Editorial

In our first two editorials we mentioned the Journal’s debt to the previous editors, Steve Smithson and Jonathan Liebenau. This issue also contains papers submitted to the Journal under their editorships, so once again, thanks Steve and Jonathan. To complete this year in transition mode, Steve is doing a guest editorial for us, picking some of the best papers from this year’s European Conference on Information Systems held in Vienna, for a special edition of EJIS in the next issue. The selected papers will meet EJIS’ requirements of course!

For the third issue in a row we give the changes we have instigated in the scope of EJIS to ensure that potential authors take up the message:

‘To us, the key aspect of European research into IS, and the first eight volumes of EJIS, is pluralism. The joy of IS is the integration of the technical, personal, organizational, strategic and societal issues that seemed to be so intertwined in any particular IS. We know in IS research that implementations driven by just technology, or just strategy without technology understanding, or sometimes those that simply ignore personal factors, are often doomed. EJIS will continue to publish papers that contain research that helps to explain, or even untangle, this intricate web of interrelation. We will not publish papers that focus purely on technology, or interface design, or organizational design, or whatever.

In terms of research methodology, EJIS has been at the forefront of pluralism. It published qualitative (and particularly interpretive) research before such research gained broad acceptance across the Atlantic, but has also published quantitative studies. We continue to welcome all methodologies without prejudice. We particularly welcome innovation in methodology. Unlike the previous editors, we do not wish to see researchers constrained by having to declare the names of participating organizations or individuals.

The delicate balance between rigour and relevance has been debated elsewhere, and is a particular problem for many journals. Our view is that relevance is in part a function of what is researched, and how it is written up, rather than of how it’s researched. The balance can be addressed by sensible choices and timely publication. We wish to do everything we can to promote relevance without loss of rigour. We consider the previous use of grouping papers under headings such as ‘practice’ or ‘management’ versus ‘research’ not useful, and from this issue EJIS will no longer do this. We expect all our papers to be academically acceptable and to have some relevance to some part of IS/IT practice.’

In this issue as promised, we have three reviews of Ian Angell’s controversial book ‘The New Barbarian Manifesto: How to Survive the Information Age.’ We invited Ian to respond to the reviews, and he offered a response from one of his pupils. We publish this as well, leaving the reader to muse as to whether Ian is being his normal mischievous self, or whether the pupil is better able to represent his master!

The Angell reviews are an invitation to readers to participate in a ‘Comments’ section of the Journal. This will be as good as your contributions. Send your comments to either editor, or to EJIS@brunel.ac.uk

Bob O’Keefe
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