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2-2016

From the Editor

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Recommended Citation
Lynn, W. M. (2016). From the editor. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly, 57*(1), 6.
doi: 10.1177/1938965516628253

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From the Editor

Abstract
[Excerpt] *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly* editor, Michael LaTour, lost his battle with cancer and passed away peacefully at his home on November 8, 2015. Mike LaTour's in memoriam, which was written by his wife, Kathryn LaTour, reminds us of his legacy as an editor, scholar, and person. I want to use this "From the Editor" to highlight and discuss another of his editorial legacies. Before he passed away, Mike decided to introduce a "research note" section to the *CQ*—the first accepted one appears in this issue. I strongly supported Mike's decision to have the *CQ* publish research notes and I intend to continue publishing them during my editorship.

Keywords
Cornell, editorial, research notes, author guidelines

Disciplines
Hospitality Administration and Management

Comments
Required Publisher Statement
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From the Editor

Cornell Hospitality Quarterly
2016, Vol. 57(1) 6
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sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav
DOI: 10.1177/1938965516628253
cqx.sagepub.com
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Cornell Hospitality Quarterly editor, Michael LaTour, lost his battle with cancer and passed away peacefully at his home on November 8, 2015. Mike LaTour's in memoriam, which was written by his wife, Kathryn LaTour, reminds us of his legacy as an editor, scholar, and person. I want to use this "From the Editor" to highlight and discuss another of his editorial legacies. Before he passed away, Mike decided to introduce a "research note" section to the *CQ*—the first accepted one appears in this issue. I strongly supported Mike's decision to have the *CQ* publish research notes and I intend to continue publishing them during my editorship.

Many people see research notes as opportunities to publish papers with weaker than typical contributions. While contribution to length ratios do influence editorial decisions, the purpose of research notes at the *CQ* is not to publish weaker papers. Here, research notes are simply papers whose contributions can be best communicated briefly. It is disrespectful to waste readers' time by needlessly stretching papers to fit some target word or page count for a full-length article. Furthermore, needlessly stretching or padding papers often makes them more complex and difficult to understand, which will reduce the readership and impact of the paper. Research notes address these problems—they allow authors to communicate their messages as briefly and simply as possible with the goal of saving readers' time and effort, and of enhancing the readership and impact of the messages.

Writing brief research notes puts a premium on figuring out what content is necessary and what is superfluous. I offer the following three considerations to help make those assessments. First, authors should avoid redundancy as much as possible. Unfortunately, this advice is rarely heeded in academic papers today. Often, authors write separate introduction and literature review sections that say the same thing—once briefly and then again in more detail. Avoid this kind of redundancy by using the introduction only to raise and justify the research question and by using the literature review section only to describe and critique previous answers to that question. Authors also often write discussion sections that repeat what was said in the introduction and/or results sections. Some repetition here cannot be avoided, but it is often over-done. As a general rule, less than one-third of a discussion should be repetition of material presented in the introduction and/or results.

Second, authors should explain only what readers need and are able to learn from the article. Rarely do readers need to know all the details of a theory or method in order to understand what the author has done and what it means. This is especially true when the theory or method is already familiar to the reader and/or when it is so unfamiliar and complex that such details would be more confusing that insightful. Unfortunately, many authors lose sight of this and engage in needless exposition. For example, it is common for authors to describe the Baron and Kenny test of mediation in abstract terms before making use of that test with their data even though the test is almost 30 years old and should be familiar to most hospitality researchers by now. In addition, many authors present the formulas underlying their quantitative analyses even though those formulas will not be meaningful to most readers unfamiliar with that method of analysis. Getting the right level of exposition in an article is difficult and there are no simple rules that will insure success. However, authors should ask themselves "Do readers really need to be told this?" and "Will this be comprehensible or meaningful to readers?" If the answer to either question is "no," then authors should probably simplify their message by cutting the relevant material from their paper.

Third, it is generally unnecessary for authors to explicitly tell readers what the authors are not claiming. This point is most relevant to the listing and description of study limitations, which is nearly ubiquitous in hospitality journal articles. Such "limitation" sections generally take the form of authors disavowing inappropriate conclusions that they never draw, but that reviewers fear other readers will. To me, that is insulting to readers, especially when most of the identified limitations are obvious (e.g., "our correlational data means that we cannot infer causality" or "our convenience sample means the results cannot be generalized to the general population" or "participants' choices in our hypothetical scenarios may not reflect their actual behavior in the real world"). Note that if an author does draw an inappropriate conclusion, then disavowing that conclusion in a subsequent limitations section does not fix the error—it only makes the paper contradictory and confusing. Thus, authors should generally forego limitation sections and simply take care not to advance any inappropriate or unsupportable interpretations of their findings.

These three considerations should help authors to write brief research reports when their core message is simple enough to be communicated in that format. However, I hope all authors keep them in mind. These considerations should help everyone write more clearly and efficiently—even when their core message is more complex and requires a full-length article.

Michael Lynn