The establishment of hospitality as “a robust academic discipline” has recently been invoked by a number of academics, particularly in England. Many of them believe that, in English-speaking countries, the study of hospitality is in reality the old and “more prosaic hotel and catering” (Lashley, 2000b, p. 4) by another name. The Nottingham Group, for example, has called for a wider understanding of hospitality. Its members have argued that both the current research agenda and the educational curriculum should be based on a new theoretical framework, not restricted to the economic definition of hospitality. The search for such a framework has ignited a debate to which this paper intends to contribute. In particular, its aim is to introduce into the debate

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the perspective of newly emerging gastronomy studies influenced by Australian academics and practitioners.

Gastronomy studies and hospitality currently share a common struggle in their attempt to become independent academic disciplines. Hospitality, in trying to broaden its own horizons, flows into the field of gastronomy; meanwhile, gastronomy studies is greatly concerned with hospitality, its research framework and educational models.

As well as introducing both the current search for a new framework for hospitality and gastronomy studies, this paper analyses some of the positions expressed in the debate. The conclusion identifies some common ground on which the new hospitality and gastronomy might work together.

**In Search of Hospitality**

In 1997 a number of UK hospitality researchers and writers met in Nottingham to explore subjects of common interest. The Nottingham Group, as they became known, decided to tackle some preliminary issues critical to the development of hospitality both within and beyond their own country. In particular, the group is concerned with finding a definition that can free hospitality from the restricted commercial preoccupation of providing food, drink and/or accommodation. Hospitality as a description of activities previously known as hotel and catering is a recent notion, having been adopted by both academic and industry journals only in the last couple of decades as a reflection of “changes in the industrial descriptor used by practitioners” (Lashley, 2000a, p. 2).

The Nottingham Group posits a working definition of hospitality as “a contemporaneous exchange designed to embrace mutuality (well being) for the parties involved through the provision of food and/or drink, and/or accommodation” (??date and page number). Although still related to the economic activity, this description shows a departure from the strict industrial provision of hospitality services either “away from home” (Joint Hospitality Industry Congress, 1996, p. 13) or “in a service context” (Higher Education Funding Council, 1998). Brotherton (1999, p. 168) better mirrors the endeavour of the Nottingham Group with this clearly farraginous definition of 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.

??Being based in the United Kingdom, the Nottingham Group is obviously concerned with their local situation. However, the circumstances in other countries, including Australia, do not differ greatly. Thus, for example, academics who, as argued by Lashley (2000a, p. 3), see hospitality management as “just cooking” or “learning how to boil an egg” and hence not a suitable academic subject, are not a rare phenomenon around the world. In many cases the only concession that they are prepared to make is to incorporate the subject in business and/or management studies.

Against this backdrop Lashley (2000a, p. 2) argues instead that:

the topic of hospitality is worthy of serious study and could potentially better inform both industrial practice and academic endeavour…

Fundamentally the industrial provision and management of hospitality services can be better focused when informed by a broad understanding of hospitality and acts of hospitableness (Lashley 2000a, p. 2).

The search for a new hospitality and its significance as an academic discipline springs from this platform, with Lashley (2000a,b) drafting a theoretical framework that distils the positions of the Nottingham Group. In line with prior positions (Cassee, 1984), this author envisages the study of hospitality as both multi-disciplinary and informed by an array of social sciences (Lashley, 2000a, p. 2). The study
must also contain a “breadth of definition” allowing “analysis of hospitality activities in the social, private, and commercial domains” (Lashley, 2000a, p. 3). Such an approach has deep roots in history, since hospitality is described as “a set of behaviours which originate with the very foundations of society” (Lashley, 2000a, p. 4). In fact, Lashley validates the advocated broadening of commercial hospitality to social and private domains with both the history and the meanings of eating and drinking. He also reminds us of Visser’s (1991, p. 2) assertion that “civilisation itself cannot begin until a food supply is assumed”:

> It is not incidental, for example, that even the most simple form of hunting and gathering societies involve some rituals round food consumption... Patterns of food and drink consumption are some of the activities which assist societies in defining who they are, and in distinguishing ‘civilised’ behaviour (Lashley, 2000a, p. 8).

That “food is of central importance in hospitality” (Telfer, 1996, p. 83) is not a new claim. The Nottingham Group framework, however, seems to endorse a hospitality-centred vision of food and drink consumption to the point that eating and drinking are defined as “hospitality related activities” (Lashley, 2000a, p. 9). In support of this assumption Lashley also provides a reading of the work of other authors (Heal, 1990) who in his view highlighted a number of roles which hospitality played in history, such as redistributing food and drink to neighbours and to the poor which helped to build social cohesion.

What is relevant to this paper, though, is that the debate for a new theoretical framework for hospitality has largely acknowledged that “food needs to be a key element in academic study of hospitality” for a number of reasons, some of which Lashley (2000a, p. 8) brings to light in his work:

> ...because of the significance the avoidance of hunger and celebration of plenty plays in human social and cultural life.

Activities associated with eating and drinking help to establish many basic human characteristics. Kinship and family groups are based round those who share and eat together, language develops for discussing food and planning future supplies. Social rules and structures are established round the distribution of food and the ethical/moral principles to be applied.

Food and drink, in particular, perform an important role in defining the identities of groups, communities and societies, and in defining the relationship between individuals and the wider social context.

In fact, by stressing the importance of eating and drinking, the construction of a new theoretical framework for hospitality lands in the territory of gastronomy studies — a fact that can no longer be ignored by the debate on a new hospitality.

**What is Gastronomy Studies?**

Gastronomy studies is a trans-disciplinary perspective that does not replace, but complements, perspectives provided by the many disciplines studying food and culture, food and society, and food and marketing. It is also an answer to the urgent need for research that evaluates performances and identifies inadequacies, efficiencies and potential improvements in the gastronomic life of communities (Scarpato, 2001b). Research with this innovative conceptual framework focuses on how these communities can evolve socially and economically, keeping an eco-nutritional commitment to environmental sustainability and community members’ optimal health.

The word *gastronomy* made its first modern appearance in France in 1801, as the title of a poem (Berchoux, 1804). However, despite its immense popularity since then, gastronomy, the object of gastronomy studies, is still “devilishly difficult to define” (Santich, 1996b, p. 1). Whilst the origins of the word are undis-
puted — in ancient Greek *gastros* was the stomach and *nomos* the law — its meanings remain only loosely related to the etymology. The broad spectrum of definitions can be reduced to two main categories with overlapping and blurred borders. On one hand, gastronomy is simply related to the enjoyment of the very best in food and drink. On the other, it is a far-reaching discipline that encompasses everything into which food enters, including all things we eat and drink. Gastronomy studies pertains to the second category of definitions and particularly to a comprehensive gastronomy implying “reflective eating” (Santich, 1996a, p. 180). However it embraces reflective cooking and food preparation as well, maintaining the association with excellence and/or fancy food and drink (Scarpato, 2000a). In the light of this, gastronomy studies is related to:

- the production of food, and the means by which foods are produced; the political economy; the treatment of foods, their storage and transport and processing; their preparation and cooking; meals and manner; the chemistry of food, digestion and the physiological effects of food; food choices and customs and traditions... (Santich, 1996b, p. 2).

There is a lack of historical research on the formation of gastronomy as reflective eating and cooking. The work of ancient Greek and Roman authors was more related to cookery than gastronomy as a separate framework, with the possible exception of ??Archestratus (1994) and ??Athenaeus (1956). An embryonic form of gastronomy was contained in medicine books and herbaria in Europe in the Middle Ages (Facciolli, 1992), whilst the first modern piece of gastronomic research was *De honesta voluptate et valitudine* (Of honest indulgence and good health). In this book, published in 1472 by Platina (Bartolomeo Sacchi 1421–81), the reasons for reflective eating and cooking are combined with those of pure food enjoyment. Platina’s work aimed at a “plan for living well” (Santich, 1996, p. 177), which is still the final purpose of gastronomy today.

The foundation for gastronomy encompassing both the enjoyment of excellent food and reflective eating and cooking was, however, laid by Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin in *La physiologie du goût* (The physiology of taste) (1994). A magistrate in his native town of Belley, France, Brillat-Savarin published the book at his own expense in 1825. His aim was “to determine the basic principles of gastronomy, so that it may take its place among the sciences which is its undeniable right” (??Brillat-Savarin, 1994 p. 295). Many aspects of Brillat-Savarin’s work still have a high degree of currency today, starting from his definition of gastronomy as “la connaissance raisonnée de tout ce qui a rapport à l’homme en tant qu’il se nourrit”. Literally translated, this means “the reasoned comprehension of everything connected with the nourishment of man”. However, a more comprehensive interpretation allows the looser translation “Gastronomy is the reasoned understanding of everything that concerns us insofar as we sustain ourselves” (Santich, 1996, p. 2).

The foundations of gastronomy as reflective eating and cooking lie in these words, since Brillat-Savarin (1994, p. 52) makes clear that:

1. The aim of gastronomy is “to obtain the preservation of man by means of the best possible nourishment”.
2. Its object is “giving guidance, according to certain principles, to all who seek, provide, or prepare substances which may be turned into food” and, since in the organisation of modern societies, academics fulfill the role of guidance, he writes that gastronomy must have its own “academicians, universities, professors and prizes” and take its place among the other sciences.
3. “All who seek, provide, or prepare substances which may be turned into food” are ultimately economic industries. “Gastronomy, in fact, is the motive force behind farmers, winegrowers, fishermen, and huntsmen, not to mention the great family of cooks, under whatever title they may disguise their employment as preparers of food”.

4. Some knowledge of gastronomy is “necessary to all men, since it adds to the sum of human pleasures”. Particularly it is “indispensable to persons with considerable incomes who entertain on a large scale” and consequently to hospitality institutions that today have undertaken these functions.

Despite the success of his book, Brillat-Savarin’s scientific gastronomy never took off, mainly because his theories did not fit dominant narratives: food, in modern societies, has always being seen as insignificant. Roland Barthes (1979, p. 167) warned that “to the scholar, the subject of food connotes triviality or guilt”. This is largely due to the influence that Plato’s philosophy has had on Western cultures. Cooks were placed at the bottom of his Republic: the privileged rulers and guardians of his ideal society were not required to learn how to cook, because this subject would not have improved their soul (Curtin, 1992; ?? Plato, 1953; Rigotti, 1999; Symons, 1998).

Another reason why gastronomy has not become an academic discipline is its multi-disciplinarity. In the last two hundred years the modernist approach to academic work has been strictly mono-disciplinary. Brillat-Savarin, by contrast, brings into play a significant measure of disciplinary border crossing by stating that:

Gastronomy pertains: to natural history... to physics... to chemistry... to cookery... to commerce... to political economy... it also examines the effect of food on man’s character, his imagination, his wit, his judgment, his courage, and his perceptions, whether he be awake or asleep, active or at rest; it classifies all these substances [foodstuffs] according to their various qualities, indicates those which may be eaten together ... and it is no less closely concerned with the various drinks which fall to our lot” (Brillat-Savarin, 1994, p. 52–4).

This was unacceptable within the dominant mono-disciplinary schemes of his times and thereafter.

However, the very reasons why gastronomy has been neglected by academia until now lead today to a re-evaluation of Brillat-Savarin’s ideas within a postmodern framework. In fact, the work of this author is at the foundation of the theoretical framework of gastronomy studies that shares its orientation with cultural studies (??Scarpato, 2000, p. 46).

It should not come as a surprise when food producers, cooks (either private or commercial) and other professionals participate in preparing, promoting, presenting and thinking about meals as a subject within cultural studies. It has been repeatedly argued that the project of cultural studies should be “broader than that taught in the contemporary curricula and ...encompassing a wide range of figures from various social locations and traditions” (??Kellner, 1999). Cultural studies focus on how subcultural groups resist dominant forms of culture and identity, creating their own style and identities. “Individuals who identify with subcultures, like punk culture, or black nationalist subcultures, look and act differently from those in the mainstream, and thus create oppositional identities, defining themselves against standard models” (??Kellner, 1999).

It has been argued that gastronomy is one of these subcultures (??Scarpato, 2000) and gastronomy studies strives to give voice to gastronomic identities and discourses oppressed by dominant narratives. These identities include culinary practitioners, either domestic or professional, and everyone participating in the theoretical and practical preparation, promotion and presentation of the meal,
such as food and wine writers, consultants, researchers, educators, as well as anyone working in or for gastronomic agencies, from restaurants to tourist resorts. As Symons (1998) argues, such people have long been silenced by dominant narratives, which have managed to represent their work as “too common, pervasive, trivial, unproblematic”. It happened with the failure of Brillat-Savarin’s gastronomy, due to the Platonic dominant narrative, and it is occurring again with the struggle of hospitality to find a new place in academia and meeting instead, as reminded by Lashley (2000a, p. 3), the opposition of academics who see it as “learning how to boil an egg”.

Exemplary is the case of cooks, who are significant figures within both gastronomy and hospitality: they “have always been in the background — both ever present and unnoticed” (Symons, 1998 p. x). Cooks and cooking activities have always had a low community profile and have been in powerless relationships with and within society. This does not come as a surprise, since, as Symons (1998 p. x) points out, “cooks generally have been women” or slaves and “their achievements overlooked as inglorious and private”.

Gastronomy studies argues, on the contrary, that cooks have been always “in charge”, that “civilisation itself is a culinary act” (Symons, 1998 p. xii). If we are what we eat, cooks have not just made our meals; they have also made us: they have shaped our social networks, our technologies, arts and religions.

Cooking is the point where production is directed, where social relationships are formed and maintained, and where the arts and sciences emanate. It is the starting-place of trades, the target of the marketplace, the object of philosophy (Symons, 1998, p. 121).

Extending what Symons (1998, p. xi) foresaw for cooks, gastronomy studies is oriented towards finding new ways to think about gastronomic activities (within which hospitality plays a large role) and identities, and to revise our views in their light. This involves a commitment to the gastronomic imagination, which means “to place meals at the heart of human affairs” (??M. Symons, personal communication, 2000). Although a field still without boundaries, research within the paradigm of gastronomy studies should contain at least three main commitments:

1. Re-positioning gastronomy activities in the community.
2. Giving “a cultural voice” to identities and discourses, including the role of hospitality, oppressed by dominant narratives (??Scarpato, 2000, p. 16).
3. Contributing to the establishment of gastronomy studies as an independent discipline.

As is the case with other social and cultural theories, emerging gastronomy studies embrace, by necessity, what is conventionally called the multi-disciplinary perspective. A number of traditional disciplines, mainly within social sciences (including history, sociology, literature, languages, nutrition, philosophy, hospitality and cooking), contribute to gastronomy. Paradoxically, though, multi-disciplinarity is a foundationalist approach that invalidates the assumption of a knowledge founded in boundary-defined disciplines (Usher, 1997). Gastronomy studies rejects this assumption, promoting instead a trans-disciplinarity that overturns “artificial academic divisions of labour” whilst creating “new forms of discourse, critique and practice” (??Best and Kellner, 1997 p. 19). These new forms include the overcoming of the modernist division between theory and practice, the search for “more concrete and empirical analysis of… the processes of the production of culture” and “intersection of technology, culture, and everyday life”. For its concrete and empirical aims, gastronomy studies, at an education level, should strategically find
space in the hospitality departments of universities rather than in those of cultural studies.

Along its route to becoming an independent discipline, gastronomy studies shares the position of other emerging disciplines. It experiences, for example, the strain of nursing research “in its search to identify and legitimise a separate focus, theoretical basis and methodology which have parallels in other social sciences” (Payne, 1997, p. 101). It is, however, with gerontology that gastronomy has the most in common. Gerontology, for instance, “recognises that the human being is a complex biological organism engaged in a social-political world” and therefore “incorporates sciences such as biology, epidemiology, pathology, psychology, physiology and sociology in order to add depth to an understanding of the context of processes of ageing” (Minichiello, Alexander, & Jones, 1992, p. xiv). So does gastronomy — by requiring the involvement of many different professions and disciplines. The possibility of interacting also with natural sciences is particularly important because it makes room for some involvement, under the umbrella of gastronomy studies, of disciplines such as food technology and oenology.

Furthermore, gastronomy studies, like emerging information systems and other disciplines “(including medicine, French, Management and geography) do not have a simple and single disciplinary status” (Avison, 1997, p. 95). Its trans-disciplinariness aims at integrating knowledge from other disciplines and studying the connections between the knowledge bases of each, in order to develop new understandings. This is a groundbreaking shift from gastronomy as being merely the object of research by source disciplines like, for example, psychology, history, sociology, food sciences and economics (including hospitality management). Instead, the missing perspective of gastronomy studies becomes a non-neutral and pro-active focal point in which other disciplines can come together to present new insights or new knowledge, consistent with the framework of the new independent discipline. It is noteworthy that Adelaide University (Australia), even if only for marketing purposes, is already linking a number of research and teaching areas, including Food Technology, Horticulture-Viticulture, and Oenology, Gastronomy (with the world’s first masters degree) and Wine Marketing, under the umbrella of food and wine studies (The University of Adelaide, 2000).

The consequences of any successful initiative to formalise gastronomy studies could be far-reaching. They could entail the re-organisation of academic research and educational curricula, particularly in hospitality. They could also give rise to new professions, such as that of gastronomer, a role for which there is increasing legitimacy. It is of note that some hospitality schools in Europe are offering courses that confer the qualification of “territorial gastronomer” in place of the classic food and beverage management. (Paolini, 2000, p. 197).

Moreover, the introduction of the missing perspective of gastronomy studies may greatly affect the search for a new hospitality.

**Gastronomy Studies and Hospitality**

The forces behind the call for the broadening of hospitality apply equally to gastronomy studies. In fact, a better-focused hospitality management could also help to overcome the often unsustainable “Darwinian” context (Christensen-Hughes, 1996, p. 5) of the industry, frequently characterised by unsound human resource management:

A troubling irony continues to exist as the industry less seldom evaluates how well it is doing with greeting, welcoming, and successfully building long-term relationships with its employ-
ees. These employees, more often than not, may actually be the real strangers in its midst (Grottola, 1998, p. 13).

Gastronomy studies is particularly responsive to issues such as the Darwinian context of the industry and the treatment of employees as strangers, since these attitudes seem to hark back to the old devaluing of cooks and gastronomy activities in general (Symons, 1998).

Other considerations and arguments, however, have been passed from gastronomy studies to hospitality. Some of the most significant, which are outlined here, validate the call for a new hospitality.

**Common Roots**

When the boundaries of hospitality are extended to the social and private, the new framework spills over into home cooking, the social significance of food, and so on — the conventional domains of gastronomy. In fact, the promoters of such an extension have legitimised it largely by referencing the very foundations of gastronomy. A tendency towards hospitality-centred valuations of eating and drinking activities, however, may jeopardise the credibility of the whole process. Claims that they are “related subjects” vis-a-vis hospitality (Lashley, 2000a, p. 9) are confusing. Similarly, it is questionable to present “as academic reflection on hospitality” (Brotherton & Wood, 2000, p. 139) research on food and drink and related issues carried out by scholars belonging to many disciplines, such as Visser (1991), ??Mennel et al. (1992), and Beardsworth and Keil (1997). To this end, it is worth remembering that hospitality is an “artificial” identification of an industry of just twenty years’ standing that has subsequently been transferred almost a-critically to research, knowledge and education. More than the academic thirst for knowledge, it is issues of power and commerce that have motivated the transfer. The subject of hospitality is seen as “related” to eating and drinking, not vice versa.

**A Fundamental Stream of Studies Overlooked**

Commercial hospitality, or at least the component that is associated with the provision of food and/or drink, is one domain of gastronomy studies that fits the above formulation Hospitality professionals, workers, educators and researchers are among those “who seek, provide, or prepare substances which may be turned into food” (Brillat-Savarin, 1994, p. 54) — a quest to which gastronomy provides direction. For this reason the commercial production of meals is a primary field of investigation for gastronomy studies. It is regrettable that, to date, the search for a new framework — at least within the contributions of the Nottingham Group — has made little or no reference to gastronomy writers, either historical or contemporary. No one, for example, has noticed that cooking itself, in the postmodern cycle, has been presented as a form of inquiry (Scarpato, 2000a, p. 22). Lisa Heldke’s (1992) co-responsible option is an exploration of cooking that focuses on the construction and use of recipes. Many aspects of recipe–cook–ingredients relationships escape both absolutism and relativism, becoming a clear example of Heldke’s approach to inquiry. This contribution is particularly important because, following John Dewey’s (1958) modern pragmatism, she overrules the dichotomy between theory (the “knowledge gaining” activity) and practice (the “getting things done activity”) — a theoretical position that cannot be disregarded in the drafting of new models for hospitality education.

**Questioning the Holy Trinity**

From the perspective of gastronomy studies, the sacredness and indissolubility of the hospitality “trinity” (provision of food and/or drink and/or accommodation) is highly questionable. Although, with his XX aphorism, Brillat-Savarin (1994,
p. 14) prescribes that “to entertain a guest is to make yourself responsible for his happiness so long as he is beneath your roof”, the provision of accommodation has a rather weak link with gastronomic activities and hospitality — namely, culinary arts. Undoubtedly, the provision of, for example, “medical, sexual, and entertainment options for customers” (Walton, 2000, p. 57), as embellishment of the basic services provided by commercial hospitality, are foreign to the main concerns of gastronomy. The foundations of hospitality are more in the very gastronomic “act of contributing to and sharing in the collective food supply” (Lashley, 2000a, p. 4) than in the production and consumption of accommodation. It is the sharing of food — and not accommodation — that is at the foundation of civilised behaviour, linking individuals, families, villages and tribes (Visser, 1991, p. 53). Not by chance, the study of gastronomy focuses on the role of cooks as sharers (Symons, 1998) — and the new hospitality would benefit from adopting the same focus.

Issues of Power and Credibility

Whilst gastronomy has been kept away from academia (with the first Master’s in gastronomy only now about to start), a limited “vocational” hospitality/culinary education has been admitted instead to universities around the world. An underlining issue of power has generated the favourable treatment of hospitality: the provision of such an education (and the related research agenda) serves the interests of a specific industry, which — it must be stressed — do not necessarily coincide with those of the broad community.

The extent of such an anomaly can be properly understood only by picturing source disciplines (medicine, economic, psychology, and so on) serving the interests of a single industry. In truth, the intrinsic weakness and narrowness of current hospitality has been repeatedly highlighted in the debated search for a new framework. It can hardly be denied that the commercial brand of hospitality is inadequate. It must be asked, then, what credibility such a debate might have within a flawed hospitality. Also to be questioned is how far researchers and academics working within the current hospitality are allowed to go in the direction of a new discipline without becoming self-destructive (loss of funding, positions, industry sponsorship). In this context, the contribution of the gastronomy studies framework can help to check the imbalances. Gastronomy studies should be introduced in the hospitality departments of universities as a critical hospitality pedagogy at both the research and the teaching level.

Overcoming the Liberal/Vocational Divide

Gastronomy studies is particularly committed to tackling the “inadequacy of contemporary training systems for professional culinary workers” (Scarpato, 2000a, p. 184). In fact, the whole issue of professional training is strategically instrumental to gaining the much-needed cultural capital as an independent academic discipline. The widespread lack of philosophy in the curricula of cooks — at a time when research has demonstrated that it is particularly needed (Fine, 1996) — is only one of the critical aspects of training models. They are also either inadequate or even nonexistent with respect to other stakeholders involved in the gastronomic environment: food manufacturers, retailers, specialised media, home meal replacement operators, and so on.

Ultimately, the success of gastronomy studies will be measured by its capacity to produce workable educational frameworks. A new hospitality, in particular, should reflect the “thoughtful practice” (Heldke, 1992, p. 263) approach of gas-
tronomy studies, which is at the same time an unprecedented way to define both cooking and eating activities and research. In educational terms this would translate into overcoming the theory/practice divide of traditional academic work and, in particular, the obsolete split between liberal and vocational teaching and learning (Airey and Tribe, 2000). In the light of both the perspective and the tradition of gastronomy, new education models in hospitality should amalgamate the two levels.

Hospitality as a Community Industry

Within the framework of gastronomy studies committed to the improvement of the gastronomic life of communities (Scarpato, 2001a), commercial hospitality is seen as “a social industry, which cannot be solely dollar driven” (Scarpato, 2000b). Accordingly, gastronomy studies focuses on how to integrate the hospitality industry into the larger educational systems of communities:

- The professional chef/designer should have his voice heard on the issues of sustainability, environment, and social improvement. Symons (1998) told us that these issues have always been in the cook’s domain. Chefs are in the business of accruing social capital for the community. They should constantly teach us how to enjoy our time at the table (conviviality therapy), how and why the efforts of our country’s producers must be supported, and how to have a healthy diet.
- They should be welcomed into schools. Applying the simplest common sense, the community should acknowledge this and be prepared to pay a small price for it.
- Chef designers should take over the role of mothers and grandmothers of the past. It is not just a romantic wish. This is the only way to have future knowledgeable customers prepared to support the efforts of fine cuisine chefs and those producers of good ingredients. The lesson has been learned by opera, music and dance companies all over the world. There is a proven correlation between exposing children to classical music and their consumption of this same music as adults (Scarpato, 2000b).

Hospitality as a Cultural Industry

The meal is a cultural artifact (Barthes, 1979) and as such is a constituent unit of gastronomy; it follows that the production of meals is a primary field of investigation for gastronomy studies (Scarpato, 2000a). The connection with hospitality as the industry producing meals is self-evident and the interrelation with gastronomy/hospitality research and education is inescapable. Gastronomy studies sees the production of meals, and therefore hospitality, as a cultural industry (Scarpato, 2000a). Quite surprisingly, the Nottingham Group has paid little attention to the cultural component of commercial hospitality. For a long time, for example, it has been acknowledged that operating a restaurant has “cultural value” (Miller, 1978). Recently, however, research has pointed out that “the economic organisation of the restaurant industry permits business to be run for their cultural rewards” (Fine, 1996 p. 11). The restaurant is “an organisation in which groups labor to produce physical and cultural objects” (1996 p. 231). So, the restaurant meal, “like all food, has an aesthetic, sensory dimension and is evaluated as such by both producers and consumers” (Fine, 1996, p. 13). When its cultural connotations are recognised, the restaurant — within a gastronomy study framework — is a “hybrid industrial organisation”, “a cross between expressive entrepreneurialism and rational economic institutions” (Fine, 1996, p. 139). This is particularly true for independent, quality-oriented restaurants, rather than outlets
of fast-food chains or restaurants operating within large hotels (Scarpato & Daniele, 2000). The new hospitality should acknowledge that the restaurant, as provider of cultural artifacts, shares the position and the characteristics of other cultural industries (Scarpato & Daniele, 2000), such as the publishing industry (Coser Kaduhin, & Powell, 1982).

Conclusion

The search for a new hospitality, unchained from the narrowness of the commercially driven provision of food and/or drink and/or accommodation, falls into the domain of gastronomy studies. Hospitality and gastronomy studies share much more than the struggle of becoming independent academic disciplines. Hospitality is closely related to eating and drinking activities and to their relations with society. Far from being a conflict-ridden situation, this represents a formidable opportunity for academics and practitioners of both fields to work together. In particular, as this paper has demonstrated, gastronomy studies can provide hospitality with the much-needed cultural, historical and social capital in its search for a theoretical framework. At the same time, the current commercial hospitality — formerly hotel and catering — can facilitate the long-sought access of trans-disciplinary gastronomy studies into universities — in the medium term an objective that could be attained by incorporating research and teaching with the framework of gastronomy studies in the activities of hospitality departments. To this end hospitality and gastronomy researchers would be wise to begin working together on strategic research aimed at identifying educational models that incorporate the expectations of both disciplines.

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