

Review of Hospitality Ethics Research in 2006

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Purpose

Isbell Hospitality Ethics shares its review and analysis of the ethics articles appearing in the hospitality journals each year, to facilitate hospitality ethics researchers' individual efforts. The purpose of this paper is to review and analyze the ethics articles which appeared in the hospitality journals in 2006. We are no longer putting up full text reprints of the articles appearing in the hospitality journals on the Isbell Hospitality Ethics web site (www2.nau.edu/~clj5/Ethics) because each year more journals are published by Sage, Hawthorn, Emerald, Blackwell, and Elsevier, none of which allow full text reprints on this web site.

Isbell Hospitality Ethics' on-line compendium of hospitality ethics research is designed to foster communication and coordination among hospitality ethics researchers whose work may ultimately improve the ethical status of the hospitality industry.

Method

The *Hospitality and Tourism Index* was used as the main source of hospitality journals. The tables of contents for *FIU Hospitality Review*, *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Education*, and *Cornell Hotel & Restaurant Administration Quarterly* were manually reviewed. Thirty-two articles, pertaining to ethics, from 17 academic journals and 15 magazines, were found for 2006. There were articles from 7 additional journals and magazines indexed in the *Hospitality and Tourism Index* in this time period. All the articles fit easily into the 11 topic areas that emerged during the previous analyses of articles from 1990 to 2005.

Description of the Data

Figures 1 and 2 identify the topic areas, the total number of articles for each topic area, when they were written, and the journals they appeared in. Figure 3 shows the total number of hospitality journal articles on ethics appearing each year over a 17-year period. While this paper's focus is on the articles appearing in 2006, it may be interesting to look at the articles within the context of the previous 16 years.

From 1990 through 2001 there were approx 10 articles on ethics written in the hospitality journals each year. From 2002 through 2006 the average articles per year was closer to 40. The publishers for the *Hospitality and Tourism Index* changed around this time and may have more to do with the increase in the number of articles than an actual increase in interest in ethics in hospitality. The percentage of articles appearing in academic journals as opposed to magazines rose 16% in 2006. It is unclear whether this increase has to do with academic interest in ethics or simply the way articles are indexed in the *Hospitality and Tourism Index*.

There were some noticeable differences in the distribution of the 32 articles in 2006 compared with 2004 and 2005. There were fewer articles categorized in Topics 3, 6, and 9: "How to do the Right Thing," "Codes of Ethics," and "Tourism Ethics," while the rest of the Topics remained somewhat consistent with the past few years. Possible reasons for changes will be addressed in the following Topic discussions.

Topics

Unethical Actions (Topic 1)

The most 2006 articles by far (9 = 28%) appeared in Topic 1. Since 1990, more articles have appeared in this category (76/334 = 23%) than any of the other categories. *Hospitality Law* defined sexual harassment in the October issue as “unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature” in exchange for employment benefits or as the basis of a “hostile work environment” (What is sexual harassment?, 2006).

Three incidents of sexual harassment were reported in two other issues of *Hospitality Law*. The EEOC sued a Taco Bell franchise owner on a female manager’s behalf who reported the sexual harassing behavior of the mostly young male crew (EEOC sues fast-food franchise, 2006). Rayna Enterprises, Inc. settled an EEOC claim for \$65,000 for sexual harassment and retaliation of four employees at the Arriba Mexican Grill in Phoenix because the employer did nothing about the complaint and then terminated one of the complainers (Restaurant settles EEOC claim, 2006). The owner of the R&R Lounge and Casino was held liable for her manager son’s sexual harassment of a bar tender that created a hostile work environment at the bar (Did bar owner, manager create, 2006).

Hyatt was sued by a guest who was charged more for her stay at the Ararat Park Hyatt Moscow than was advertised on the web site where she made the reservation. While the action was not found to be a violation of the Illinois Consumer Fraud and Deceptive Business Practices Act, it was considered a legal but questionable break of a promise (Difference in advertised, 2006).

Retaliating with a “detrimental job decision” against employees who have made discrimination claims has become more prevalent and can be avoided by not retaliating and also by making sure there are legitimate documented reasons for any future job decisions affecting the complaining employee. Employees’ discrimination complaints need only to be made in good faith with reasonable belief in order to be considered protected and safe from retaliation (Sherwyn, Eigen, & Gilman, 2006).

Human rights violations such as the exploitation of children and migrant workers, displacement and/or discrimination of indigenous people, and workplace health and safety make working environments less stable and negatively affect those involved. The Tourism and Human Rights Initiative is developing human rights principles with the hope of helping the tourism industry to address these issues (Addressing human rights issues, 2006).

Cruise tourism is growing and while it brings income to port destinations, it also pollutes the water with sewage and garbage, pollutes the air, is noisy, and negatively affects the sensitive ecology of the Pacific Coast. The Clean Cruise Ship Act, if passed, will tighten up current lax state and federal laws (Alarm bells ring, 2006).

Cheating may be increasing in universities due in part to faculty and administrators being less willing to catch and punish offenders. International students from Asia may feel more pressure to cheat than North American students, but between 40 and 90% of all college students have cheated at least once. It is the responsibility of college faculty to instill values in students and to help them to understand the pressures they will be under to cheat, which may help them to resist in school and later in their careers (Kincaid & Zemke, 2006).

One Chicago hospital for children has an on-site McDonalds restaurant. It was found that more patients' parents believed McDonald's financially supported the hospital and that their perceptions of the healthiness of the fast-food fare were erroneously increased. The authors concluded that fast food restaurants should not be in hospitals (Sahud, Binns, Meadow, & Tanz, 2006).

How Ethical Are We? (Topic 2)

Five out of 32 articles (16%) were categorized into Topic 2, which is consistent with the distribution of past years. In a survey of 205 corporate and association planners reported in *Successful Meetings*, half of the anonymous meeting planners admitted to using hotel incentive points for personal use. In live interviews, the same people agreed that it is wrong to use the hotel incentive points for personal use and all but 10% said they did not use them (Ng, 2006).

Half of 455 corporate, association, and independent planners, in another survey, agreed that disclosing bids to competitors before contracts are signed is extremely unethical. One-third however, thought that hotels should renegotiate rates if the rates went down after signing the contract. The planners also thought that it was unethical to use, without payment, destination management companies' whole plans but not as unethical to use pieces of the plans (Alonzo, 2006).

Australian high school students were surveyed to find out what traits/values were predictive of successful transitions into hospitality careers. It was found that industry-bound students valued friendliness, sociability, integrity, and honesty more than personal recognition and achievement. Personal ethical values were found to be the sole predictor of whether or not a student would successfully transition into hospitality careers. Avoiding value mismatches in career choices can mitigate financial and career problems (Ross, 2006).

Ethics can be clustered within the four structures of reliability (regulates behavior - honesty), human (integrity and equality), capability (reach potentials), and future (environment, etc.). Five levels of ethical focus are societal, industrial, company, work, and personal. One-hundred-ninety-six Norwegian hospitality students were asked to write case studies of ethical dilemmas they would hope not to encounter in their future careers, with the goal of designing effective and appropriate ethics instruction. It was found that students' dilemmas mostly dealt with reliability and capability ethics at the social and company levels. Their dilemmas involved relationships and problems between managers and subordinates, finding that managers often were alone in trying to do the right things. It was concluded that students should be taught ethics in a way that identifies more stakeholders and encourages communication between stakeholders and managers for better problem solving (Marnburg, 2006).

Social, economic, and environmental ethical dilemmas were developed by industry professionals and given to tourism students in Canada, Australia, and the UK to determine their levels of awareness. Students viewed environmental ethics as most important, obviously unaware that care of the environment is linked to social, economic, and political systems. Effective ethics instruction should teach students to identify more stakeholders, recognize their perspectives, and make decisions resulting in the best outcomes for the most stakeholders (Hudson & Miller, 2006).

How to do the Right Thing (Topic 3)

Four articles were categorized in Topic 3. There were 50% fewer articles in this category than in 2005 and the change was even more dramatic from 2003 and 2004.

It is not enough to just have an anti-sexual harassment policy (\$167K award sends message, 2006). Sexual harassment policies must be written with the goal of eliminating sexual harassment and should include definitions of prohibited behavior, confidentiality, and a responsive complaint process that includes appropriate investigation, prompt corrective actions, and prevents retaliation (Solid foundation strengthens, 2006).

Maintaining ethical balance is difficult so Bucaro (2006) offered some guidelines that include focusing on the other and the common good in situations rather than on our own egos, being open to with wisdom of others, staying true to our own values while understanding and respecting the values of others, and closing the gap between what we say we believe and what we actually do.

A study of guest satisfaction surveys from an international hotel chain revealed that guests want to feel some control over guest service exchanges. The more control they perceived to have, the more satisfied they were with the product. Customer perceived fairness on the part of service personnel also increased customers' satisfaction and actually made customers believe they had increased control. The results of this study can be used to design service systems that better satisfy customers (Namasivayam & Mount, 2006).

Company Values (Topic 4)

Only one article appeared in Topic 4 in 2006 and reiterated the need to hire employees who are a good fit and then to have an on-going nurturing process of passing on the company values to all employees so that the company values become the culture of the organization (Carlson, 2006).

Ethics and Leadership (Topic 5): no articles

Codes of Ethics, the Need for, and How to Develop Them (Topic 6)

Topic 2 had only two articles in 2006 compared with ten in 2005, eight in 2004, and ten in 2003. An article in *Club Management* stated that it is essential for all businesses to have ethical guidelines in place and went on to outline how such a code should be written. They suggested involving employees in writing the code, keeping the code simple, updating the code as needed, including a decision making model, including examples of unethical behavior and punishments, and taking into consideration the company's culture and structure (Developing a code of ethics, 2006).

One of the things that governing boards can do to improve their effectiveness is to develop codes of ethics that can become a part of their operating culture (Lovell, 2006).

Ethics for Hospitality Educators (Topic 7): no articles

Teaching Ethics (Topic 8)

In one of two articles in Topic 8, the textbook, *Ethics in the Hospitality and Tourism Industry*, was positively reviewed and recommended for use in hospitality ethics courses or training programs (Lim, 2006).

The second article in Topic 8 discusses the positive role the tourism industry can take in promoting world peace and harmony and provides suggestions for educating and enlightening future managers. A unit on “Peace through Tourism” is recommended for inclusion in every tourism course (Kelly, 2006).

Tourism Ethics (Topic 9)

Tourism ethics is a huge area of inquiry and beyond the scope of Isbell Hospitality Ethics. The following four articles are typical of the articles found in this category.

Hilton Maldives Resort & Spa’s upgrade following the tsunami is stripping the nearby Mandhoo Thundi of valuable trees, soil, and sand, leaving the inhabitants at future risk (Hilton hits on mandhoo, 2006). High levels of education are correlated with high levels of nature conservancy. Targeting nature-conserving tourists may improve the sustainability of a destination rather than trying to provide a sustainable destination for everyone (Dolnicar, 2006).

As ecotourism is defined, policies are written and implemented, therefore, it is essential for the definitions to be accurate and agreed upon. The following six themes must be part of the definition: nature-based, preservation/conservation, environmental education, sustainability, distribution of benefits, and ethics/responsibility (Donohoe & Needham, 2006).

For tourism to be sustainable, negative impacts must be mitigated. It is the responsibility and combined efforts of all of the stakeholders (tourism industry, governments, tourists) to develop tourism plans that take into consideration social and environmental issues (Kasim, 2006).

Trends, Issues, Challenges (Topic 10)

The only article in this topic defends the right of rational and mature individuals to take part in dangerous leisure activities (Olivier, 2006).

Corporate Responsibility (Topic 11)

Before 2004, there were no articles written on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). There were three articles in 2005 and four articles in 2006. Society is beginning to believe business should be held responsible for its impacts on society. Maximizing profits is not enough for a business to be successful. One survey found that 79% of Americans make buying decisions based in part on the environmental and social reputation of the company (Clark, 2006), while another survey found that 84% would change brands to a company with good CSR records (Choi & Parsa, 2006).

Companies with good corporate social responsibility records tend to be better employers and this can positively affect customer and employee recruitment and retention (Lane, 2006). Green practices (part of CSR) can reduce the costs of waste and energy through conservation (Clark, 2006),

In the past some companies chose to donate money to charitable organizations. Corporate Social Responsibility today has more to do with conducting business in a socially responsible way. (Jones, Comfort, & Hillier, 2006) Companies are now ranked by several different organizations as to their level of corporate social responsibility, and many companies are putting out yearly CSR reports (Lane, 2006). While awareness of

CSR and its benefits have increased considerably, many companies' CSR efforts are more about public relations than about health, environment, and social sustainability.

Conclusion

Bad behavior is still being reported in the hospitality journals, but in 2006 there was less mentioned about doing anything about it. It may be that the efforts reported in the 2005 journals are still being made and practitioners and researchers felt no need to reiterate their findings.

A number of surveys were reported, adding to the literature about student's perceptions and about what they say they would do in future dilemmas. However, there is evidence that people do differently than they say they would. We have previously questioned the value of much of the survey research done in the area of hospitality ethics over the past ten years.

A preponderance of articles came out of the UK and Australia, which may be because the *Hospitality and Tourism Index*, several years ago, took over *Hospitality and Tourism* formerly co-produced by the University of Surrey and Oxford Brookes. One survey indicated that 90% of British, 70% of Australians, and just 33% of Americans believe that tourism is dangerous to the environment (Clark, 2006). Awareness of environmental issues has grown in the U.S., and media attention is further increasing companies' need to establish systems to monitor, report, and ensure high standards of corporate responsibility (Lane, 2006).

The growing interest in the area of corporate social responsibility is perhaps the biggest change seen in the literature in the past few years. We at Isbell Hospitality Ethics will review the literature on the topic of corporate social responsibility and write a state of the industry paper in regards to CSR. We consider CSR to be a positive move towards more accountability in terms of sustainability.

Figure 1. Number of Articles in the Eleven Topic Areas

Topic	Content Area	No. of Articles 1990-1999	No. of Articles 2000	No. of Articles 2001	No. of Articles 2002	No. of Articles 2003	No. of Articles 2004	No. of Articles 2005	No. of Articles 2006
1	Unethical Actions	27	4	4	8	3	13	8	9
2	How Ethical Are We?	16	1		3	5	4	2	5
3	How to do the Right Thing	12		4	4	10	15	8	4
4	Company Values	6			3			1	1
5	Ethics and Leadership	9	1		1	1	1		
6	Codes of Ethics, the Need for and How	18	1	2	4	10	8	10	2

	to Develop Them								
7	Ethics for Hospitality Educators	4							
8	Teaching Ethics	16	1		2	1	1	6	2
9	Tourism Ethics	6			5	8	9	8	4
10	Trends, Issues, Challenges				2		2		1
11	Corporate Responsibility						1	3	4

Figure 2. The Number and Year of Each Article Written on the Particular Topic for the Particular Journal. **(2006 articles in red)**

Journals *Academic Journals	Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3	Topic 4	Topic 5	Topic 6	Topic 7	Topic 8	Topic 9	Topic 10	Topic 11	Totals
Anatolla: An Int'l Journal of Tourism & Hospitality Research *									06			1
Annals of Tourism Research *									93 95 99 03 05			5
AsiaPacific Journal of Tourism Research *									03			1
Association Meetings						02						1
Beverage Industry			02									1
Beverage World			05									1
Bottomline	94	91				91-2 94						5

Business Travel World	04					05						2
Canadian Travel Press									05-2			2
Casino Journal			04 05									2
Caterer& Hotelkeeper	04 05					03-2 05					05-2	7
Chef Educator Today								05				1
Chef Magazine			05									1
Club Director						03						1
Club Industry			01 01									2
Club Management	01		03			06						3
Consultant *		04										1
Contours *	06		05 06						02 03-4 04 06			10
Cookingfor Profit				94				94				2
CornellHotel & Restaurant Admin. Quarterly *	06	93 99		02	94 00	92 00		00				9
Corporate Meetings& Incentives		03	03 04 05									4
Consortium Journalof Hospitality& Tourism *								06				1
Cruise Industry News						04						1
Exec.House- keeping Today					02							1
FIU Hospitality Review		92 94 99 02	04		97			05				7

Hotels					97	92						2
HSMAI Marketing Review			96								06	2
Indian Gaming			05									1
Insurance Conference Planner						04						1
Int'l Journal of Contemp. Hospitality Management *		00 02			98 99			98 04				6
International Gaming & Wagering Business	96 01					04 05					06	5
International Journal of Hospitality Management *		04 05		90-2 91		97 01		90	92			9
Int'l J. of Hospitality & Tourism Admin. *									06			1
Journal of Consumer Marketing *		02		02								2
Journal of Convention & Exhibition Management *						03						1
Journal of Ecotourism *									04-2 05 06			4
Journal of Foodservice Business Research *					04						06	2
Journal of						91						1

Analysis *												
Tourism Culture & Comm. *		06										1
Tourism Management *		06				98			95			3
Tourism Recreation Research *									03 04 05-2			4
Tourism Review *		03										1
Tourism Review International *									04			1
Tourist Attractions & Parks	05			06								2
Travel Trade Gazette	04		04-2			05			02-3 05			8
Travel Weekly	03 04-4					03			04 05			8
Totals	76	36	57	11	13	55	4	29	40	5	8	334

Figure 3. Total Number of Articles on Ethics in Each Year 1990-2006

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Articles</u>
1990	13
1991	14
1992	22
1993	11
1994	13
1995	5
1996	8
1997	7
1998	8
1999	13
2000	8
2001	10

2002	32
2003	38
2004	53
2005	46
2006	32

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