theconscioussoulcentre.com/), and some personal contacts utilised for snowball recruitment.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Results addressing quantitative items were derived from frequency analyses and means computations. Those from qualitative items are drawn from word frequency analyses using NVivo version 10 and thematic analyses.

There were 61 valid responses from the online survey. Respondents agreeing with ten or more statements defining Cultural Creatives were invited to continue, but to ensure respondents had New Age ideologies they were also invited to label their beliefs (Table 1). Most (with the possible exception of atheist and counsellor) were consistent with New Age ideas, and as expected, many reflected spiritual interests beyond the boundaries of mainstream religion.

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Participants were generally well educated, with 42.6 percent having a postgraduate qualification, and a further 18 percent having an undergraduate degree. Most were females over 50 years old, and the most common religious affiliations were given as esotericism, spiritualism and occultism. Women are more likely to have New Age beliefs than men (Sjoberg and Wahlber 2002), but data on the relationship between New Age beliefs and educational levels are inconclusive (Chauvin, Hermand, and Mullet 2008). Over 8% of participants did not provide their age and 11% withheld their gender.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>72.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not specified</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-50</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>26.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-70</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>54.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SPIRITUAL INTERESTS

Participants were asked to label their spiritual beliefs, which also helped determine common labels, and discover other interests and affiliations for use in future research. In total, 43 descriptors were given as spiritual self-labels, with just seven respondents identifying as New Agers; this was not unexpected, as the term 'New Age' has negative connotations (Possamai 2005; Poulston and Pernecky 2014). Respondents could provide as many self-labels as they wanted (See Table 1). Other labels and interests included: Angel communicator, Benower, Bon, Cosmic Crusader, Creation spirituality, Earth-centric, Energy medicine, Environmentalist, Evolutionist, Greater power, Higher power, Incarnated soul, Liberal Christian, Metaphysicist, Mother Gaia, Occultist, Positivity quester, Rayologist, Reiki Master, Spiritual guidance counsellor, Seasonal spirituality, Sufi, Sun worshipper, Truth seeker, Unity-seer, Way shower, Wiccan, and Zuvuyu surfer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not specified</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>42.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Entrance</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other / not specified</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not specified</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Spiritua...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural creative</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>5.4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Esotericist</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free believer</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meditator</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ascensionist</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atheist</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative (general)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freemason</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interested (enthusiast)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yogi</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (see below)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>30.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>93</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Spiritual interests and self-labels of participants listed more than once

Consistent with the New Age phenomenon, there was little clustering except around spiritual interests (21.4%).

**GOOD HOSPITALITY**

Mansfield and McIntosh (2009) commented on the importance of understanding the interactive nature of the host-guest relationship in spiritual hosting because of the potential to misunderstand the culture or ideology of the guests. Spiritual beliefs may therefore affect the way guests view hospitality, so participants were asked their views on ‘good hospitality’. As this was not a comparative study, it could not be determined whether data differed from those of the wider population, but the desire for a respectful understanding of spiritual practices from some participants is consistent with Mansfield and McIntosh’s concern for need for sensitivity around cultural and ideological beliefs.

Responses on expectations of good hospitality reflected more interest in people than in facilities, with a respectful, genuine and compassionate attitude sought in hosts (See Table 2). Four major themes emerged.

1. Warm and friendly: Concepts of good hospitality centred around experiences of friendly and welcoming service; ‘friendly interaction with staff’ and ‘friendly people and good vibes’ were considered important.
2. Genuine: The comment ‘friendly but not in your face’ suggested that good hospitality should be genuine and guests should feel able to pursue their interests without interference. ‘Genuine kindness, authenticity, actually caring about needs, not just ‘doing’ good hospitality’ were also mentioned.

3. Respectful: Participants related good hospitality to courtesy and respect, and a sense of respect for others’ beliefs - a ‘welcoming of all cultural beliefs and spiritual practices’.

4. Compassionate and helpful: The ability of hosts to anticipate needs, empathise, listen, and ‘go the extra mile’ was considered important, illustrated in comments such as ‘empathetic to individual guest preferences, courteous, flexible’. One participant wanted that ‘the entire hotel and staff would exude a sense of peace and tranquillity’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good hospitality descriptors and elements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Main descriptors</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcoming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genuine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care/caring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfortable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attentive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleasant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courteous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Words used to describe good hospitality
A comparison with results of a recent study on hospitableness show that views on good hospitality in this study were closely aligned with what Tasci and Semrad (2016) referred to as ‘heart-warming hospitableness’: welcoming, courteous, respectful and kind, all involving human interactions, and confirming hospitableness as a critical component of good hospitality (Tasci and Semrad 2016).

**IDEAL ACCOMMODATION**

Participants were asked what features in keeping with their beliefs, philosophies and practices, their ideal accommodation would have (see Figure 1), as responses have the potential to inform accommodation operators of common preferences.

![Figure 1 Belief-influenced accommodation](image)

Main themes in order of importance were:

1. Meditation area: A dedicated room, corner or quiet space suitable for meditation, perhaps with singing bowls and stones for those wishing to use them.
2. Yoga room: A place to do yoga was the second most popular choice in ideal accommodation after a meditation area.
3. Gardens and outdoor spaces: Several mentioned the need for a natural garden or kitchen garden where they could reflect, connect with nature and socialise: ‘A beautiful peaceful garden full of birds, trees, flowers and water (pond or fountain)’. Ideally, accommodation
was in a natural setting or close to nature: ‘within bush environment, close to bushwalks or beach walks or swimming in natural environment (sea, hot pools, river)’, and with ‘access to nature and have it be integral to the spaces’.

4. Healthy food: Organic and/or vegetarian food was considered important, as was providing fresh organic food from a kitchen garden: ‘fresh vegetables and herbs’, and ‘an orchard for fruits’.

5. Relaxing interior: Interiors with good feng shui, natural lighting, water features, labyrinths, and using ecologically friendly building practices were sought after.

Comparisons with Buddhist (Hung 2015) and Christian (Weidenfeld 2006) themed hotels revealed some interesting similarities. The strong preference for a place for spiritual practices, such as a meditation room and yoga space was consistent with Weidenfeld’s (2006) finding that Christians valued having a place of worship in a Christian themed hotel, and Hung’s (2015) finding that Buddhists also value having a meditation room in a Buddhist themed hotel. Similarly, Buddhists have a preference for a vegetarian menu and tranquil environment, reflecting the strong relationship between Buddhism and the New Age phenomenon (see Rohmer 2014).

NEW AGE ACTIVITIES
Participants sought a wide variety of activities, with little clustering except around meditation, yoga, massage, and light exercise such as walking, swimming and cycling (see Table 3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meditation</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoga</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massage</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming, cycling, sports</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspirational seminars/talks</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art or music therapy</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team building</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local tours (guided or)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilates, Tai chi, Qi gong</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction with others (e.g.)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chanting/singing</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancing</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spa</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photography, cooking, gardening</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kayaking, boating</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitness classes</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Direct comparisons with activities sought by Buddhists and Christians in religious themed hotels were not possible, as participants in this study were asked for any activities they wished to pursue when away from home, rather than limiting them to spiritually-relevant activities. This had the advantage of allowing the data to construct an understanding of New Age interests for practice as well as future research.

**DISCUSSION**

Views on the nature of good hospitality (i.e. warm and friendly, genuine, respectful and compassionate) provide guidance to hosting New Age guests, and emphasise the importance of human interactions in perceptions of hospitality (Tasci and Semrad 2016). Professional service, etiquette, and speed were not mentioned, yet these are the mainstay of hotel and restaurant training schools and competitions (Tepper 2012). This discrepancy between the industry’s focus on excellence and New Agers’ views provides opportunity for reflection on the meaning of real hospitality and is unlikely to be limited to New Age consumers.

Concepts of ideal New Age accommodation such as the inclusion of a meditation room, yoga room, gardens and outdoor spaces, varied from mainstream accommodation only in terms of the specialised rooms required for meditation and yoga. Otherwise, ideas such as gardens, healthy food, and places for relaxation seem features that most travellers would welcome. Although Weidenfeld (2006) identified the importance of meeting travellers’ religious needs while away from home, difficulties may arise if religious travellers stay in an incompatibly themed hotel, just as they may for a straight couple staying in a gay-friendly hotel. While New Agers are generally accepting of traditional religions (Flere and Kirbiš 2009), the reverse does not necessarily apply, and some Christians consider yoga (and potentially meditation) incompatible with their beliefs (Anderson 2011). This creates difficulties for theming hotels as New Age, or even catering to New Agers, and suggests that New Age hotels would be best located where local attractions draw New Age travellers, such as the red rock formations at Sedona, USA. Meditation, yoga, walking, swimming, cycling, and local tours are consistent with the provisions of many luxury hotels, but also common in
hotels in Sedona, USA (Poulston and Pernecky 2014), and Byron Bay, Australia (Wray, Laing, and Voigt 2010), that attract New Agers.

Hung, Wang, and Tang (2015) framed their discussion of consumer needs in Buddhist themed hotels in terms of normative expectations (i.e. what customers ought to get), a model initially examined by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1985) as an influence on perceptions of service quality. In themed hotels, meeting normative expectations helps create a unique experience for travellers (Lee, Lee, and Yoo 2000). Results of this study provide a range of activities and facilities that are the normative expectations of New Age travellers, but fall into predictive expectations in retreat centres and New Age locations. Such places may therefore find consideration of the normative expectations of New Age travellers helpful.

As data in this study comprised a mix of spiritual and environmental interests, the literature on religious themed hotels was of limited use in determining the relationship between New Age and other religious interests. However, consulting studies on ‘green’ (i.e. following sustainability practices) hotels was more productive. Chen and Tung (2014) found that the most important influence on visiting a green hotel was related to perceptions of availability, suggesting that niche themed hotels may struggle to attract visitors. It may therefore be productive for practitioners to combine one or two themes in order to become more mainstream. In this regard, those wishing to attract New Age travellers may be advised to also attract LOHAS consumers, Buddhists, and other yoga practitioners by meeting common needs of the groups (i.e. meditation rooms, yoga rooms, healthy menus, sustainability practices etc.).

CONCLUSIONS AND LIMITATIONS

This study makes a contribution to knowledge by providing research-based motivations for hotel operators wishing to attract the New Age market to offer meditation, yoga and outdoor spaces, consider ways of providing genuine hospitality, and pay attention to the healthiness of their menus. It also offers direction for research on New Agers, whose accommodation-related interests until have now, have been unknown. New Agers, Cultural Creatives (Ray and Anderson 2000), and potentially the LOHAS market (French and Rogers 2010), comprise a growing and potentially significant group with a wide range of interests, yet to date there has been no research into their accommodation preferences. Practitioners seeking to accommodate this segment of travellers are advised to consider providing some of the services and facilities identified in this study. Researchers now have a range of activities for further study, such as (for example) ranking New Age activities in order of importance, testing
some of the spiritual labels for coherence with other New Age ideas, and examining some of the preferred facilities to determine their potential to offend those with other or no beliefs.

It may be a limitation of this study that so few participants responded to the invitation to complete the survey, despite intensive efforts through website advertising and the use of personal contacts. Future studies may therefore run for extended periods to maximise the response rate, as well as target potential participants in New Age bookshops, locations, and retreat centres.

REFERENCES


Hospitality and hostility between the lavras novas-mg district community (br) and the service providers in tourism: an analysis in the period from 2008 to 2015 under the theory of optics of stakeholders

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ABSTRACT

From the perspective of studies of hospitality and stakeholder theory was intended to identify the reasons for the maintenance of conflicts between the population of Lavras Novas, service providers and tourists. Methodologically, the study presents itself as qualitative, using the processing content analysis technique. The results indicate to a deficiency in the relationships and interactions between those involved, compromising the development of the locality in the analyzed categories.

Keywords: Stakeholders. Hospitality. Tourism Destination. Local Development. Organizational Conflicts. Social Relationships.

1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism is researched under various lenses, including hospitality. But notes the need for further study of these two disciplines with a focus on stakeholder theory, integral and important part of this context, it is they who influence the success of an organization, and that in the same way, are influenced by it.

In 2008, was developed a study on the influence of local culture on organizational culture in Lavras Novas district. But the development of research at that time was another. The intention of the study turned to the power relations in organizations established to provide services to tourists found themselves in constant conflict with local people bringing as a result the difficulty of maintenance and survival of the company (Rodrigues, 2008).

The data collected in the period were processed and analyzed, but a lot of extra information at first were filed. It is intuited that they reached other dimensions of knowledge. They warned that there was something more to be approached but did not find space to be discussed and analyzed by the structural limitations of the research.

Lavras Novas is released outside Brazil, mainly due to its proximity to Ouro Preto and Mariana. Located in the state of Minas Gerais, southeastern Brazil, is part of the circuit of Estrada Real, route recognized as one of the most important to the national and international tourism. The number of visitors has not been measured officially, but it is known that there are many, as for holidays and weekends booking for accommodation has to be made in advance. It was
observed that by the year 2012, little had changed in the relations between the population and companies, as well as the required infrastructure by residents, tourists and the service providers (Rodrigues and Jeunon, 2012).

It is important, although the tourism marketing promotion that Lavras Novas just say that was a quilombo (a place where there was concentration of runaway slaves) the research Rodrigues (2008) found no significant evidence of this past. The research support, as well as reconstruction of the history of the district reported by its residents, found support in the local architecture and the lack of traces that demanded the existence of slave labor procedures (Rodrigues, 2008).

Through this context, the question is: From the perspective of stakeholder theory and hospitality studies can identify the reasons that promote the maintenance of the existing conflicts between the population of the Lavras Novas district and the organizations established and providing services in the locality?

The main objective aims to identify the most present conflict in relations between the residents of Lavras Novas and service organizations. For specific objectives: a) to verify the relationship between the people who was born the locality and service providers for the categories 'culture', 'work', 'sustainability', 'infrastructure' and 'leisure' under the lens of hospitality and stakeholder theory; b) To examine how social ties happen and are formalized between service providers and residents of Lavras Novas district; c) Describe what the main elements of conflict that generate hostility among the inhabitants of Lavras Novas and service providers.

This study is justified by the great potential of the district as a tourist destination, based on the exuberant nature of Itacolomi Park, its history, its customs and host of the local population.

2 Hospitality and Hostility

With support in specific academic literature, hospitality is presented in various dimensions like explains Santos (2014: 13), constitutes a 'study object under multiple analytical lenses', without any one of them can be excluded due to the profusion of interpretations possible.

Hospitality can be understood as a set of actions that attempt to welcome the guest in a pleasant way, or even as 'an attribute of certain meetings between hosts and guests, called hospitable meeting, but not necessarily all the meetings' (Camargo, 2008: 19). For Lugosi (2008), besides the house, providing food and drink and entertain, hospitality is based on human relations, the exchange of experiences in contact and social life and in the design of
Lashley (2004), the established relationship between host and guest pervaded by a sense of generosity and true intention to please, recognizing the guest as an individual.

Santos (2014) supports the idea of Nogueira (2013) that all individuals are both hosts and guests through the links that set - ideals and perceptions - by placing them symmetrically and promoting human relations. And is that way, the human relations, the relations of hospitality and welcome are the process in which individuals or groups build social bonds.

Studies of hospitality are based by English side, which considers 'good reception without involving the turmoil that the deepest sense of hospitality implies' (Montandon, 2003: 142) and maussiana aspect of the gift, which highlights the interaction between men, regardless of their friend status, foreign or client. But, according to Santos, Perazzolo and Pereira (2014), the observed phenomena cannot always be inserted in either approach can be cited those dealing with a collective vision or about micro phenomena that are interconnected by the urban reality.

Supported by Yves Cinotti (2008), the authors agree that the hospitality consists of the residents and the guests of a locality. The hospitality occurs through contact with the population and with service providers. It also considers elements such as affectivity, social behavior and the local language, as it is these that provide the hospitable character to receive the guest. Thus, it can be said that the hospitality goes beyond a quality services, as it is implemented in host interactions and guest.

Montandon (2003) says that hospitality has its other side: hostility. But 'the ritual of hospitality is already in itself an antidote to hostility'. The author says that in commercial hospitality hostility and aggression are more present, both the individual contract or collective level. The breach of a contract, overexploitation of natural resources, infrastructure and services of a region and the increase in prices due to the high demand are factors that favor the hostility of the local population in relation to guest (Montandon, 2003). Camargo (2015: 45) 'hospitality analyzes the interpersonal relationship as the rescue, the exchange of warmth in a social environment increasingly inhospitable, if not hostile, emphasizing the possibilities that remain in the contemporary world, demonstration or recreation of social ties'. Regarding the nature of the exchange, the author believes that this may be the genuine results or staged, an ethical or aesthetic attitude, 'when it becomes "an end without end" in the words of Kant, but also can, covertly or clear hide a material interest (a business) or intangible (prestige, ostentation, power)' (Campbell, 2015: 45).
Drake and Gurney (2004) deals with hostility from the perspective of hospitality from the perspective of performance and the conflicts it causes to accommodate the guest. They explain that the hospitality offering brings tensions to the host, as from that moment the expectation is a more close and continuous relationship with the guest, translated into access to areas which hitherto were considered private or reserved. And yet, host and guest care about their actions, because not everything can be done in the eyes of the other (Darke and Gurney, 2004). The authors say that tensions may increase through the back of the anonymity of the commercial hospitality, as many guests, because they have paid or invested a monetary value to the private use of a particular space, do unsustainably, accumulating trash, destroying property and committing acts of vandalism.

3 STAKEHOLDERS AND ITS RELATION TO THE HOSPITALITY

When it comes to organizations and the environment in which they operate should consider the studies involving the stakeholder theory. According to Koga and Wada (2013), Freeman, in 1984, introduced its management strategy vision through his work Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach, important reference for academic studies and organizations.

According to the authors, several scholars contributed to the approach of stakeholders, including Clarkson (1995) and Freeman (1999). These contributions and several others, encouraged Freeman in 2010 to publish the work "Stakeholder Theory: the state of the art".

According to Freeman (1984: P vi), 'stakeholder is any group or individual who can influence or be influenced for the achievement of the objectives of a company.' Freeman and McVea (2001) defined as the relationship of the parties involved that management should prioritize and explore with the aim of developing business strategies. Corroborating Freeman (1984) and Freeman and McVea (2001), Carroll and Buchholtz (2003: 70) conceptualize as 'an individual or a group that has one or more of the various stakes in a business'. Actions, decisions, policies or practices of both can affect both companies and stakeholders.

In this context, emerging from the discussions related to stakeholders that, from Freeman's theories (1984), become part of the discussions regarding business relations. According to the author, should not despise "any group or individual that affects or is affected by the organization's purposes, because this group can prevent the achievement of the organization '(Freeman, 1984: 52). So in theory, the concept of stakeholder should involve groups and individuals, regardless of their impact factor in the organization's daily life. Emphasizing that
such involvement should also contain groups or individuals who have different values and practices to the organization. 'Admitting that illegitimate groups have participation in the company's business, although unpleasant, needs to be considered from the point of view of strategic management' (Freeman, 1984: 53).

Figure 1 - Map of the two dimensions of stakeholders

Source: Freeman, Harrison e Wicks (2007: 7)

Freeman, Harrison and Wicks (2007) and Clarkson (1995: 106) proposes the division between primary and secondary stakeholders (Fig. 1), as follows:

Primary stakeholders: are the groups whose participation and continued interest are responsible for the maintenance and survival of the company - shareholders and investors, employees, consumers, suppliers, customers, government and the community.

Secondary stakeholders: are groups or individuals who, in principle, are not directly involved with the organization, but somehow, in certain situations, can become influential enough to affect their daily lives (Clarkson, 1995).
The need to establish techniques and processes capable of managing stakeholders within the organization Freeman (1984) suggests how understand procedures from the perspective of rationality, who the stakeholders are and what the power of influence that can have on the organization; understand the organizational processes - implicit and/or explicit - to better manage the organization's relationships with its stakeholders; and understand the interactions between the organization and its stakeholders, based on its operations or business in order to check if they fit the map and the organization's processes in relation to its stakeholders (Freeman, 1984).

Clarkson (1995) to divide the stakeholders into primary and secondary facilitates the understanding of the relationships that must be established between them, as the urge to differentiate the issues concerning stakeholder social issues, understanding of why organizations do not manage their relations with society and their appropriate analysis considering the institutional, organizational and individual levels. From its division groups, adds the risk involved in the relationship organization-stakeholders, is classified as voluntary stakeholder that somehow invests in the organization and is aware of the risks that may occur and involuntary stakeholder, which are subject the risks arising from the organization's performance, but have little knowledge about them (Clarkson, 1994). Thus, stakeholders, individuals or groups may have or claim to property, right or interest in an organization and its activity in the dimensions of law, ethics, individual or group.

It is considered, therefore, that the union of individuals, groups, cities and organizations form a community and, in this perspective, Grinover (2007) involves the relationship between people and organizations interact institutionally, but occupying the same space, Local promotion of the welfare and security. It is in this space that materializes accessibility, readability and construction of identity, intertwined by sociality, ethics, culture and the rites of hospitality. To that end, the procedures proposed by Freeman (1984) also join the hospitality, as all have in common the interaction of one with the other, the host to the guest, the organization with its stakeholders. It is the action in different circumstances and times is defining the position of the parties involved. now is, why is the other.

The hospitality of the organization and its stakeholders promotes social links open spaces for the active and interactive participation of all those involved strengthening, enhancing the quality of relationships in social spaces and providing meaning to community life (Bueno, 2015).
4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Methodologically, it is intended to conduct a comparative study of the current conflicts between the population of Lavras Novas district and the sector of services during the period 2008-2015, through the lens of hospitality. Therefore, this study presents with a qualitative approach, descriptive character by exposing "certain population characteristics or a certain phenomenon" (Vergara, 2003: 47).

The collected data not analyzed in 2008 was used and through semi-structured interviews applied to two representatives of the people who were appointed by Lavras Novas (MG District Administrative Board) responsible for the organization and administration of the locality. For the current study counted on the participation of a member of the Administrative Board, current President. One respondent (former member of the Administrative Board) of previous research and a shop owner, born in the community, young and that for a long time worked in other establishments whose owners were 'foreigners'.

For data analysis, was used the Bardin content analysis (1997, p. 117), in the form of categorization that is presented as a sort operation of the components of a set, for differentiation and then, by regrouping according to the analogy with previously defined criteria. 'Therefore, it was defined as categories to be investigated:

- Culture: beliefs, local rites, customs and local history;
- Work: respect for labor laws and practices for the performance of work;
- Sustainability: Local development, preservation of natural, historic and cultural;
- Infrastructure: education, health and basic sanitation;
- Recreation: sport and entertainment.
5 DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Considered for this analysis, the population of Lavras Novas-MG as the organization as stakeholders, service providers established in district, tourists and Ouro Preto-MG City Hall for the categories under analysis (Fig. 2).

Figure 2 - Primary and secondary stakeholders of Lavras Novas-MG district.

Culture: In 2008, the reports point to a disregard for the rites and customs of the community by tourists and service providers. A quiet, religious and many ritual site, the population was changing their habits and rituals as a way to preserve what was most dear to them, their way of life. Currently, the report gives an example:

I like to preserve the roots, though this ending. Many investors who came out saying they wanted quality of life ... and I thought it was! They wanted was to make money. They do not care about the culture of the place. (I1, 2015)

The statement I1 shows that disregard for local culture is still a practice of ‘outsiders’, meeting the assertion Camargo (2008) that not all meetings are hospitable. Based on Freeman's view (1984), it can be pointed to a lack of understanding of the processes implicit and explicit organization of the local population and those that there lodge or visit.
Work: In 2008, few workers were hired under the labor laws. The reports at the time pointed to the individual work of exploitation, low pay on the basis of skin color, little formal education and way of speaking. Today, some things have changed:

Things have changed a bit. Here everyone has improved, because we are getting even with them. You see in the case of hotels. Today, many people here have inn equal to or better than theirs. We learned to work with them […]. The people here are smart. (I2, 2015)

Most works of a formal contract, only those who do not want is to not have a formal contract. (I3, 2015)

Analyzed from the perspective of performance and conflicts of Drake and Gurney (2004), it was noticed the tensions that constitute the relationship between host and guest due to the narrowing and continuity of relationships. Thus, the previous hospitality creates a sense of hostility as can be observed in I2 declaration (2015).

Some treat people here with indifference […]. They do not like a lot of people are equating them. (I2, 2015)

Host and guest are concerned about their actions, because not everything can be done in the eyes of the other (Darke and Gurney, 2004).

Sustainability: In 2008 appointed the elimination of water sources due to the construction of buildings in a disorderly manner outside the resort, dumping of sewage and garbage in the river and in the pond and the mess left by tourists in the vicinity of waterfalls. Today, the situation is not much different, as states I1.

Unfortunately, the people who came and it here, do not have this concern. […] I see it like an epidemic. The person only cares about what's inside his property. [I1].

Quadricycles are degrading the water. Last year we had fight here on the street because of the water. The police had to come! (I3, 2015)

These claims are in line with the explanation offered by Darke and Gurney (2004) that the anonymity of commercial hospitality elevate tensions between guests and hosts, as they are based on investment or the monetary amount paid for use of a particular space. Therefore, according to Clarkson (1994), established relationships should be known, they may include stakeholders - individuals or groups - which have or claim to the property, right or interest in an organization and its activity in the dimensions of legislation, ethics, the individual or group.
Infrastructure: In 2008 and 2012, the district did not have a medical station, sanitation, pharmacy and had an elementary school. The allegations pointed disregard of the Ouro Preto city, since the higher income of the municipality came from mining. Today, little has changed. The district has a health center that works twice a week, a newly opened pharmacy and a post office. Education remains the basic, elementary school, but faces problems of shortage of teachers. In I1 opinion has not changed:

The car that transports people is the same, starts classes and no teacher. [...] I had to go to the office to talk to the secretary [...] It was more difficult to talk to the secretary than as mayor. No one wants to solve problems ... (I1, 2015)

According to Grinover (2007) is the union that promotes the community through interaction between people and organizations that occupy the same space in search of well-being and safety by ensuring the accessibility, readability and construction identity, intertwined by sociality, ethics, culture and the rites of hospitality. For Freeman (1984) all have in common the host interaction with the guest, the organization with its stakeholders. It is the action in different circumstances and moments that define the position of the parties involved, now is one, now is the other. Bueno (2015) completing explaining that hospitality between the organization and its stakeholders promotes social links open spaces for the active and interactive participation.

Leisure: The feeling of the population as leisure in 2008 was the loss as not attending the fun places like the waterfalls and the bars of the locality due to tourism which occupied the countryside and raised trade prices. The population did not have enough money to support the new standard. Currently, the population's economic standard has improved and gradually are going to frequent the same places for tourists.

Now we go out from time to time. Now we have money. We join the class and will in Bem-Te-Vi, will in Pink Pepper ... (I2, 2015).

Before I did not go because she had no money to spend. Now we have. (I3, 2015).

The statements corroborate the assertion Freeman (1984) that regardless of the impact factor of different individuals or groups in the organization's daily life, their involvement, although unpleasant, should be considered from the perspective of strategic management.
6 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Based on stakeholder theory and studies on hospitality this study found that the intended objectives have been achieved.

As the general objective is perceived that the conflicts in 2008 and 2012 are still present. Despite the presence of hostility in certain issues raised in relation to disrespect the culture and sustainability, local people understand that they can also take on egalitarian roles in relation to service providers.

When checking the relationship between the native population of the locality and service providers for the categories 'culture', 'work', 'sustainability', 'infrastructure' and 'leisure' under the lens of hospitality and stakeholder theory in the period between 2008-2015, there was a breakthrough in labor relations and leisure, but also mediated more by economics and competition between the two groups. The hospitality between them is still very significant in the relationship, because they do not support the search for solutions to important issues affecting the district as a whole.

The analysis of how social ties happen and are formalized between the residents of the District of Lavras Novas-MG and service providers showed the lack of interest of the population in closer relations with the 'outsiders' making it clear that this only happens when relates to working aspects.

Regarding the elements of conflict that generates hostility among the inhabitants of Lavras Novas-MG and service providers it was observed that these involve environmental sustainability, especially the preservation of water sources. The lack of union of the two groups regarding the infrastructure demands by the Ouro Preto City Hall were also considered in the interviews. The disregard for local culture was also punctuated, but with the understanding that the novelty behind new elements that are added to the community.

Based on the results it is considered that the hostility, in a veiled way, is still very present among the local residents in relation to service providers, tourists and public administration. At first, it was realized that the community accepts to live with the 'foreign' but protecting their genuine hospitality only to those who have already gained their trust through actions that are in the categories proposed in this study and are corroborated by theory stakeholders.
REFERENCES


The home-food economy: the alternative economy of online mediated commensality

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to understand the alternative economy of a growing form of hospitality provision. Online mediated commensality is a popular form of hospitality that promotes a social, shared meal experience that differs from other forms of dining. The phenomenon is discussed with reference to ethical, shared and innovative perspectives of alternative economies. Empirical data based on participant observations and discussion style interviews are used to gain valuable insight into the phenomenon. The paper identifies a broader conceptual gaze of the phenomenon which is used to discuss the components that are being exchanged within it. The Home-food Economy is identified as a nuanced, alternative economy which is facilitated online and promotes unique experiences of commensality within contemporary hospitality provision.

Background

Commensality is defined as the act of eating with others (Sobal & Nelson, 2003). Its defining features, however, argue that commensality is about much more than satisfying a nutritional need. Grignon defines commensality as “a gathering aimed to accomplish in a collective way some material tasks and symbolic obligations linked to the satisfaction of a biological need” (2001) which argues that commensality is a combination of satisfying a nutritional need as well as an emotionally symbolic togetherness experienced by those sharing food. The social act of sharing involves an understanding of reciprocal commitment and involvement between individuals. The intimate exchange of food can encourage, consciously or unconsciously, a physical bond which can constitute the very structure of social organisation (Fischler 2011). The feelings of amity and bonding can occur while sharing a meal as well as signifying that the diners share a number of characteristics, values and behaviours (Morgan, 2012). Danesi (2012) suggests that the sharing of food can act as a social lubricant, which can enable social relations to be established and maintained. Commensality, therefore, can lead to temporal equality and an intimacy which can generate symbolic communication and further interpretation by those involved (Morgan, 2012).

The recent phenomenon of online mediated commensality (OMC) is defined here as ‘social events structured around the meal that are organised online to attract interested individuals or groups.’ The recent growth of online mediated commensality has identified a change in the
way individuals are dining out and how these meals are constructed due to the advances of online technology. It has been suggested that contemporary British society has seen a decline in the prevalence of family meals, the decreasing importance of meal times and the fact that eating is often done alone or at the same time as other activities. Commensality, therefore, has become a more of a novelty and the experiences found within online mediated commensality, it is argued, identify why the phenomenon has grown. The social element of these online mediated meals has also suggested a popularity of eating with others, strangers or like-minded people who enjoy the social and communal aspects of the meal.

Those writing on commensality and communal dining suggest that there are great pleasures associated with sharing a meal with others. Julier (2013) suggests that there are both tangible and intangible rewards relating to engaging in commensality. The shared experience of the meal allows individuals to socialise, converse, interact and to feel connected to one another. Another attraction to such meals is the opportunity to experience something different, to meet new people, experiment with new tastes, cuisines and cultures (Yates & Warde, 2015). It is the combination of tangible and intangible rewards that are found within online-mediated commensality that are seen as the main attraction. One writer on the phenomenon argues that the chance to enjoy top-quality food and to meet new people offers a more unique, complete experience of the meal than those found in regular restaurants (Schofield, 2015).

Within this phenomenon, its online mediation and attraction, an alternative economy is taking prominence. The development of such an economy takes influence from a number of ethical, moral and shared interactions which are seen as both innovative and challenging to more traditional forms of hospitality provision. The purpose of this paper is to build an understanding of this alternative economy, its influences, variations and implications on the wider industry.

The paper builds on previous research on network hospitality and associated alternative economies. Germann Molz’s (2007, 2012) work on the CouchSurfing network seeks to understand ethically framed, non-monetary interactions and their online facilitation and structure. Botsman & Rogers (2011) and Ikkala & Lampinen (2015) identify Airbnb as an example of a shared, collaborative network of hospitality provision. Similarly Guttentag (2015) discuss creative and innovative business practices of hospitality provision surrounding the Airbnb phenomenon. While these authors demonstrate understandings of alternative economies and practices around hospitality, they are focussed on accommodation and an
interaction which can be bound or conditioned by inevitable separation during the experience of hospitality i.e. guests and hosts rarely sleep or cohabit in the same room for the duration of their visit. Online Mediated Commensality, however, is dependent on its communal, social and interactive practices. This paper will therefore investigate how an alternative economy has developed and what implications this has on the phenomenon and the place of contemporary hospitality provision.

**Research Material Collection**

The collected research material for this paper comes from extensive exploratory research on the phenomenon of online mediated commensality. The collected research material was undertaken in two phases. The first phase was based on a combination of autoethnography and participant observation of 38 meals that fit the definition of the phenomenon of online mediated commensality. Meals were chosen if their online description fitted with the criteria speculated in definitions of online mediated commensality. These definitions stipulated that the sample should be a meal that was organised online and had a social/communal element to it. Broadly termed as supper clubs, meetups, underground, pop-up or home restaurants, suitable meals offer an alternative to the restaurant scene where individuals and groups can attend a meal based on sharing the experience in a range of social contexts and venues. Venues included private homes, restaurants, bars, delicatessens, art studios, churches and community centres and the number of those attending ranged from intimate meals of 4-6 diners to larger events of 50-60. All meals were set around communal tables allowing for social interaction between those attending.

Hosts/organisers of meals were contacted in advance of the first phase of material collection. Those that agreed to take part were invited to take part in the second phase of research material collection. The second phase involved 21 discussion-style interviews with hosts/organisers of meals that are considered part of the phenomenon of online mediated commensality. The combination of both phases of research material collection aimed to achieve an all-round interpretation of the phenomenon by using a range of research techniques. Each set of data was transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis seeks to discover information about participants’ lives through what they say and do. In doing so, it can make interpretations on the particularities of the social practices or phenomena under study (Wilkinson, 2011).
The Growth of an alternative economy

An increasing crisis in value and a growing immaterial economy has seen a response to capitalism which has been influenced by social, environmental and moral values (Arvidsson Bauwens & Peitersen, 2008). This alternative economy has taken prominence within business and enterprise. In what Arvidsson (2009) calls ‘contemporary capitalism’ value is derived from ethics within social organisations rather than the generation of knowledge of profit. This change in valuation has seen the creation of an alternative economy primarily structured by networks, social recognition and based on generosity, trust and reciprocity (Arvidsson et al, 2008). This alternative economy and its place within contemporary society has been defined by two main perspectives. The ethical economy, it is argued, is based on ‘affective affinity’ rather than purely power or monetary obligations. The use of the word ‘ethical’ also relates to the fact that obligations are of an indeterminate nature and that the source of value is often an ‘ethical thing’ like a community, shared value or belief (Arvidsson et al, 2008). Another aspect associated with the ethical economy is that it seeks to create and sustain values and norms that strengthen a particular network or social relationship rather than establishing a universal or global moral code (Arvidsson, 2010). This concurs with Aristotle’s view of ethics which focuses on constructing community through mutual values, passions, purpose and integrity and the fulfilment of obligations and earning pride and respect in one’s practices (Solomon, 2004). While, as with Aristotle, ethics have always been a part of economic behaviour, the fact that it is now seen as something new and alternative suggests that it has previously been marginalised in a capitalist orientated society (Altman, 2005). While care should be given when conceptualising and underpinning what is truly ethical or not, engagement in the ethical economy can open up new opportunities and types of exchange that were not previously readily available.

Another perspective of an alternative economy is that of the sharing economy. The sharing economy refers to a range of exchanges which are facilitated through online platforms and which can be for-profit as well as not-for-profit (Richards, 2015). Also described as collaborative consumption, the sharing economy uses online communication and technologies to cope with a growing consumer awareness fuelled by social commerce and the need and want to share resources (Botsman & Rogers, 2011). What exactly is being shared within the sharing economy, however, can be slightly misleading. Belk (2010) argues that sharing is commonly associated with communal acts linking individuals to each other creating feelings of solidarity and bonding. While sharing within the sharing economy can encourage the sharing of physical resources, it can also involve the sharing of feelings and emotions which
can create and regulate social ties, social norms and reciprocity (John, 2012). At one end, and similar to the ethical economy, the sharing economy can be viewed as an antidote to capitalism and a prelude to collaboration and community (Richards, 2015). At the other end, however, the sharing economy can be highly competitive and motivated by profit. What transpires within the sharing economy is a paradox of whether the sharing economy is actually sharing or a capitalist niche acting as a remedy for a hyper-consumerist culture (Schor, Walker, Lee, Parigi & Cook 2015).

Both the ethical and sharing economies have lead, in some respects, to examples of disruptive innovation. The process of disruptive innovation seeks to promote unique experiences, services and/or products to a growing market through an innovative internet-based business model (Guttentag, 2015). Disruptive products and services also offer a number of benefits. They are often seen as cheaper more convenient alternatives, offering more value for money, and appealing to new or less-demanding customers (Christensen & Raynor, 2013). They can also lead to further business innovation, experimentation and/or growth and can feel new or alternative to those experiencing them. A successful disruptive product or service will generally improve over time and experience, thus becoming more attractive to a growing market (Guttentag, 2015). Christensen, Raynor, & McDonald (2015) argue that disruptive innovation should refer to the continuous evolution of a product, service or experience rather than viewing it at one fixed point.

What all three of these perspectives do promote, however, is the ability and possibility of doing economy differently. As the economy of the 21st century places importance on technology, social relations and sharing information, the alternative economy could be described as “more friendly, empowered, collaborative and locally orientated capitalism” (Schor et al, 2015). While the use of the word capitalism here may go against the more ethical end of the alternative economy, this definition strengthens how the alternative economy uses online technology to facilitate exchange, limit uncertainty and promote trust between participants. Others argue, however, that while trust and exchange is promoted amongst individuals, that the serendipities involved in meeting, interacting and exchanging with others are reduced, normalised and less open to spontaneity due to their online mediation (Schor et al, 2015).

The alternative economy, and its aforementioned components, have impacted on the provision and development of a number of hospitality networks. Couchsurfing, Airbnb and a
number of informal hospitality networks have grown in popularity in the last decade. The phenomenon of online mediated commensality also represents a nuanced, alternative economy taking influence from ethical, sharing and innovative perspectives. The OMC phenomenon represents an economy which places the meal, identities, the concept of home and the sharing of these experiences at its centre. The following section will discuss a broader conceptual understanding of the phenomenon and the alternative economy related to it.

**The concept of Home-food**

Through the exploratory research on the OMC phenomenon the broader conceptual gaze of Home-food represents an alternative take on the provision of food, drink, the meal and hospitality. The meal is an understood concept, a mainstay of the concept of hospitality and largely understood within the industry as taking place in the settings of restaurants, cafés, bars and other, more traditional forms of commercial eating establishments. What Home-food presents is, however, turning some of the traditional underpinnings of the meal and commerce on its head. Its organisation, online mediation, consumption and forms of payment and its place within contemporary economy suggest the Home-food is a way of dining, interacting and ‘doing’ hospitality differently.

The findings identified a number of elements which have been brought together to understand the concept of Home-food. The 5 key elements are: identity, sociability, values, skills, and setting (Figure 1).

![Figure 1: Elements of the Home-food Movement](image-url)
Table 1 identifies a number of characteristics that belong to each element. These too have been identified through the exploratory research process of Online Mediated Commensality.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements of Home-food</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Quote from research findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identity</td>
<td>Nationality, origin, occupation, status, self</td>
<td><em>I just love cooking...from a family who is just obsessed with food, we are from the south west of France and down there food is a religion just about, so I have been well brought up in that respect because we have always had really good food at home...</em> (D8: 2-6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociability</td>
<td>Sociability, communality, interaction</td>
<td>‘for me it's just as much about the social aspect as it is the food stuff. Like this...if it wasn't for (this meal) we might not be speaking like this and having this kind of conversation’ (M25: 166-168)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values</td>
<td>Sharing, togetherness, community, family</td>
<td><em>I think that food is common to every single human being in the world. (...) it brings people together. We have something in common immediately, (...) food relates to emotions, you can have a really bad day and have a good meal and instantly you feel better (...) that emotion we feel when we eat something is important cos when you share that with other people it affects how you feel</em> (D9: 279-285)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>Social, culinary, business, organisation, technology</td>
<td><em>I started doing these supper clubs about a year ago, cos I have always been like really really into cooking, (...) and also entertaining and also design like creating a really personal experience (...) I've been kind of like praised for attention to detail which you don't get in restaurants</em> (D15: 3-6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I think maybe it’s a little bit of the unknown (...) maybe there is an aspect of ‘oh what’s going to happen?’ 'Who am I going to meet?' 'Who am I going to be sat next to?' 'What will it be like?' Curiosity about the location, (...) I think it’s a little bit about having some adventure (D16: 284-297)

Table 1: Elements and characteristics of the Home-food movement

The use of the term ‘Home-food’ is based on a number of the findings from this study. Food, the meal, commensality and the importance it found in much of the collected research was strongly associated, directly or indirectly, with home. The concept of home is also contextualised as being given reference to identity, family, background, nationality, socialisation, memories and nostalgia. Its hyphenation, here, aims to represent the interconnectivity between the two components.

The research findings suggested that participants relate ‘home’ with family, place, identity, and belonging. These references are not, however, solely linked to home as a setting but the broader concepts of space, mobility and self. The findings demonstrated strong links to other academic sources. Wiles (2008: 116), for example, describes the concept of home as a "slippery, multi-layered ongoing process" which can be identified in a number of ways. The findings show that food, and an individual’s relationship with it, is also replete with meanings, symbolism, identity, familiarity and belongings. Certain foods called back memories of family, occasions, destinations and cultures and often had a profound effect on those experiencing them. The meals in this study also acted as a learning for those not familiar with the food, style of dining or cuisine. This learning would come from the host, or others who were more familiar with the idiosyncrasies of each meal. The sharing of information at meals encourages a dialogue between those sharing the experience, learning from each other, interacting and conversing similarities and differences throughout the duration of the meal.

The choice of the term Home-food in detailing the broader conceptual gaze of what is taking place is apparent as the two words become interconnected, inseparable and constants in terms of their understanding within the phenomenon under study. The concept of Home-food
also represents alternative experiences of hospitality where individuals can link the meal to their own concepts of home. Whether it be their physical location, the setting, the style of service or the style of food, individuals can attend meals to, consciously or not, reconnect with, reimagine or reconceptualise home for themselves. It is here that the structure and organisation of OMC leads to an experience of hospitality which encapsulates the uniqueness of the phenomenon.

**The Home-food Economy (HFE)**

Using Home-food as a concept, however, does not truly represent what is taking place within online mediated commensality. The intention here is to detail how the concept is underpinning this study and how this will have implications on the broader context of contemporary hospitality provision. On one hand, Home-food could be seen as a Movement. Movements, or social movements, generally relate to group action of a specific cause seeking social change or recognition. In the case of a Home-food Movement, the cause may be to sustain the diminishing family/communal meal, to broaden levels of social interaction, cohesion and change. On closer inspection, however, the findings did not demonstrate an overall manifesto, aim or group action or a sense of activism. This questioned whether this was enough to use Home-food Movement as a conceptual term. What the findings do suggest is that Home-food represents a social phenomenon based on the exchange of a traditional form of hospitality which is becoming less of a societal norm or regular occurrence due to social change and the dynamics of society. Individuals are therefore presenting opportunities to recapture a dying or diminishing social act – the shared/family meal. The use of the word economy, rather than Movement, thus stipulates that what is taking place is based on a transaction or exchange which is monetary or otherwise. While many of the meals within this economy are for profit, or where money is at least used to facilitate acts of commensality, there is also a cultural, social and experiential exchange taking place which often absolves the exchange of money and becomes the main attraction. The Home-food Economy, therefore, proves a more suitable term in capturing what is taking place within the phenomenon.

Links can be made between the Home-food Economy and the aforementioned alternative economy. In terms of the ethical economy the HFE facilitates exchanges of ‘ethical things’ (Arvidsson, et al, 2008) such as a social experience, a belief or value system and the provision of hospitality towards others. The HFE also demonstrates moral understandings of behaviour, appropriateness and appropriate levels of social interaction for the duration of an attended meal. One participant commented:
‘For me it’s about creating community around food (…) you get to meet some interesting people and get a connection with them, you know, just like now…and for me it’s about meeting similar types of people, not just vegetarians but people who enjoy doing this sort of thing and are maybe a bit ‘out there’ or a bit adventurous’ (M13: 149-152)

Elements of the sharing economy are also present within HFE. Exchanges are not purely commercial (and sometimes not at all) but invariably promote a shared, social, collaborative, communal experience. The meals promote not just the sharing of an experience i.e. the meal, but a socio-emotional sharing, social bonding and reciprocity around social norms that are associated with more non-commercially orientated experiences of hospitality. The following observation relates to the sharing of food and responsibilities:

plates were passed around and shared around the table. People checked how much others were taking and sometimes asked if they could take a second, or third, helping of one of the dishes (M26: 146-148)

The meals within HFE also present a number of facets that bring innovative and creative opportunities for business-like interactions and experiences. Connections to Disruptive Innovation can be make as the meals provided a unique opportunity which has a number of benefits when compared to alternatives. This innovative approach to providing meals saw the development of potential new markets and alternatives within hospitality provision. One diner mentioned why they were attracted to the phenomenon:

‘we looked for something different and quite enjoyed it (…) it’s cheaper as well and the food was great’ (M36: 114-115)

The following framework (Figure 2) details how the concept of Home-food exists within the aforementioned alternative economy.
The Home-food Economy (and therefore Online Mediated Commensality) is sourced, on one hand, by those interested in the meal, sociability and different experiences of dining. On the other hand, the Home-food Economy can be sourced by those with an interest in exploring business and/or social ventures based around the meal. While the figure shows these as separate components they are not necessarily mutually exclusive and interest can evolve simultaneously from both perspectives. When interest, in either case, is initiated it is through its online mediation that information is sourced and shared among interested individuals. The Home-food Economy therefore represents an aspect of hospitality provision that incorporates aspects of identity, social interaction, values, skills and setting associated with the meal. Its online mediation and its association with the alternative economy fosters interaction with likeminded individuals with similar interest and shared moral frameworks related to the meal and the components found within it.

While sociability and interaction are key aspects of the HFE, the nature of the economy does not extend these social relations beyond the experience of the meal. The experiences of HFE represent momentary meals within momentary spaces and the motivations of many of those participating in HFE was not to make friends or have future interactions with fellow diners. As one participant mentioned:
‘Socially, we don't make friends or see these people again, but that's what I like, the transience and temporary meetings of people...it's fun and there is no pressure. It's like the one (...) we told you about, we could have stayed there all night with the people we met at the table, but when the night came to an end we all said goodbye...and that was it...but that didn't matter’ (M28: 201-205)

The transience and temporariness of social interactions were commonly observed and discussed among participants and hosts of the phenomenon. While they generally do not move away from the experience of the meal, they do represent, what Bell describes as flickering moments of hospitality, “little islands, magic touches, throwntogetherness” (2012: 149).

Conclusion

The HFE represents opportunities for interested individuals to experience the hospitality, social interaction and related experiences found within the shared meal. The concept of Home-food is identified as containing 5 key components: identity, sociability, values, skills and settings. These components, and their combination, are identified in the research findings and develop a deeper understanding of what is taking place within the phenomenon and therefore what is being exchanged. The HFE demonstrates a nuanced, alternative economy which takes influence from ethical, shared and innovative perspectives. While alternative economies have been previously identified in hospitality provision, they have focused on accommodation and home sharing and have not been specifically related to the meal and the intimate interaction around it. The HFE represents how the experience of the shared meal and the online facilitation of it are becoming more popular in a fast paced, liquid society. Interested individuals are able to fleetingly experience alternative, creative and unique meals with like-minded others. The social interaction and experiences are contained within the meal, rarely moving beyond it or being repeated in the same way, with the same people again. It is argued therefore that one of the main attractions of OMC and the experiences of HFE is to experience the hospitality contained within the shared meal as a one off, unique experience.

While the author’s definition of OMC is still appropriate in defining the phenomenon, a further definition of the broader Home-food Economy can now established as: ‘An alternative economy promoting memorable experiences of the meal where identities, skills and values are shared among participants in a sociable, unique, hospitable setting’. While this definition
builds on previous examples of network hospitality, it further demonstrates how alternative economies and online mediation of experiences are becoming intrinsic aspects of a broadening approach to contemporary hospitality provision. The implications of such alternative economies will deepen our understanding of hospitality and its online mediation and how this can influence or affect our understanding of hospitality in a broader context.

References


