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To cite this article: Alison McIntosh & Tracy Harkison (2024) Experiences of a fine dining event held inside a working prison, *Research in Hospitality Management*, 14:1, 21-27, DOI: [10.1080/22243534.2024.2353522](https://doi.org/10.1080/22243534.2024.2353522)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/22243534.2024.2353522>



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Published online: 12 Jun 2024.



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Experiences of a fine dining event held inside a working prison

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ABSTRACT: Fine dining experiences offered inside working prisons are one type of hospitality initiative attempting to support prisoner rehabilitation and offer a memorable dining experience for the paying public. Previous hospitality research has not explored how fine dining delivered in a working prison, offered through this type of social initiative, is experienced by those involved: the inmates volunteering in the event, the celebrity chefs who mentor them, paying diners and other event stakeholders. This case study research examined the "Gate to Plate" fine dining event held inside Rimutaka men's prison in New Zealand. We analysed publicly available material online about this hospitality initiative to discern the key experiences of those involved. Thematic analysis of the data revealed four main themes relating to the experiences of those involved in the fine dining event: a quality food and meal experience; pride and passion arising from being involved; skills for change; and shifted perceptions. While the case study research revealed positive experiences of the prison's fine dining event and suggested it was a potentially transformative experience for all those involved in it, we critically discuss wider implications of the event, and the positive portrayals by all those involved, for hospitality initiatives in working prisons.

KEYWORDS: celebrity chef, culinary experience, hospitality training, offenders, New Zealand, prisoner rehabilitation

Introduction

Hospitality scholars have posed the question of whether hospitality can be a force for good in the world (Cockburn-Wooten et al., 2014). Indeed, hospitality training and education programmes have been used to facilitate the transitions of marginalised people, frequently through increasing employment opportunities for a number of disadvantaged groups, including homeless people, unemployed youth, people with disabilities and ex-offenders (Cosgrove & O'Neill, 2011; Katz, 2014). Such programmes are seen as a means to rehabilitate, facilitate and mobilise a new form of self-hood for marginalised individuals through entrepreneurial freedom and hospitality employment (Hollows & Jones, 2010; Kelly et al., 2015).

Globally, high incarceration, re-offending rates and the rehabilitation of (ex)offenders present a major policy challenge for many countries (Yukhnenko et al., 2020). The aim of rehabilitation is to provide learning to help change debilitating behaviour so that (ex)offenders can live a life free from crime, and to stabilise their lives and those of their families. In-prison training and securing employment for (ex)offenders is viewed as fundamental in the reduction and prevention of re-offending (Cosgrove & O'Neill, 2011). As such, hospitality training as a form of prisoner rehabilitation is increasingly viewed as a method to transition prisoners to life outside upon their release and to tackle recidivism (Meier, 1991; Mbatha et al., 2019).

An increasing number of prisons worldwide offer qualifications in catering, hospitality work-release programmes and/or a hospitality social enterprise, such as a prison café. Notable examples of cafés or dining in working prisons include the Verne

Jailhouse café and The Clink restaurants in the UK. Thomas-Graham (2019) lists 10 gourmet restaurants around the world that are inside minimum-security prisons, where the prisoners run the kitchen and front-of-house under guidance. The Clink restaurant, inside Brixton prison in the UK, frequently ranks as one of the top-10 fine dining restaurants in London on TripAdvisor (Gebbs et al., 2021), indicating the popularity of this type of culinary experience among consumers. Anecdotally, these prison dining initiatives are found to reduce the re-offending rates for those prisoners involved (Giousmpasoglou et al., 2019). As such, these prison restaurants are not just hospitality establishments, they are innovative work-based rehabilitation programmes for prisoners (Graham, 2020).

While hospitality training programmes and culinary qualifications in prisons are increasingly used for the rehabilitation of prisoners, little is known about how the prison fine dining experiences are experienced by those involved. Public and training provider support are essential for the sustainability of any such hospitality initiative, as well as advocacy for its social purpose. As such, the aim of this article is to identify and examine experiences of a New Zealand working prison's hospitality rehabilitation initiative from the perspectives of those involved in the fine dining event.

Literature review

The social dimension of hospitality work, host-diner interactions and the economic benefits of employment are reasons why the hospitality industry is seen as an appropriate support industry for the process of prisoner rehabilitation (Beier, 2015). Hospitality

employment/training programmes offer the opportunity for prisoners to work during incarceration, providing vocational training and the development of key social and personal life skills. These are notable because offenders often lack the skills and education needed to function in the wider workplace and community after spending time separated from society, and they may also exhibit poor (physical and mental) health and social problems (Hunter & Boyce, 2009; Værøy et al., 2011; Beier, 2015). Offenders face the stigma of having a criminal record, being unreliable and being untrustworthy, which remains a significant barrier to gaining employment (Obatusin & Ritter-Williams, 2019).

Previous studies have reported the challenges of in-prison employment, education and training interventions for offenders, including problems of building links with potential employers, ensuring a close fit between training and qualifications with skills shortages, the isolation of prison work experience from the "real thing" (Hunter & Boyce, 2009), and dealing with the unpredictable behaviours and vulnerability of (ex)prisoners (Værøy et al., 2011). The prison location itself can also pose challenges to the delivery and success of training and work schemes as a result of security, risk management processes and prison regimes (Cosgrove & O'Neill, 2011). That said, anecdotal evidence has emerged to suggest in-prison culinary experiences can successfully offer excellent fine dining for consumers, and potentially change public perceptions of prisoners, breaking down some of the existing stereotypical images of offenders that can hinder their rehabilitation. TripAdvisor reviews of the four Clink restaurants showed consumers praised the high quality of food, service and atmosphere, despite the prison location, and prisoners who work in the restaurants were viewed as trainee hospitality employees rather than inmates (Gebbers et al., 2021).

Previous research confirms the influence of the media on shaping public perceptions of hospitality and social issues, for example, youth employment (Hollows & Jones, 2010) and gender representation (Chen et al., 2020). While media portrayals can contribute to perpetuating stereotypes and can worsen discrimination, they too are seen to offer a resource for social change because of the media's ability to influence individuals' beliefs (Coombe & Davis, 2013). Previous literature has, in particular, noted the inspiring "star" image and role model portrayal of celebrity chefs, and the power of their advocacy and celebrity status to draw focus and leadership to social issues, such as health and social exclusion (Zopiatis & Melanthiou, 2018; Giousmpasoglou et al., 2020).

Media representations of hospitality also highlight the power dynamics and hierarchy of the professional kitchen (Kelly et al., 2015), as well as the need for trainees to conform and deliver to the required standards (McIntosh & Harris, 2018). "Fine dining" has a distinctive identity of exacting culinary standards, and attracts consumers by providing unique attributes (Montargot et al., 2022) that are often represented as "elitist" (Herhuth, 2014). There remains little previous consideration, however, of the extent to which the elements of fine dining may be successfully delivered inside working prisons (cooked and delivered by prisoners), or how fine dining, used as an in-prison hospitality rehabilitation initiative, is experienced and represented by those involved. To address this void, our research sought to discern how a fine dining event, the "Gate to Plate" event held in Rimutaka Prison in New Zealand, was experienced by those involved – the inmates who volunteered to take part in the event, their celebrity mentor chefs, paying diners and other event

stakeholders. Their experiences are important because the ways in which they publicly describe and portray their experiences of the event through online material may consequentially support or hinder the success of such rehabilitation initiatives, and may or may not help change stereotypical perceptions of prisoners as professional hospitality providers.

Method

We employed a case study approach to glean new insights into this new research context (Marshall & Rossman, 2010). The case study that was the focus of our research was the "Gate to Plate" three-day pop-up event held inside the Rimutaka men's minimum-to-high security prison, situated on the North Island of New Zealand. The event is part of the region's annual Visa "Wellington on a Plate" Festival. Mentored by local celebrity chefs, volunteer prisoners are trained for nine months to produce fine dining cuisine, preparing and serving a three-course dinner to 160 paying members of the public and more than 60 stakeholders inside the prison, over the three nights of the event (Jacobs, 2017). The prisoners taking part are those whose behaviours have earned them the privileged kitchen duties positions and, hence, they are usually experienced in cooking and studying towards a culinary qualification. After clearing tight security and a briefing, diners at the event are offered a glimpse of "life inside" via a tour of the prison, guided by corrections officers. Canapés are served in the visiting room by the prisoners participating in the event, with the main dinner taking place in the staff training college. After the dinner, the prisoners who have been cooking and serving interact with the public and answer questions (Kong, 2017).

The case study differs from notable prison restaurants or cafés, such as The Clink restaurants, The Jailhouse Café and HMP The Verne in the UK, as it looks at an annual pop-up event, not a permanent social enterprise. It is the only in-prison fine dining initiative of its type currently offered in a New Zealand prison. Similar to other rehabilitation initiatives, the "Gate to Plate" event is an innovative way to show the public the work being undertaken to rehabilitate prisoners through the provision of skills to help them better integrate into society on release (Department of Corrections, 2015). The "Gate to Plate" event is the most popular event in the annual regional festival, with diners having to enter a ballot to get tickets to the event, as tickets sell out in minutes (Jacobs, 2017).

We identified and examined experiences of the "Gate to Plate" event through secondary online data sources, including commentaries and photos/videos included in online news articles, website media releases, magazines, social media and a radio interview with a prisoner (Table 1). Our data included complete coverage of all the online media sources that provided perspectives of those involved in the event since its conception in 2012. The data thus includes the first media coverage in 2013 and runs until 2019, the last public coverage, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our data excluded general sources of information promoting or giving the specific details of the event itself; rather, we sought an ethnography of experiences communicated by those involved (Kozinets, 2002). In addition to examining how those involved represented their experiences via online media sources, secondary data analysis also enabled us to glean the experiences of the prisoners who may otherwise be ethically challenging for researchers to gain access to.

TABLE 1: Online sources of data about the "Gate to Plate" event

Online source	Number of sources
Facebook	7
Newspaper	5
Government website media release	4
Events websites	3
Hospitality industry magazine	2
Radio	2
National magazine	1
Public opinion blog	1
Personal website	1
Total	26

Using keywords "Gate to Plate" and "Rimutaka Prison", "Wellington" or "New Zealand", our search retrieved 26 sources of data (Table 1). Five event participant types were revealed in these online sources (Table 2). The search revealed commentaries and images about the event featuring the experiences of staff from the Department of Corrections, prisoners involved as volunteers at the event, New Zealand celebrity chefs who were involved in mentoring and training the prisoners involved, journalists and paying customers dining at the event.

We used thematic analysis to analyse the data, following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step process. Both researchers manually analysed the data separately, and then together. Previous studies that have examined media representations of hospitality training/employment have similarly employed inductive thematic analysis to determine the key messages and meanings constructed and conveyed through the representational systems (Harris et al., 2011; McIntosh & Harris, 2018).

Findings

Thematic analysis of the data revealed four main themes: a *quality food and meal experience*; *pride and passion*; *skills for change*; and *shifted perceptions*. These four themes are presented below and are illustrated using material taken from the public material available online that represented the experiences of those involved in the "Gate to Plate" event.

Quality food and meal experience

The "Gate to Plate" initiative is officially promoted as "fine dining", and the positive commentaries about the quality of the food and meal experience showed that sophisticated multi-course, à la carte menus were being presented in a unique way, giving the diners a memorable experience, albeit within the environment of a working prison, which included security measures around cutlery and alcohol not being permitted.

TABLE 2: "Gate to Plate" event participants

Event participant type	Acronym	Event participants portrayed
Prisoner	P	10
Celebrity chef	CC	5
Journalist	J	9
Diner (paying customer)	D	11
Department of Corrections staff	DC	5
Total		40

The quality of the food and its presentation was commented on several times by diners, particularly on public Facebook posts. Their comments included: "Meal was delicious, very impressive, presentation was really good" (D1, Facebook); "My favourite was the starter, actually, the kingfish. It was just beautifully presented. It tasted delicious and it was like a piece of art on a plate" (D3, Facebook); "I was very impressed by the food. Yeah, it's just perfect" (D6, Facebook). Food was also prominent in the videos (nine clips on Facebook) and photographs (15 across 26 sources). The nine Facebook video clips showed diners enjoying the meal and the dining environment, despite the prison environment being in stark contrast to the usual high-end settings in which this quality of food would usually be served.

Comments posted on social media by corrections staff included: "What they can produce from here, all done by scratch; I think it's just absolutely fantastic. This is restaurant quality; it is fine dining within the prison and it just goes to show what people can actually produce" (DC5, Facebook); "It has surpassed my expectations with the range of different foods and types of preparation, cooking and presentation" (DC4, government website media release); "People like to come to and have a look around the prison. The food is great, but it's the whole experience which is what makes it so popular" (DC3, government website media release).

The celebrity chefs also commented on the quality of the food produced by the inmates. One commented:

Very impressed with just the right amount of smoke on that banana. You know these guys, they've gotten very little point of reference and so therefore, they've kind of never been told no, no you can't, that it doesn't go with that, or that can't go with that, so they are so creative in their thinking. There's pretty much unbridled thinking (CC2, Facebook).

One prisoner commented on the fact that they are now allowed to create their own food for the event:

This year we've created desserts and everything else... like any cooks, I suppose we just sort of trial and error and we brainstorm amongst ourselves. I mean, sometimes it's as simple as sitting on a seat in the sun, and something pops into your head and you think, wow, that looks good, I'm gonna try it (P2, radio).

This theme provided some evidence to suggest what those involved experienced "fine dining" and food to be in the context of the "Gate to Plate" event; that is, that the meal experience, the quality of the food, the flavours, the presentation and the attention to detail appeared comparable to top-end restaurants that are traditionally described as "fine dining". However, the absence of a high-end environment may potentially challenge the wider public perceptions of what is traditionally viewed as "fine dining" given the location (a working prison) and service being delivered by inmates.

Pride and passion

The commentaries made in online media conveyed feelings of both the "pride" and the "passion" felt by the celebrity chefs and prisoners participating in the event. This theme can be aptly illustrated by the following quote from a prisoner who described how his volunteer role in the "Gate to Plate" event was on top of other prison work and duties, but the passion for being involved in the event was the driving force:

Pretty passionate about it now. It's giving me something to look forward to going forward. Sometimes we do up to 12-14 hour days, seven days a week and we don't get paid for it. It is just about passion for us because no matter what happens, we want to give 120% to it. For us, it's just a really enjoyable experience, but you will get a lot of pride in what we do...And it gives you a lot of hope...there is a chance, you know, that people are willing to give you a chance (P2, radio).

The celebrity chefs similarly used the word "passion" to describe their involvement in the event. As one explained:

There's a real passion for them with working with what they're doing here. They, you know, they want to do well at it. They want to exceed at it, and they do not want to disappoint anybody, including themselves. So they apply themselves in the most extraordinary ways (CC2, radio).

Another celebrity chef said, *"This is something I am passionate about...the most rewarding thing"* (CC2, hospitality industry magazine).

A sense of pride was also evidenced in the commentaries made by the celebrity chefs. For example, one expressed their sense of pride by being able to teach and seeing the results of their teaching:

I was really fortunate enough to have great teachers that taught me really well and so it's time for me to give back a little bit, and I enjoy watching other people flourish and other people succeed and get better. So it's something that I get a big, big buzz out of (CC5, Facebook).

A sense of pride also came as a result of the food that was produced, as one celebrity chef stated:

I would also say that the prawn cracker on the top the guys have made themselves. They took that idea and they have worked tirelessly to get this right and they are the best prawn crackers you have ever had in your life, they taste amazing (CC2, Facebook).

This theme denoted the overriding feelings of "pride" and "passion", demonstrating the personal affect and meaning that participants portrayed publicly in regard to their involvement in the initiative. That the "Gate to Plate" event gave prisoners something to have pride in is worthy of consideration in the context of how hospitality can make a difference to their lives. That both prisoners and celebrity chefs would volunteer their time to try to make a difference, and that they conveyed passion for making a difference, is perhaps a unique qualitative aspect of this event as a hospitality rehabilitation initiative. Arguably, it may potentially feed a wider moral or ethical agenda for those involved to portray only positive experiences from their sense of pride and passion for supporting a social initiative of this type.

Skills for change

Comments made publicly by those involved in the event appeared to showcase the event as a "successful", innovative form of prisoner rehabilitation, providing prisoners with "skills for change". Specifically, the event was reported to give prisoners new skills that helped build a new confidence in themselves and was perceived to be a positive aid in their rehabilitation and employment post-release.

The celebrity chefs commented frequently on how the event could provide skills for change, as well as their own sense of

achievement, from being able to provide training to aid the employment prospects of prisoners upon release. One celebrity chef suggested that *"As a community, we have to be part of the solution and give these people a chance"* (CC2, hospitality industry magazine).

Corrections staff, not surprisingly, presented a more official position on the "Gate to Plate" event as a positive form of prisoner rehabilitation to lower the rate of re-offending. As one journalist commented, *"The commissioner spoke passionately about lowering the re-offending rate"* (J3, newspaper). In their public commentaries, corrections staff referred to the skills involved in the event as an innovative rehabilitation programme. For example, one corrections staff member commented:

Rimutaka Prison Gate to Plate is an innovative way to show the public and our stakeholders the work happening to rehabilitate prisoners...Inmates involved are learning skills that will help them better integrate into society on release and turn away from a life of crime (DC1, government website media release).

Importantly, the prisoners involved in the event similarly commented on the skills and other benefits the training that being involved in the event had provided them with. They relayed comments that included, for example, *"For me, I've learned about style, different cooking techniques that wouldn't have been possible otherwise"* (P7, hospitality industry magazine). Prisoners equated these new skills and experiences with positive change for themselves, not only through giving them food preparation skills, but also building their confidence to better themselves. As one prisoner reported:

This whole experience gives us confidence to do anything...He's shown us anything is possible...I fully realise my mistake and being away from my daughter has changed my ways...I have secured a job and never want to re-offend...We've worked our way through hard work to get to where we are now...trying to do better for ourselves (P8, hospitality industry magazine).

Addressing his celebrity chef trainers, one prisoner stated:

Like words can't really describe what you do coming in Saturdays and Sundays helping us, helping us to grow and better ourselves...For our families. Treating us like humans is huge...sometimes good people do just make bad decisions. And there's a lot of us here...we've progressed a lot through prison...so we would like to thank you guys from the bottom of our hearts (P1, Facebook).

The positive change for the prisoners was similarly reported on by one journalist: *"He's helped transform a group of initially disinterested men into the skilled foodies of today"* (J9, newspaper). Images portrayed in the nine Facebook clips and one prisoner interview showed the prisoners talking about their new-found skills. Even though their faces were blurred for confidentiality, they were shown cooking and plating up high-end food, displaying different culinary techniques, knife skills and communication skills.

This theme therefore provided some evidence to suggest that the people involved saw the "Gate to Plate" event as a means to deliver experiences that lead to positive social outcomes beyond the popular nature of the pop-up dining event and being part of a regional food celebration. The event was conveyed as providing important opportunities for post-release employment and giving prisoners the chance for positive personal change to enable a

life without crime. Perhaps driven by a more official narrative, corrections staff positioned the event as an innovative solution to reducing re-offending rates in New Zealand. Seemingly, it is perceived to provide the prisoners taking part with experiential learning to improve their skills and self-confidence levels.

Shifted perceptions

This theme involved experiences recounted by those involved conveying their "shifted perceptions" about prisoners as a result of attending or being involved in organising the "Gate to Plate" event. This transformation, or shift in perceptions, was reported to involve their stereotypical beliefs about prisoners being challenged, and their sense of being surprised or enlightened about their interactions with the prisoners. This theme is aptly illustrated in the following quote from one of the celebrity chefs:

My view was they should lock them up and throw away the key. Those guys should be breaking rocks in the hot sun...It's probably the single most rewarding thing I've ever done, certainly the most confronting — emotionally, spiritually, with shifted perceptions about the nature of offending (CC2, hospitality industry magazine).

These shifted perceptions reportedly came from "the guys shot in a bit of a different light, rather than just the bad stereotype that everyone thinks about them" (CC5, Facebook).

Paying diners at the event similarly commented on their changed perceptions of prisoners as a result of the dining experience. One diner explained:

I have had an opportunity tonight to talk to some prisoners and it's been enlightening, really. Nice to talk to them and they're just like, they could be my neighbours living on my street (D5, Facebook).

A similar position was reported by a journalist whose thinking had changed as a result of attending the event:

When you think of prison, what is the first thing you think of? Lowlifes and criminals...but, by attending the event, the whole night was a brilliant experience. I used to think prisoners were all awful human beings with no redeeming qualities (J3, newspaper).

The prisoners also saw the event as "an opportunity to break down stereotypes on both sides" (P2, radio). As such, one prisoner involved explained how the event provides an opportunity to change perceptions, commenting that

It's about us trying to build small bridges with the public...show that we're not really all the animals they think we are. There is some hope, there are some skills in here if people want to give us a chance (P2, radio).

The fact that the "Gate to Plate" event brought "outside" stakeholders into the "inside" life of a prison to interact with prisoners volunteering in this prison fine dining experience potentially had a transformational impact, helping to publicly reframe stereotypical negative assumptions about prisoners through the interactions and experiences it provided.

Discussion

Experiences portrayed through online media of fine dining in a working prison have not yet been examined by hospitality researchers. Previous studies have shown that we are more likely now to use media not only to discover entertainment, but also for social action (American Press Institute & AP-NORC, 2015;

Chan-Olmsted & Wolter, 2018). So, our research is timely in this regard in terms of uncovering how social hospitality initiatives, such as the "Gate to Plate" event, are experienced by those involved, and their potential for a wider impact. Our research showed that those involved in the event, across the years of online sources we studied, commonly relayed their experiences as an enjoyable, quality meal experience comparable with other high-standard restaurants, despite being located inside a working prison. This finding further corroborates Gebbels et al.'s (2021) findings of positive customer feedback about dining at the UK's Clink prison restaurants, and is commensurate with previous findings about the successful achievement of fine dining standards by students in experiential training restaurants (Dang & Moreo, 2022). The prison setting appears to provide a novel and unique environment for the successful delivery of a fine dining experience.

Participating in a successful fine dining event, the celebrity chefs portrayed their experiences as being passionate and proud mentors/educators, and their involvement likely created positive public attention for their role in prisoner rehabilitation. Indeed, they appeared as positive endorsers of a social issue (Cifelli et al., 2020), and effective educators in experiential learning (Dang & Moreo, 2022). Furthermore, prisoners themselves reported a sense of pride and passion when they talked publicly about what they had achieved through participation in the event, including culinary skills and personal confidence. This lends anecdotal support to the idea of hospitality as a force for good, as being emancipatory and transformational for (ex)offenders, potentially enabling the construction of new social identities and roles (Kelly et al., 2015; Chandra, 2017). Arguably, "[t]heir identity is not reduced to being a criminal, but to a skilful individual" (Beier, 2015, p. 193). The engendering of passion and pride in the prisoners who participated, and supported in their training via the mentoring of local celebrity chefs, may indeed be a crucial component in the success of rehabilitation initiatives based on culinary training, like the "Gate to Plate" event. These qualities have certainly been similarly evidenced as outcomes from student-operated restaurant education programmes and are important attributes for entering the hospitality industry (Dang & Moreo, 2022).

The research also revealed the potential value of providing hospitality education and training inside the prison to give prisoners new skills for a changed life upon release. The prisoners participating in the event relayed that it had given them the skills to move forward, and this was also reported by the celebrity chefs and corrections staff. Indeed, there are other countries around the world where hospitality training programmes have been introduced into prisons in the hope of reducing re-offending, drawing on the social and transferable skills inherent in hospitality that seem compatible with prisoner rehabilitation (Hunter & Boyce, 2009; Værøy et al., 2011; Beier, 2015; Cale et al., 2018). New Zealand appears to be following this international trend by holding the "Gate to Plate" event in Rimutaka Prison. However, at present, there exists no permanent public fine dining hospitality establishment in a New Zealand prison comparable to that found in some other countries, such as The Clink training restaurants in the UK. The four Clink restaurants were started in 2009 and have reported a 65.6% reduction in re-offending among former prisoners who graduated from the training programme (The Clink Charity, 2022). A similar model may therefore be worthy of consideration in New Zealand.

The findings of our study certainly add further weight to suggestions that dining initiatives in working prisons may be transformational, and have a role to play in helping to break down negative perceptions of prisoners. However, care needs to be taken in interpreting the findings, as media representations may portray overly positive feedback, or espouse "official" communications (Taddeo & Barnes, 2016). In this case, they may lend support to a government's "successful" position on the rehabilitation of offenders, such as that noticed here in the commentaries made by corrections staff. Similarly, the popularity of celebrity chefs may help to conflate public attention on, and inspiration for, social initiatives (Hollows & Jones, 2010). However, findings from journalists, prisoners and paying diners were not official sources of communication, and their experiences of the "Gate to Plate" event remained positive.

Conclusion

This study identified and examined the experiences of those involved in the only in-prison fine dining hospitality training initiative in New Zealand, the "Gate to Plate" event. A thematic analysis of the data revealed four main themes to denote their experiences: a *quality food and meal experience*; *pride and passion* from being involved; *skills for change*; and *shifted perceptions*. While this article makes no claim as to the actual effectiveness of this fine dining initiative as a reforming rehabilitation practice, the case study research did reveal positive experiences by all those involved in the dining experience. The quality of food and service was delivered to the exacting standards required of "fine dining", and delivered by inmates inside a working prison. Further research is needed to validate the satisfaction of diners' experiences at the event, as well as provide important longer-term data to reveal if participation in the event reduces rates of recidivism. Future research could compare the success of pop-up hospitality rehabilitation initiatives, such as the "Gate to Plate" event, with more permanent in-prison hospitality training initiatives, and suggest what elements make each model effective with respect to enabling prisoners to achieve hospitality qualifications and gain subsequent entry into the hospitality industry post-release, as well as reducing recidivism rates and the negative social stigmatisation of offenders.

The online representations of the "Gate to Plate" event that we analysed certainly provided evidence to show that the positive experiences of those involved situate this event as a successful agenda for social good and one to have "pride" in. Noting that some online media sources convey more bias than others because they often represent the carefully crafted agenda or espouse the values of an organisation/stakeholder (Taddeo & Barnes, 2016), more critical attention to media representations of the event are needed. In particular, the politics of the event needs greater consideration in relation to how the experiences are manifested, who has agency in the process, and whether this implies a political and/or moral framework. There is also a need to more critically interrogate the perceptions held of prisoners in in-prison dining initiatives. While our study suggests prisoners may come to be perceived differently as a result of the dining event, they regardless remain somewhat exceptional within the espoused agenda, and in representations of prisoner rehabilitation and the nature of their incarceration. This can also be coupled, alongside the seemingly increasing interest among

consumers in paying to have a novel and unique experience "inside" a working prison, as a form of "prison tourism" wherein imprisonment has become a popular tourist attraction to be gazed upon (Wilson et al., 2017). In short, the complex intersection of political and media discourses, power and class differences, and how they are mediated and represented to showcase in-prison dining experiences by the stakeholders who take part in them, is also a valuable avenue for future critical enquiry that positions hospitality as a force for good.

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