

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS



Daniel Rottig, Ph.D.,
Editor

We have entered a new era for international business! Recent news, events and developments evidence a broader globe-spanning trend toward more isolationism at the cost of further integration; toward more neo-mercantilism and less free and fair market ideology; and toward a more pronounced focus on domestic rather than international issues. This increasingly “spiky” (and diminishingly flat) world is experiencing a new, cranky face of globalization that has left its marks on many domains, including our academic realm - which is illustrated by the vanishing legitimacy and relevance of our IB field. The current issue publishes a set of articles which discuss and analyze how we, as members of the AIB, can contribute to reversing this trend and making our IB field more legitimate and relevant again.

Simon Collinson focuses on IB scholarship, its new realities and key challenges. He argues that IB scholars are not significantly influencing the debates that are shaping our world and explores the questions of why that is, and what most constrains our engagement with a wider set of stakeholders and limits the contribution we could make to solving these challenges.



John Mezias, Ph.D.,
Associate Editor

Mary Ann von Glinow asks whether the current developments and changes affecting our field will take us, as IB teachers and scholars “out of our ivory towers into the “abyss” or [whether we are] simply dangling on the edge of it?” She also offers specific suggestions regarding our top journals, research incentives and possible collaborations with our accrediting bodies for how to deal with these challenges and new realities.

Jonathan Doh makes a case for “phenomenon-based research” to encourage IB scholars to address real-world issues in their research, something our field had heavily focused on upon its inception more than a half century ago. He argues that our core theories and narrow focus on academic contributions have distracted IB scholars from addressing important challenges facing managers. He calls for studies which answer big questions that address important phenomena, and a renewed emphasis on examining real-world problems in order to regain relevance and legitimacy as a field.

Rob Grosse addresses the key challenge for us as IB teachers: the declining demand for stand-alone IB courses and programs due to the commonly made, fallacious assumption that integrating “international” in other courses by simply adding an “internationally-oriented” chapter to textbooks would suffice. Based on this assumption, the “value added” and uniqueness of IB as its own domain has been questioned, and our field has been marginalized. Rob Grosse further discusses the crucial competences of our field and offers suggestions for teaching and curriculum changes that will facilitate the (re-)establishment of IB as a core discipline, and so contribute to regaining relevance and legitimacy.

Jean Boddewyn, who co-edited this special issue, and the editor of this publication discuss how we, as members of the AIB, may contribute to the efforts of our field to regain relevance and legitimacy. The article discusses the new challenges facing our field in this new era for international business, explores some actionable projects to tackle these challenges, and proposes specific opportunities for you, our valued *AIB Insights* readership, to become involved in this dialogue, and so contribute to regaining relevance and legitimacy as a field.

One of these opportunities is a **Panel Session titled “Tracing the Contours of a New Era for International Business: Regaining Legitimacy and Relevance for its Study” at the upcoming AIB 2017 Annual Meeting in Dubai** (*scheduled for Tuesday, July 4 from 9:00 to 10:15 a.m. in Room Dubai 1-2 at the JW Marriott Marquis Conference Hotel*), organized by Jean Boddewyn and the editor of this publication. All authors who contributed to this special issue will join as panelists.

We hope that you find this special issue valuable, and we cordially invite you to attend the aforementioned panel in Dubai in order to engage in a fruitful conversation on how we, as the AIB, can regain relevance and legitimacy for our field.

Go AIB, Go *Insights*!

Daniel Rottig

John Mezias