Exploring the impact of the constructs of the three-domain approach on private social and commercial hospitality provision

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This article explores the constructs of private social and commercial hospitality in a panoramic examination of the impact and potential future development of the three-domain approach. Focused primarily (but not exclusively) on the books *In Search of Hospitality: theoretical perspectives and debates*, and *Hospitality: A Social Lens*, the article describes how the three-domain approach provides a theoretical framework to inform the holistic study of hospitality and discusses the importance of the broader phenomenon of hospitality in private, social and commercial hospitality provision.

Keywords: Commodification, service delivery, hospitableness, generosity, reciprocity, virtuousness

Introduction

The publication *In Search of Hospitality* emanated from a debate that began in the UK among members of the Council for Hospitality Management Education (CHME) in 1997. Later referred to as the Nottingham Group, these senior hospitality educators sought legitimacy for the hospitality discipline by reflecting on the composition of the hospitality management curriculum as well as the theoretical framework that supports it (Morrison & O'Mahony 2002). As a result, the overriding theme within *In Search of Hospitality* was the need to broaden the definition of hospitality to include perspectives from the humanities and the social sciences.

Although hospitality has frequently borrowed from disciplines such as finance, human resource management, marketing and information technology, the innovation of *In Search of Hospitality* is the inclusion of sociological constructs such as anthropology, history, philosophy, gender and performance. These perspectives provide the greatest potential to develop the critical, analytical and entrepreneurial mindsets required for the practise of commercial hospitality in a dynamic, global, competitive environment. Along with the aforementioned constructs, a number of other major themes are included in the text, including the commodification of domestic hospitality, hospitableness, generosity, reciprocity and virtuousness. These themes are crucial to understanding how relationships are formed and how the bonds that underpin such relationships are developed and nurtured. Thus, there is much to be gained by examining these dimensions and reflecting on the value that they can add to both the study and practice of hospitality.

Indeed, the expansion of hospitality beyond a purely managerial focus has already led to the uncovering of '… insights into the study of hospitality that encompass the commercial provision of hospitality and the hospitality industry, yet at the same time recognise that hospitality needs to be explored in a private domestic setting and studies

hospitality as a social phenomenon involving relationships between people' (Lashley & Morrison 2000, xvi). However, it is Lashley's (2000) contribution in chapter one, which not only sums up the arguments presented by the other authors, as all good editors should, but also presents his vision for the development of the theoretical understanding of hospitality in its broadest form. As a result, the conceptual model that he presents as the three domains of hospitality represents a breakthrough that not only resonates with many hospitality scholars who have explored the socio-economic phenomenon that is hospitality, but also provides a holistic framework for hospitality research in a multidisciplinary context.

The purpose of this article is to take a panoramic look at the impact and potential for future the development of Lashley's (2000) three-domain framework, focused primarily (but not exclusively) on the books *In Search of Hospitality* (2000) and *Hospitality: A Social Lens* (2007). The article describes how Lashley's three domains provide a theoretical framework to inform the holistic study of hospitality and discusses the importance of the key constructs of the broader phenomenon of hospitality on private, social and commercial hospitality provision.

The three domains of hospitality

In presenting the three-domain approach, Lashley (2000) correctly pointed out that hospitality has traditionally been discussed as a commercial, economic activity. As a result, the social science perspective, which has a role in informing hospitality provision, has largely been ignored. He proposed that private, social and commercial hospitality have a fundamental role to play in our understanding of the broader phenomenon of hospitality. He has compacted these activities into one unifying schema, described as the three-domain approach and he presents this as a simple but powerful Venn

diagram depicting the private, social and commercial domains of hospitality.

The private domain takes into account the fact that in western societies hospitality is a private activity and, within this context, it is imbued with a range of symbols, rituals, duties, privileges and cultural values. Many of these are played out in the sharing of food, which is an important step in the development and consolidation of relationships. Consequently, friendship, sharing and reciprocity are key features of private hospitality.

Social hospitality considers the social settings in which hospitality is produced and consumed as well as the impact of a variety of consumption practices, social forces and cultural norms. Hospitality in the social domain can occur in both private and commercial settings, which has prompted Lashley (and others) to consider the social context in which hospitality is consumed, thus extending the definition of hospitality to include the values and norms of hospitality provision. These include the protection of guests, such as the example of Shakespeare's Macbeth noted in *In Search of Hospitality*, as well as concern for the mutual well-being of hosts and guests.

Commercial hospitality refers to the production and consumption of hospitality and related services for profit including the provision of overnight accommodation (Jones 1996), food and drink in a commercial environment (Brotherton & Wood 2000).

Commodification of domestic hospitality

A key theme in *In Search of Hospitality* is that many aspects of managing commercial hospitality businesses revolve around the commodification of the principles of private or domestic hospitality. With this in mind, a number of chapters concentrate on the relationships that are developed between hosts and guests from a private hospitality perspective (Lashley 2000, Dark & Gurney 2000, Telfer 2000).

While private hospitality can refer to hosting guests in private homes it has also played a wider role in the commodification of hospitality and, indeed, in the development of the hospitality industry, particularly in the UK. Take, for example, Mrs Beeton's many books and, in particular, *All About Cookery* which was a best seller in its day. Interestingly, the inside covers (back and front) of the 'New' edition published in 1923, are dominated by advertisements for beef suet, bicarbonate of soda, baking powder, tea and cocoa, as well as the Russell Range – as used at Queen Alexandra's Technical School in Sandringham. Clearly, the publishers and advertisers recognised the commercial value of this household management text. The editors describe Mrs Beeton as a '… guide, philosopher and friend of countless happy homes for more than half a century' (editors, in Beeton, 1923, 5). The household context is also important because a small household is described as one with only one or two servants, while in larger ones a larger complement of staff is expected; as noted in the statement: 'the cook and those who serve under her are so intimately associated that their duties can hardly be treated separately' (Beeton 1923, 35).

The households to which Mrs Beeton refers exemplify the values and norms of the period, where the provision of hospitality was directly linked with the relationships that are developed between hosts and guests. In these upper-class households, those relationships had a particular influence on one's position within society and the sharing of food and drink was an essential element in this. More importantly, though, these households provided the training grounds for commercial hospitality staff and, indeed, many of the rituals, traditions and practices of these households were transferred directly into the hospitality industry. Consequently, commercial hospitality has a long and established link with private and social hospitality, which has not always been recognised (Slattery 2002).

As a result, the history of hospitality and the hospitality industry is important to our understanding of hospitality provision. This is illustrated by Walton (2000), who approaches history from an urban/industrial history perspective. His approach fits neatly with the evolution of both hospitality as an industry and the importance of the social science approach to hospitality education and research. The presentation of history in a social and industrial context has also allowed the roots of hospitality to be uncovered in an accessible way without the constraints of the dominant empiricist 'worldview', which has permeated British history and philosophy (Carr 1961). In so doing, it has also opened the notion of macro relationships, allowing hospitality academics to expand their repertoire into international relations, diplomacy, politics and ethics, as well as concepts such as conditional and unconditional hospitality in line with Derrida's (2000, 2005) observations, and Kant's (1983) more restricted approach that includes codes of friendship, displays of power, elitism and rituals. Baker (2011, 59) describes the Kantian view as acknowledging the rights of strangers but limiting these rights with the '… evils of colonial appropriation in mind'.

Walton's chapter in *In Search of Hospitality* has since been enhanced by O'Gorman (2010), who reflects on the importance of hosts and guests and the relationships that are developed between both parties when hospitality is provided and consumed. The social, economic and geographic influences, described by O'Gorman are of special relevance in a global hospitality environment.

The social values system

The importance of hospitality to social cohesion and to the general well-being of communities is another key theme noted in redistribution of '… food and drink to neighbours and to the poor …' (Lashley 2000, 7). This central connection to the values of society was, up until relatively recently, a critical and well understood element in many societies. Indeed, the welfare state, which provides for the health and care of citizens, is a somewhat new phenomenon. Prior to this, many societies relied on the benevolence of the wealthy to provide hospices and charitable infirmaries to care for the sick and those less fortunate. As a result, offering hospitality to strangers was a moral imperative that formed a core part of the social structure of communities. Reciprocity, which as Lashley (2000) explains is a major component of the social value system, was an equally prevalent value. When enacted in a social hospitality context in either private or commercial settings, it entailed a level of mutual obligation, whereas in commercial hospitality that obligation is mitigated by economic exchange. The exploration of these constructs

is furthered in *Hospitality: A Social Lens*, which extends our understanding of host/guest relationships and the mutual obligations that these relationships entail.

Hospitableness

Hospitableness is central to the notion of hospitality; however, hospitableness is a philosophy with many dimensions. For example, there are many instances within the delivery of hospitality services where a lack of hospitableness can have a negative impact on overall satisfaction. O'Mahony (2009) notes, for example, that inhospitable behaviour can be inadvertent or overt. For instance, lack of acceptance of international credit cards, poor directional signage and the instructions provided for users of public transport can be inadvertently inhospitable, while tourism taxation is often a more overt attempt to move the burden of local taxation to tourists who do not have voting rights within the tourism destination. This ensures that there is minimal political backlash for local politicians. When this philosophy underpins tourism taxation it represents a breach of trust, which can have a major impact on the development of relationships. In a social hospitality setting this has an obvious impact on turning strangers into friends (Lashley 2000); however, recent studies also highlight the nexus between trust and guests' commitment to ongoing commercial hospitality relationships as well as the potential loss of repeat visitation and/or positive word of mouth communication (O'Mahony et al. 2013). Consequently, Telfer's (2000) philosophy of hospitableness is a well founded virtue that has significant implications for commercial hospitality practice.

Expanding the definition of hospitality

Naturally, an expansion of the hospitality discipline requires an expanded definition of hospitality to navigate the complexities of Lashley's (2000) three domains. Few would be more qualified to define hospitality within this broader context than Brotherton, with a background in strategic and operational management, and Wood, with a background in sociology. Together they synthesise semantic and evidential definitions of hospitality into a coherent yet comprehensive statement. The semantic definitions relate to dictionary meanings, while the evidential are connected with the hospitality industry.

Many of the semantic definitions of hospitality provided in dictionaries reflect the private hospitality perspective and include the virtuous elements of hospitality. For example, generosity, openness, hospitableness and reciprocation are all components of these dictionary understandings of hospitality. Brotherton and Wood also reflect on the emergence of the published sociological perspectives of hospitality that emerged in the 1980s and 90s, including Visser (1991), Mennell (1985) Beardsworth and Keil (1997) and Warde and Martens (1998). These works featured the cultural contributions of hospitality along with the value system inherent in hospitality provision, which opened up possibilities for the exploration of hospitality in private, social and commercial domains within cross-cultural settings. This prompted Brotherton and Wood (2000, 143) to define hospitality as 'a contemporaneous human exchange, which is voluntarily entered into, and designed to enhance

the mutual well-being of the parties concerned through the provision of accommodation, and/or food and/or drink'.

This definition, whilst inclusive of the social values of hospitality consumption through the inclusion of the notion of enhancing mutual well-being, also captures several of the push factors of tourism motivation. More specifically, these are factors related to reducing stress, meeting new friends, having fun or being entertained and getting physically or emotionally refreshed (Dann 1981, Yoon & Uysal 2005).

In defining hospitality, Brotherton and Wood (2000) have shown that hospitality is more than just a cluster of service sector activities connected with the production and provision of food, drink and accommodation. As a result, it could be suggested that, for some considerable time, those that were seeking legitimacy for the hospitality discipline were seeking their inspiration in some of the wrong places.

Impact on hospitality education

The publication of *In Search of Hospitality* created a wave of excitement that was captured in a flurry of publications, conference discussions and published opinion pieces. The opportunities that this presented for hospitality scholars invoked a sense of pride at the opening up of additional possibilities for the study of hospitality. As Lashley, Lynch and Morrison (2007) note in the introduction to *Hospitality: A Social Lens,* the emergence of the more broadly conceived hospitality studies allowed for the critical analysis of social concepts to complement the managerial focus of higher education hospitality programmes. At that time, it was hoped that this broader perspective could not only better inform the management of hospitality businesses, but could also allow for deeper reflection on past and emerging trends in consumption behaviour and continue to raise the profile of hospitality as a legitimate discipline. In line with previous work published by Morrison and O'Mahony (2003), there was a sense that academic myopia could be overcome by engaging more fully with the social sciences while developing the philosophic practitioners highlighted by Tribes (2003).

Two curriculum streams within hospitality higher education programmes were identified, namely hospitality studies, which is informed by a range of disciplines including the social sciences, and the more traditional hospitality management education (Lashley & Morrison, 2000, Morrison & O'Mahony, 2002, Wood, 2013). However, while *In Search of Hospitality* represented a significant contribution to the study of hospitality in higher education, the opportunities that it presented have yet to be fully realised. There are a number of reasons for this. One is the dominance of the vocational ethos that has permeated higher education hospitality curricula (Morrison & O'Mahony 2002), which would require a significant transformation in classroom delivery. Schwab (1973) notes that major shifts in curriculum need to address four specific areas: (1) teachers, (2) curriculum, (3) the milieu and (4) students.

The first shift concerns hospitality educators and their approach to education.

From a teaching perspective, in order to achieve consistency in the delivery of course material, there is a need to standardise the delivery process by making available a number of teaching resources. Thus, an operational textbook that is

accessible to teachers and students, along with supplementary materials, is needed to complement existing frameworks.

The second shift relates to the ability to develop a comprehensive, pedagogically sound syllabus utilising the broader hospitality studies orientation that the three-domain approach underpins. Morrison and O'Mahony (2002) provided a viable example of such a syllabus which, was developed and delivered at two universities located in Australia and Scotland. The resulting introductory subject linked the concepts of hospitality in all three domains in a structured, experiential learning environment designed to provide an early sense of the context and meaning of management issues at a level that would be accessible to all students, irrespective of background. The subject integrated a liberal and reflective way of thinking and learning about management in the first six weeks, then presented examples of how these concepts could inform hospitality management. The subject was widely accepted by peers as an innovation in teaching and learning and successfully engaged a diverse student population (Morrison & O'Mahony 2002, 2003).

However, the milieu is arguably the most critical issue in achieving curriculum shifts. *In Search of Hospitality* certainly reflected and indeed inspired the milieu at the time of its publication. It also capitalised on sociological initiatives emerging at around the same time, for example, sociologists such as Ritzer (1993), Beardsworth and Keil (1997), Bell and Valentine (1997) and others. Collectively, these publications reinforced the notion that the broader world of hospitality was critical, reflective, analytical and that the social sciences were valuable in informing commercial hospitality provision. However, the milieu also includes understanding the underlying motivations of students to engage in hospitality studies as well as the market and political forces that stimulate them to do so. In the case of hospitality, the emphasis on the development of managerial competencies has aligned well with potential employment outcomes and the perceived needs of the hospitality industry (Slattery, 2002).

There is also a stronger political dimension in many countries, which is connected with the commodification of education particularly for its export value. This is compounded by a government focus on improving efficiency within the education system based on a 'neoliberal' philosophy, which judges education performance on criteria such as the immediacy of employment rather than the quality or value of the education graduates receive (Ayikoru et al. 2009, Marginson & Considine 2000, O'Mahony, 2009, O'Mahony & Salmon 2014). For this reason, the majority of hospitality higher education programmes have retained the emphasis on managerial and vocational competencies, where management capability is achieved through various training interventions supported by the theoretical concepts of operations management.

Impact on hospitality research

The concepts presented in *In Search of Hospitality* have been further developed in *Hospitality: A Social Lens* (2007). The chapters in this more recent text have shown that by breaking free from the traditional, managerial view of hospitality new perspectives can be brought to both the study and research of hospitality related phenomena. It is worth noting that the latter publication was published as a series of publications under the title *Advances in Tourism Research*, which the publishers introduced as state-of-the-art research findings. This book does indeed advance our thinking in terms of hospitality research.

The addition of new dimensions in hospitality research also presented the opportunity to engage in exploratory, inductive investigations that bring new perspectives to hospitality studies. This has allowed researchers to employ 'qualitative methods [which] can be used to uncover and understand what lies behind any phenomenon about which little yet is known' (Strauss & Corbin 1990, 19). The studies that have emanated from this approach provide a refreshing change from the plethora of published articles based on quantitative studies conducted in minor markets often supported by the ubiquitous structural equation models of the attitudes and behavioural intentions of samples of students that have been accosted in college cafeterias.

Both *In Search of Hospitality* and *Hospitality: A Social Lens,* have encouraged an ongoing debate that has inspired others to locate their work within the non-traditional domains (private and social) of hospitality. This has had a lasting impact through the founding of the *Journal of Hospitality and Society*, which captures those studies that would not otherwise be published in the more managerial focused journals. However, a critical dimension in the move to a more socially inclusive approach to the study of hospitality is the development of a framework or model under which these studies can be captured. Again, much can be learned from the social-anthropological view, where multifarious dimensions in the study of various phenomena have been accommodated within models that enable multidisciplinary scholars to determine its research parameters. Take, for example, the study of food in society. Beardsworth and Keil (1997, 7) assert that '… there are two basic routes through which the study of food and eating is being incorporated into the mainstream of sociology'.

Firstly, there are studies that involve the analysis and interpretation of food production and consumption, and the complex social structures which underpin these elements. Such studies are specifically designed to illuminate existing sociological issues. Secondly, there are studies that analyse the processes of food production and distribution. These are often used to highlight the processes of capital intensive, highly rationalised economic systems.

Both of the above approaches have been combined into a food studies model that was proposed by social anthropologist Jack Goody in 1982. In his book, *Cooking, Cuisine and Class*, Goody asserts that the human food chain can be organised under five specific headings: cultivation, distribution, preparation, consumption and the disposal of waste. He sees all of these elements as important since each is invariably linked to the process of consumption. This model is most appropriate because it involves the complete 'food production chain' or the human food cycle incorporating gastronomic, economic, social and environmental impacts. As Symons (1996, p.84) notes 'in simple language … [the model] follows the production process of food from field to market to kitchen'.

Goody's approach has been the subject of scholarly scrutiny, indeed, an issue of the journal *Food and Foodways*

was dedicated to a discussion of the model and included a number of academic perspectives. In these reviews, one minor flaw was suggested, which relates to the use of the term production. Goody interprets production as cultivation on the land, whereas Freckelton, Gurr, Richardson, Rolls and Walker (1989) cite fish as an example of produce that does not come from the land and argue that the model should be expanded to recognise other inputs into the food system. As a result, a more apt term for the first stage of the model would be procurement.

Goody's model has been used successfully in a number of previous studies (Freckelton et al. 1989, O'Mahony 2003) and, thus, presents an opportunity for international benchmarking in both the practical, cultural and academic sense. This is reinforced by Sangren's (1989) assertion that '… Goody has performed a great service for scholars interested in the comparative study of food and foodways over time and across cultures' (1989, 197). Table 1 shows the types of studies that can be captured under Goody's (modified) model.

In order to capitalise on changes in society, consumer behaviour and the demands of the industry, therefore, a model to capture all of the elements of hospitality provision is a critical component not only for applied, practical hospitality research, but also to inform the development of the hospitality curriculum. This includes the main dimensions under which various elements can be accommodated as well as the essential overlaps that such a model will invariably generate.

Lashley's (2000) three-domain approach provides a similarly useful framework to encapsulate and illuminate the social elements of hospitality and allow researchers to interpret the impact of emerging social trends alongside the study of the management of hospitality operations. As such, Lashley has provided hospitality scholars with a canvas to explore the broad phenomena of hospitality (guided by the three-domain approach) and, thus, he too has performed a great service for hospitality scholars.

Discussion

The key strengths of *In Search of Hospitality* are exactly the themes that are explored. That is, the text made a distinct contribution by presenting a view of hospitality that was not available in previous hospitality texts. The fifteen chapters provided insights into areas of the authors' individual academic expertise which, in turn, provided readers with opportunities to reflect on hospitality in ways that had not previously been explored. It also signalled to the hospitality industry that it was important for managers to understand
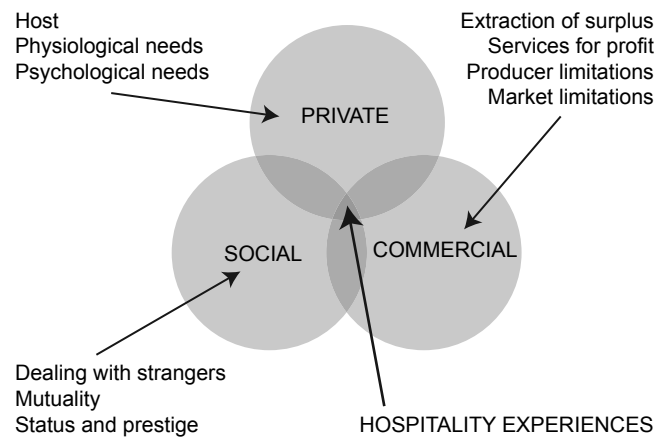

Figure 1: The three domain Venn diagram

the impact of personal, traditional, cultural and societal values on commercial hospitality provision. Many of the constructs contained in the text (as discussed above) have proven to be vital in contemporary hospitality provision. Take, for example, the countless links between the philosophy of hospitableness and corporate vision. Recent work in this area has shown that a shared vision permeating hospitality organisations at all levels has become critical in developing a competitive advantage in a global environment (Lahap et al. 2013).

The value of host/guest relationships, reciprocity and the development of strong bonds has also proven, to be a crucial component in business profitability and, ergo, business sustainability. Developing such relationships in order to gain repeat business and positive word-of-mouth communication is becoming increasingly important, partly based on their influence on guest satisfaction, loyalty and behavioural intentions (O'Mahony et al. 2013) and, more recently, due to the influence of social media. Indeed, managing social media, specifically guests' postings of poor experiences, has become a major issue for contemporary hospitality businesses. Thus, the emphasis placed on acts of friendship, creating mutually beneficial experiences and establishing relationships in *In Search of Hospitality* and in *Hospitality: A Social Lens* have proven to have major commercial implications. Similarly, understanding the traditions, culture and beliefs of guests has become significant for many hospitality businesses. This is connected with the changing pattern of tourism demand, that is, the country of origin of tourists. For example, the Chinese outbound tourism market is predicted to be a major force in the future (Yeoman 2008).

Table 1: Examples of studies that might be conducted under each dimension of Goody's model

Procurement	Distribution	Preparation	Consumption	Disposal
Farming	Equity	Cooking	Culture	Sustainability
Fishing	Logistics	Preserving	Rituals	Land use
Husbandry	AFN	Ingredients	Social issues	Fertilisation
Aquaculture	Food and wine trails	Cooking methods and medium	Religion	Marine nursery grounds
Seasonality	Food miles	Taste	Obesity	Animal feed
Sustainability	Carbon emissions	Culture	Diabetes	Recycling
Harvesting	Farmers' markets	Religion	Heart disease	Co-use in propagation

This is important because studies show that culture influences tourists' needs, wants and expectations (Lee & Ulgado 1997, Ozdipciner et al. 2012); destination image, motivation and satisfaction (Kozak et al. 2003); communication style and customer satisfaction (Reisinger & Turner, 2003), as well as service delivery (Armstrong et al. 1997) and service recovery (Mattila & Patterson 2004). As a result, many organisations are scrambling to gain a better understanding of the needs and wants of this cultural market segment.

The social domain has also become an important platform to understand how private and commercial hospitality can co-exist and can prompt a level of managerial thinking that might otherwise remain obscure. Take, for example, a wedding taking place in a luxury hotel. In this instance, there are many differences to the normal provision of commercial hospitality. For example, management cannot reserve the right of admission because it is the host's prerogative (usually the bride's family) to send invitations to those that they wish to celebrate the occasion with. Thus the needs of guests differ and, as a result, the conventions by which satisfaction is determined are also different. Indeed, on such celebratory occasions, the hotel is merely a component in the creation of a memorable experience and the role of hotel personnel is confined to support staff that, along with a variety of externally contracted service providers, assists the family to generate this memorable experience. Understanding these relationships and their impact on the overall hospitality experience is essential to providing the memorable experiences envisaged by the hosts, with the trinity of hospitality provision (food, drink and accommodation) playing a relatively minor role.

Conclusion

Based on the above discussion it is fair to say that the most important element in the expansion of hospitality has been the advent of the three-domain approach. However, the constructs that represent the core dimensions (for example, generosity, reciprocity and virtuousness) of this broader view of hospitality also provide significant opportunities for further expansion and development to inform the hospitality curriculum. Indeed, the three-domain approach is essential to the holistic examination required to develop ongoing programmes of study to sustain hospitality service structures and to capture appropriate research to support them.

Nevertheless, these works have been made permanent by the two books considered here and the ongoing publications in the *Journal of Hospitality and Society*, which has provided an ongoing outlet for non-hospitality researchers to continue to engage with the broader study of hospitality and to connect with like-minded researchers that engage such studies.

Where to from here?
If the debates and scholarly work reflecting the broader perspective of hospitality that have emerged since the publication of *In Search of Hospitality* in 2000 could be succinctly distilled, three particular contributions emerge. These are: (1) the three domains of hospitality as a guiding framework, (2) a comprehensive definition of hospitality and (3) the relationships that are developed and enhanced through acts of hospitality including mutual obligation, reciprocity and virtuousness. The extension of hospitality into the broader

sphere of private, social and commercial hospitality reveals that the social science context that can be brought to bear within this three-domain approach has still more to offer beyond the issues and challenges of commercial hospitality provision. Take for example, social responsibility in terms of alcohol-related harm as well as the obesity and diabetes epidemics that confront us and we can see how a multidisciplinary approach might be brought to bear to find innovative solutions to these societal dilemmas.

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