



Some personal reflections on 11 years of JISIB editorial notes and production

For now, this is the last issue of JISIB. The reason is that funding for Open-Source journals through NOS-HS has been halted for all journals ending in 2022. JISIB had financing through 2021. There may be a revival of Open-Source initiatives and then it's possible to continue if we can obtain the funds, but for now JISIB will be put on pause.

JISIB came out regularly between 2011-2022, so for 11 years. For eight of these years the journal received funding from VR and NOS-HS. NOS-HS is the Joint Committee for Nordic Research Councils in the Humanities and Social Sciences. It's a cooperation between the research councils in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden responsible for research within the Humanities and Social Sciences. We are very grateful for continuous support received from NOS-HS. It has been instrumental for the advancement of Open-Source Publishing in Sweden.

The journal was started at a time when the interest for competitive intelligence (CI) was declining, during the first decade of the 21st century. Bibliometric analysis shows that JISIB has been the primary outlet for scientific articles on CI for the past decade. Most articles have been in the border between CI and business intelligence, or more specifically between software and web-solutions, web-intelligence, and social media intelligence. Some articles have been in market intelligence and other closely related areas. In France there has been a continuous interest for "intelligence économique" and in Sweden "omvärldsanalys". We have also seen new areas emerge and some areas increase in popularity, like collective intelligence, foresight and insight (competitive and market insight). However, the core of the content is much the same despite this relabeling. It's still about processes for providing decision makers with need-to-know information.

At the beginning, the editorial note basically just presented the content of the issues. As such, the first editorial note written was a general introduction and a welcome to the new journal (Vol 1, No 1, 2011). The second editorial note speaks of the importance of Open Access journals for the free and equal advancement of science to people around the world (Vol 2, No 1, 2012). We could have gone with private publisher too, but a majority of the editors were convinced that it was important for science to be free and easily accessible and that this was the future. We still believe so. In the third editorial note (Vol 2, No 2, 2012) the focus was on different CI conferences as contributors and sources of articles for the journal. The journal has always relied on these conferences for good and relevant content. The next editorial note is on the journal being indexed by EBSCO, and applying to get indexed by others, first Web of Science (Vol 2, No 3, 2012). The early days of the journal focused on reviewing what had already been done. Typical of this was my article "An overview of articles on Competitive Intelligence in JCIM and CIR" in that issue. This was also a time when I was able to work closely with my old mentor Per Jenster from CBS. We published "The relationship between Strategic Planning and Company Performance – A Chinese perspective" as a result of Per having moved to China and working at CEIBS.

The sixth issue of JISIB featured articles by prolific contributors such as A.S.A. du Toit and Sheila Wright (Vol 3, No 2, 2013). Many contributions in the next issue came from the 2013 SCIP conference in South Africa under the leadership of A.S.A. du Toit, the journal's editor for Africa (Vol 3, No 3, 2013). In 2014 we were indexed by SCOPUS and this was noted in the first editorial note of 2014 (Vol 4, No 1, 2014). In the next issue I published a so called spot-check, a market survey to see what readers and users prefer to see as content. Much of the challenge in theory is often to align the reality of intelligence with theory, to make sure they follow each other and are in sync. If not, theory tends to become irrelevant. This resulted in "A survey of users' perspectives and preferences as to the value of JISIB - a spot-check" (Vol 4, No 2, 2014). The last issue of 2014 presented some case studies, a gap that had been identified in the spot-check in the previous issue. This last year Jonathan Calof and I had been working with SAP to try to write some large cases on intelligence studies, but it will probably take another year or so before we know the results.

The first issue of 2015 presented papers from two conferences (Vol 5, No 1, 2015). The second issue presents articles from the ECKM 2015 conference. Vol 5, No 3 marks a landmark as this is the first issue after the design facelift made possible with the NOS-HS grant (Vol 5, No 3, 2015). The editorial note presents some self-reflection on intelligence studies as a discipline. My article is entitled: “A place for intelligence studies as a scientific discipline”. In the next issue I take one step further with “A research agenda for intelligence studies in business”. The next issue, No 2, is on user perspectives on business intelligence. My own contribution here is: “Users’ perceptions of Data as a Service (DaaS)”. I was never a tech guy so could not make many contributions in this area. Instead, I have written numerous articles on the user perspective, related to marketing and customers’ expectations. My latest contribution there was published last year on how households look at Central Bank Digital Currencies: “Household acceptance of central bank digital currency: the role of institutional trust”. For the last issue of 2016 I did an update of the problem studied in my doctoral dissertation on industrial espionage: “Economic and industrial espionage at the start of the 21st century – Status quaestionis”. In the first issue of 2017 I tried to gather my ideas about how intelligence is related to geopolitics and founded in biology. It was based on the ideas expressed in my book “Goeconomics”. The article is entitled “Why the social sciences should be based in evolutionary theory: the example of goeconomics and intelligence studies”. It summarizes the way I still teach intelligence studies in Sweden today under the Swedish term “omvärldsanalys”. I have given this course for 20 years now, first at BTH then later in Halmstad, and as a guest lecture at other universities. In the second issue of 2017 I revisited a favorite company: Ericsson, this time doing a comparative case study with another major Swedish company, SCA: “Why care about competitive intelligence and market intelligence? The case of Ericsson and the Swedish Cellulose Company”. Among a series of conclusion, the article shows a major obstacle to good and well-functioning intelligence organizations: the all-knowing manager. Many managers simply do not listen to good intelligence because they think they know best. The issue deals with “How companies work and fail to work with business intelligence”, as the editorial note suggests (Vol 7, No 2, 2017). No 3, 2017 has an even closer look at the implementation of new technology, as in the editorial note title: “How companies succeed and fail to succeed with the implementation of intelligence systems”. Our article in that issue is called “The perception of useful information derived from Twitter: A survey of professionals” and shows that a large majority of managers find Twitter useful, but only half think that those who tweet have useful things to say. “It may be that intelligence professionals can find valuable information about markets, industries, and products without the person tweeting having any valuable information:

“It may also be that ‘the value of the information lies in the things that are not said. (...) Intelligence professionals know that corporate tweets come from communication departments and professionals. They may know how to read what they see or what is between the lines, so to speak. In that lays the valuable information’ However user of Twitter think that overall those they are following have useful things to say. About 22% think that they get their most valuable information from Twitter. This may seem low but is rather significant. However, it may also change with time”.

The survey was done during a time when Twitter was more popular. These studies are a bit like fresh milk and need to be updated regularly to be relevant.

The next editorial note is entitled “The disciplines of management and IT have indeed merged: new empirical data” (Vol 8, No 1, 2018). By this time social media intelligence had become dominating for all kinds of market intelligence. Gathering information is now mostly about forms of web-intelligence. Intelligence and social research are now closely related (Vol 8, No 1, 2018). We see this in the next editorial note title as well, “Social media intelligence” (Vol 8, No 2, 2018). This issue had, for the first time, an editorial note that looks backwards and compares previous issues to confirm the strength of this change in how companies gather information.

The next editorial note is named “Why you should be interested in intelligence studies” (Vol 8, No 3, 2018). In it I argue for what I think is the core of intelligence studies:

“It is suggested that the difference between information science in business, business- and market research and intelligence studies is mainly one of perspective and scope and less one about the content of problems or scientific methods used. Intelligence studies in business see the organization much like an intelligence organization, the offspring of the study of state and military intelligence, where the aim is to find information that affects the business as a whole (as in ‘surrounding world analysis’ or in Swedish ‘omvärldsanalys’). A study of intelligence studies – management information or information sciences - that does not explain which outside events affect the business becomes sterile and uninteresting. The essence of intelligence is to scan the world for relevant developments, to find out what is going on that affects our organization (need-to-know, strong signals, trends). How

to do this should be the focus of the subjects' research agenda and what sets it apart from other disciplines studying information in a business context." P. 4

There is also a summary of my conviction about what has gone wrong in the study of business in general and for the study of information in particular:

"Sometimes this goal seems far away as when reading about how a new technique is applied to an industry in a specific market. Sometimes I miss hearing about how basic methods like traveling to foreign countries (the spirit of Marco Polo) and reading books may be the best methods for understanding what affects an organization. We must always remember that the technology is only there to facilitate the process, it never explains why things happen and it seldom helps us in the actual understanding of the data. Statistical analysis does not explain why or how things occur: at best it summarizes what has happened. Authors of articles I read in other journals too often miss the difference between correlation and causation. What is then so special and different with intelligence studies? Intelligence studies - at the present at least - are less a series of theories than a new perspective on (micro and macro) economics. Intelligence studies is not exclusively about management, but also about economics as it's just as relevant for how nation states become competitive. It is the suggestion that competitive organizations of all sizes are best organized as intelligence organizations, focusing on the process of gathering, analyzing and delivering need to know information to decision makers. This is a different way of looking at organizations and what they do. Competitive organizations today all basically work with information. It is how they work with this information that decides whether or not they will succeed. The importance of building a formal intelligence organization was realized more than two hundred years ago in the military domain with the Prussian and Russian armies. In the study of business this was first realized with the shift in thinking that came with the Information Age and the development of computers, the realization that competitive advantage is more about what you know than what machinery you own or how much money you have in your accounts. If the introduction of IT represented the 1.0 version of this development, then the introduction of the Internet represents the 2.0. Many saw this development coming. Some experts thought that it would not only lead to intelligence studies being introduced as a special function in the organization but that we would see the implementation of separate departments of intelligence, or that the whole current division and structure of business activities, into marketing HRM, finance, would be abandoned for functions of intelligence gathering. When this did not materialize many started to question the value of the approach all together. Many still think that the approach failed, that the perspective has passed and been surpassed by other subjects and disciplines. I disagree. Even though things have not happened as quickly as many expected or hoped, we are still moving in that direction now more than ever. B2B digital marketing is a good example. Today it is less about push marketing and sales and more about gathering and distributing valuable information to potential customers. When customers see that we are knowledgeable not only about our products but also about the industry we are in, they start to trust us and we are able to build a customer relationship. This is not only changing how B2B marketing is done, but also the competences needed to succeed in B2B marketing. On the state or macro level we are living in a period of (neo-) mercantilism and geoeconomics where intelligence is key. The states that are succeeding economically today are countries like China, Singapore, and South Korea, but also Norway. These are representatives of state capitalism, not free market liberalism. The individualist, liberalist model supported by neoclassical economics and its foundation in the writing of Adam Smith (not always fairly interpreted, so I prefer to call them the marginalist school), Walras, Marshall and Samuelsson, have greater difficulty convincing readers today. As Piketty showed in his vast empirical project about capital, their (our) societies led to an extreme wealth being assembled at the very top with very little trickle-down effects. When the crises came it was the rest of society that had to take the hit, while the elites bailed themselves out to save a dysfunctional system. After a period of prosperity, which lasted for some four generations (and was only extended during the past two generations through massive debt), the populations in the Western world are experiencing a decline in their standard of living. These causes were all missed by the marginalist school whose members have been advising governments for more than half a century. The consequences of these policies have been massive protests and disbelief - almost hatred - of their own elites as in the US, but also in France, the UK and Italy. The point is that our leading social science paradigms and especially our economic and management theories that brought us here by not being relevant and, worse, by supporting the wrong policies; regardless of the good intentions, which many of my colleagues even doubt. Mainstream economics combined with too narrowly and fragmented studies of management obsessed with a method of small empirical investigations have become the

supporters, not only of an elite – the status quo- but more worryingly of an uncompetitive society. Now, for business studies that is almost what we should call a contradiction. Our reigning business theories and research are making us less competitive. The new economic powers in the East have copied what has been done well in the West, but it is unlikely that they will copy our leading social science paradigm. It is the message China sends out when it says “...with Chinese characteristics”. Chinese leaders are following the thinking of Drucker, Schumpeter, and Michael Porter; more so than the winners of the Nobel prize in Economics and their schools of thinking. They are not reading our thousands of small business journals, even though their own scholars are taking a larger part in the work of running them and contributing to them. Instead they are first and foremost inspired by their own values, their own history and their own thinkers of strategy and philosophy. China is already a superpower of intelligence gathering, which they see as essential for strategy. Not only have our theories of political science been contested, but there is now clear critic of Western Moralism. There are hardly any independent thinkers outside the Western world who believe in the good intentions of Western political and economic interferences anymore. As we in the West have failed to keep up the living standard of our middle classes (our promise to the voters) “Eastern arguments” are starting to convince a large part of our own populations in the West. The failure of the Western world to compete becomes a confirmation of the weaknesses of our strategic thinking (the weakness in our political system to make plans), and in our ideas which at the end is a critic of our reigning social science projects. Eastern ideas will be closer to practice. The West is left with a number of paradoxes. For all our interest in strategy during the past two decades we have no strategy, no long term thinking and no major infrastructural projects. Instead we are consumed with our immediate problems and crisis handling. We are so obsessed with the critic of China as a dictatorship that we refuse to see that they are undertaking the largest infrastructural project in world history (the Belt and Road Initiative, or BRI), that their mercantilist ideas are engulfing our markets but also helping to improve the living standard of people living in the developing world. Our media is full of stories about Chinese exploitation in the developing world, which also exist, but forgetting that exploitation - even slavery - used to be our specialty for centuries and the hallmark of the British Empire. Now, what does this all mean for business studies? It means we have to search for other paradigms other than the existing one if we want to become competitive again. We have to become more interested in what is actually going on in the world, more curious. This reality must be led by business disciplines.”

After this rather long explanation of the context of the study it's back to essentials in the next issue, as the editorial note is entitled “Developing new models for intelligence studies”. It says “The aim of any social science is to develop theories and/or models to better understand the business reality. We are happy to see that a majority of contributions this time do exactly that.” Very few articles in fact take this seriously, but in this issue we see a few attempts at least. The bigger question is also to what extent this theory building is possible in the social sciences. Most contributions are attempts. It's quite possible that the social sciences are best treated as an art, as Peter Drucker suggest.

In the issue (Vol 9, No 1, 2019) I also write an article entitled “How managers stay informed about the surrounding world”. It's out of this wish to be practical and useful. It's an important question for intelligence studies and one that has to be frequently updated empirically to be of value to managers. The conclusions were quite telling, I think:

“• No one said they read books • New media companies are dominating as providers of competitive information: Google, YouTube, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter • People watch TV news first of all, to the extent that the content is available on YouTube • Trade shows are a major source of information • Radio is not a significant source of information anymore, with the exception of in places like the African continent and to a certain extent in France • HUMINT is still considered highly relevant for information gathering, on all levels and across organizations. This includes “coworkers and colleagues”, but also gossip and “friends in the media”. • Many managers say they get their best information through emails, from Google and the act of googling. This makes Google LLC the single most important source for competitive intelligence. • A number of reports are widely popular, for example from OECD, IMF, and the World Bank, but also those that are distributed by the major consulting companies. • Most managers read a combination of their local and/or national news and international news. • The most popular sources offline are The Economist, WSJ, and NY Times.” P. 32

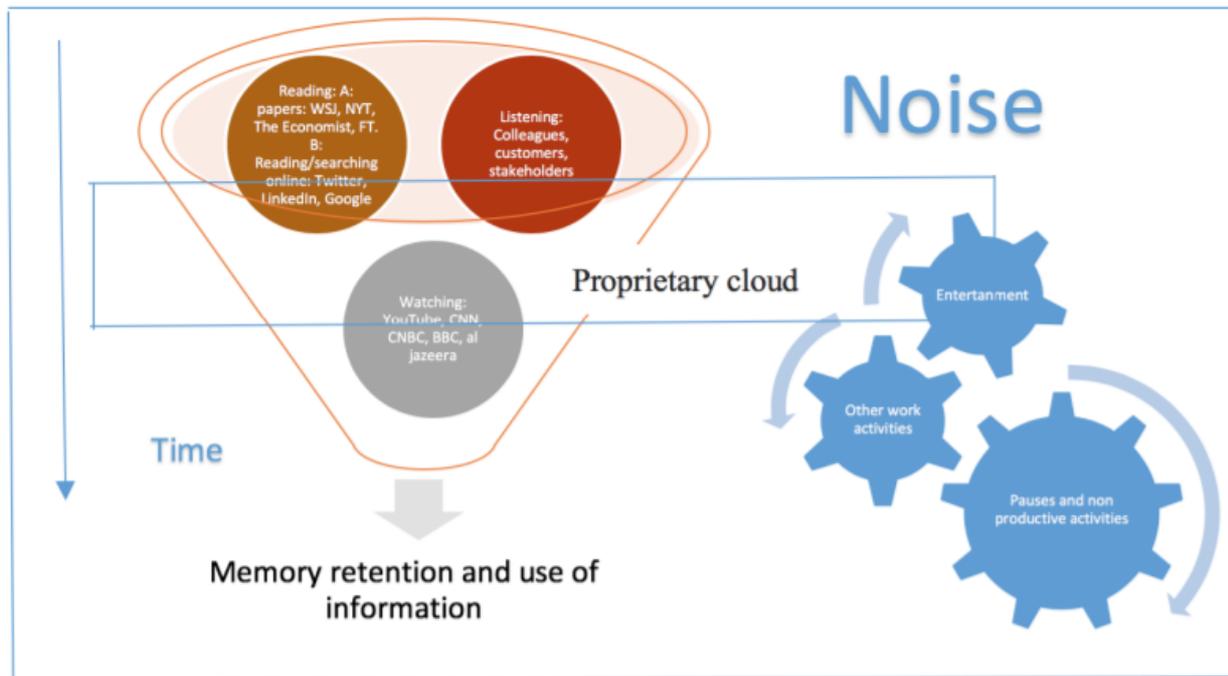


Figure 1 The manager's model for staying informed.

At this time there was a strong notion among practitioners that “open source is mostly noise”. Ben Gillad, one of the founders of CI, is among those who raises his voice often on this topic, as with his recent book “The Opposite of Noise: The Power of Competitive Intelligence” (2021). It may be because of noise that managers are willing to pay for good information because searching in Open Source material is often found to be a waste of time, literary. There is good material on the web, but it takes too much time (and training) to find it. In my above-mentioned article, I suggest an intelligence model that takes this noise into consideration, inspired by The Shannon–Weaver model of communication¹. This is shown in Figure 1.

It suggests that managers' intelligence set (what they know) is a function of reading, listening and watching disturbed by noise in the form of entertainment, other work activities and pauses and non-productive activities over time, corrected for the individual's ability to remember (memory retention) and to use/implement of what they have learned. I called this the manager's model for staying informed.

Around this time collective intelligence was a hot topic and the next editorial note was entitled “A deeper look at the collective intelligence phenomenon”. My own review article was called “Making sense of the collective intelligence field: A review”. It concluded that “the collective intelligence field is valuable, truly interdisciplinary, and part of a paradigm shift in the social sciences. However, the content is not new” p 6. This was later the start for a major bibliometric research project with some colleagues that resulted in an article that has just been accepted in *Technological Forecasting & Social Change* entitled “Understanding the structure, characteristics, and future of Collective Intelligence using Local and Global bibliometric analyses”. It basically shows who are the major contributors, what academic tribe they belong to and where the study has been going.

The next editorial note is entitled “The argument that ‘there is nothing new in the competitive intelligence field’” (Vol 9, No 3, 2019). The reason for writing this somewhat provocative piece was that many CI professionals who had been around for a while saw nothing new in CI and complained about it. In the editorial note I explain that “Another way to explain this development is to say that CI has evolved, thus is no longer the same”. The problem, I think, is that experts were trying to check up on what they did, if it still existed, unwilling to see that the field had moved on and become something else. What was this new form? I suggest that intelligence studies now is more about “data mining, search engine optimization, social media marketing and digital marketing in general.”

Vol 10, No 1, 2020 was entitled “On the 10th anniversary of JISIB: Reflection on academic tribalism.” It was the 10th anniversary of the journal. In the editorial note I use the possibility to address the problem of academic tribalism for the development of science:

¹ The Shannon model has as its origin a model by H. Nyquist (1924) who uses “intelligence” instead of “information”.

“The unnecessary division of networks that look at the same phenomenon is sometimes referred to as “academic tribalism.” Academic tribes become a barrier to learning and this can result in close-mindedness. This is also according to my own experience. Academic clustering is a similar mechanism whereby graduates from one institution favor those who come from the same institution, but there are also those universities that systematically refrain from this. Among these is Harvard University, which seldom hires their own PhDs, or so I have been told. If so, that is probably better for the progress of science. Where is it meaningful to draw a line between academic groups then? Everyone will agree that the natural sciences are quite different from the humanities. Between psychology and business though there is much overlap with psychology in business. Between accounting and management, a good understanding of how to manage a business requires the knowledge of income statements, balance sheets and how to set up a cash flow analysis. One way to think about division is if the method is different. According to this criterion most social scientists should be able to do each other’s work, and subsequently go to each other’s conferences. Another meaningful division is based on experience and the depth of specialization obtained by the discipline. This criterion is less precise. I do not pretend to have the answer, but I think it’s a pity that all these tribes exist, with their own buzzwords often studying more or less the same phenomenon, with the same methods. What distinguishes intelligence studies from other tribes is, in my opinion, first of all that we see that the private organization is better organized as an intelligence organization, with focus on information gathering and analysis. It has less to do with departments of marketing, HR or accounting, even though the one does not exclude the other. Another way is to see the intelligence organization as a superstructure, a layer that exists above all functional departments where the aim is to achieve a competitive advantage through better information. In this respect the need for CEOs is not unlike those of ministers of state. Now, is this perspective so radically different that it deserves its own tribe with its own journal and conferences? That is the important question. And in some way, I cannot help but think that learning would be better without them, that is, it would be better if it was all one big interchangeable group, going to one another’s conferences, and writing for each other’s journals. Science would benefit from it. From time to time I have also peeked over into other groups and joined their conferences. What is astonishing especially for an outsider is that you are immediately confronted with a pecking order that is related to who has been there the longest and published the most in the group. This cannot be an advantage for the advancement of science, I tell myself. But, then again, pecking orders seems to be the rule rather than the exception for most social creatures, not only chicken.” P. 4-5

Academic tribalism is probably a major reason why the social science are not moving forward in the way many had expected, helping organizations to solve practical problems and making them more competitive. Our job should not be to produce as many articles as possible, or to gather as many citations as possible from Google Scholar but to try to be relevant, that is of real use. This was easier before when many professors were also business consultants and the pressure to publish in journals was lighter.

Vol 10, No 2, 2020 is entitled “The impasse of competitive intelligence today is not a failure. A special issue for papers at the ICI 2020 Conference”. The editorial note is a continuation of the previous under the title “The argument that ‘there is nothing new in the competitive intelligence field’”. This was to show that there is a problem, but that that problem is more in the way we study these subjects, the methodology. I start with a brief historical perspective:

“Intelligence studies started as strategy, the “art of troop leader; office of general, command, generalship”, both in Europe (in Greece as *stratēgia*, but first of all much later with Carl von Clausewitz’ book “On War”, 1832) and in China much earlier with the seven military classics (Jiang Ziya, the methods of the Sima, Sun Tzu, Wu Qi, Wei Liaozi, the three strategies of Huang Shigong and the Questions and Replies between Tang Taizong and Li Weigong). The entities studied then were nation states. Later, corporations often became just as powerful as states and their leaders demanded similar strategic thinking. Many of the ideas came initially from geopolitics as developed in the 19th century, and later with the spread of multinational companies at the end of the 20th century, with geoeconomics. What is unique for intelligence studies is the focus on information— not primarily geography or natural resources— as a source for competitive advantage. Ideas of strategy and information developed into social intelligence with Stevan Dedijer in the 1960s and became the title of a course he gave at the University of Lund in the 1970s. In the US this direction came to be known as business intelligence. At a fast pace we then saw the introduction of corporate intelligence, strategic intelligence and competitive intelligence. Inspired by the writings of Mikael Porter on strategy, as related to the notion of competitive advantage the field of competitive intelligence, a considerable body of articles and books were written in the 1980s and 1990s. This was primarily in

the US, but interest spread to Europe and other parts of the world, much due to the advocacy of the Society of Competitive Intelligence Professionals (SCIP). In France there was a parallel development with “intelligence économique”, “Veille” and “Guerre économique”, in Germany with “Wettbewerbserkundung” and in Sweden with “omvärldsanalys,” just to give some examples. On the technological side, things were changing even faster, not only with computers but also software. Oracle corporation landed a big contract with the CIA and showed how data analysis could be done efficiently. From then on, the software side of the development gained most of the interest from companies. Business intelligence was sometimes treated as enterprise resource planning (ERP), customer relations management (CRM) and supply chain management (SCM). Competitive intelligence was associated primarily with the management side of things as we entered the new millennium. Market intelligence became a more popular term during the first decade, knowledge management developed into its own field, financial intelligence became a specialty linked to the detection of fraud and crime primarily in banks, and during the last decade we have seen a renewed interest for planning, in the form of future studies, or futurology and foresight, but also environmental scanning. With the development of Big Data, data mining and artificial intelligence there is now a strong interest in collective intelligence, which is about how to make better decisions together. Collective intelligence and foresight were the main topics of the ICI 2020 conference. All articles published in this issue are from presentations at that conference. The common denominator for the theoretical development described above is the Information Age, which is about one’s ability to analyze large amounts of data with the help of computers. What is driving the development is first of all technical innovations in computer science (both hardware and software), while the management side is more concerned with questions about implementation and use. Management disciplines that did not follow up on new technical developments but defined themselves separately or independently from these transformations have become irrelevant. Survival as a discipline is all about being relevant. It’s the journey of all theory, and of all sciences to go from “funeral to funeral” to borrow an often-used phrase: ideas are developed and tested against reality. Adjustments are made and new ideas developed based on the critic. It’s the way we create knowledge and achieve progress. It’s never a straight line but can be seen as a large number of trials and solutions to problems that change in shape, a process that never promises to be done, but is ever-changing, much like the human evolution we are a part of. This is also the development of the discipline of intelligence studies and on a more basic level of market research, which is about how to gather information and data, to gain a competitive advantage. Today intelligence studies and technology live in a true symbiosis, just like the disciplines of marketing and digital marketing. This means that it is no longer meaningful to study management practices alone while ignoring developments in hardware and software. The competitive intelligence (CI) field is one such discipline to the extent that we can say that CI now is a chapter in the history of management thought, dated to around 1980-2010, equivalent to a generation. It is not so that it will disappear, but more likely phased out. Some of the methods developed under its direction will continue to be used in other discipline. Most of the ideas labeled as CI were never exclusive to CI in the first place, but borrowed from other disciplines. They were also copied in other disciplines, which is common practice in all management disciplines. Looking at everything that has been done under the CI label the legacy of CI is considerable. New directions will appear that better fit current business practices. Many of these will seem similar in content to previous contributions, but there will also be elements that are new. To be sure new suggestions are not mere buzzwords we have to ask critical questions like: how is this discipline defined and how is it different from existing disciplines? It is the meaning that should interest us, not the labels we put on them. Unlike consultants, academics and researchers have a real obligation to bring clarity and order in the myriad ideas.”

The editorial note in Vol 10, No 3, 2020 is entitled: “Labeling or science-by-buzzwords: The semantic trap in academic research and how to get out of it”. In the editorial note I suggest a way to get out of the buzzword-mire of the social sciences. We should instead focus on the problems:

“The social sciences are drowning in new fancy academic terms or buzzwords, labels with unprecise definitions, rebranding phenomenon that somehow seem familiar. We are all surrounded by smart cities, innovation, and sustainability. What do these terms mean that we could not express earlier? Introducing them also raises new questions, which at first may seem provocative: Are there dumb cities too, if so where? Do we carry out research at our universities that is not innovative? Does the literature on sustainability make our products more sustainable? Above all, these new fields are formulated in almost suspiciously positive terms attracting the attention of our politicians and echoed everywhere. How can anyone be against smart cities, innovation and sustainability? It must

be good, important and therefore it deserves funding. Creating new terms to describe what is mostly old and familiar problems (relabeling) is not helping move science forward but instead hindering its development as it leads the researcher to believe he or she is setting out on a new quest, while often just ignoring past literature, especially that written in French and German languages, which then suddenly does not apply. The same is true for intelligence studies. "Research" today is too often reduced to searching for articles in one of two commercial databases: Web of Science (Clarivate Analytics) or Scopus (Elsevier), basically consisting of articles that have been written during the past two generations. Here we are supposed to cite the most cited articles, even though the same ideas (but with different words) have been expressed numerous times before in older articles, books or are just common sense, so that whoever wrote the first article become popular. This then is the pyramid scheme of the brave new world of the social sciences, a system that creates academic peacocks. The majority of social science researchers today are not first of all knowledgeable in say economics or business, but of how to produce articles. That is a skill that has less to do with what is happening in the real world of social behavior. That is the price we must pay, some say, but the actual production of research also attracts very little attention outside of the circle of academics who contribute to it. Moreover, it makes our business education less relevant. Ask yourself, if today's business education was relevant, why are the Chinese outperforming the West? Why are there so few famous business schools in economically successful countries like Germany, Taiwan, or South Korea? Who teaches you how best to succeed in business life, the authors of the most cited scientific articles in business and management or the Chinese classic authors, like Confucius or Sun Tzu? When I got interested in intelligence as a business student it was based on the notion that better information can make organizations more competitive. This was still during the first generation after the start of what was called the information age, when companies realized that information and knowledge, not physical assets, were the most important ingredients for business success. There was no internet, nor mobile phones. I was interested in the following questions: 1. How do organizations work with information? 2. What is the most effective way for organizations to work with information to obtain a competitive advantage? 3. Why are organizations not working more effectively with information? I was interested in these questions from an international perspective, curious about the relationship between specific cultures and production. So, much like Marco Polo, I asked myself: 4. What can we sell to other countries and what can we buy from them? 5. What is the best way of doing this? I am still predominantly interested in these questions and Marco Polo seems to follow me in my thoughts wherever I go and seek new knowledge. I am not interested in the semantics surrounding these questions, the new terms that are introduced more as labels than to give a more exact definition of the underlying phenomenon we are looking at. To make things even worse, these new labels change, and quite frequently, in what looks like ever-shorter life cycles of social science research fields, replacing each other after quick overlaps. It is much like watching trends in the clothing industry. Suddenly you realize that your corduroy pants that work perfectly and have no holes in them need to be changed out. Your surroundings demand it. To take a more fitting example: I was interested in how people work together with information as we started a research project on why employees hide information. Here, I am not interested in collective intelligence, competitive intelligence, co-creation, wisdom of crowds, knowledge management, complex systems, or systems theory, just to take some examples. I am first of all interested in the problem. Many academics mix labels with theory. Theory does not mean to name labels, but to present similar problems in other studies, to say if they reached similar or different results and to try to explain why this may have been the case and what it means for our own study. This can be done almost completely without using labels. Still, I tend to spend more time on semantics than on actual problems, very much against my own will. It's like my academic surroundings impose this on me. It seems that most business researchers fall into the same semantic trap. It's not only due to how we label problems with key words in databases, but also to the way we organize ourselves as researchers. The process can be explained as follows: Business researchers quickly try to own the terms that they become interested in instead of focusing on the problems and problem areas that they are interested in. Instead of broadening the field, we narrow it, becoming specialists in ever smaller parts, all with their own labels. After a few rounds we are no longer in contact with business life anymore. There is another variation of this problem and that is when the academic discipline is in close contact with industry even though it is erroneous. To me the scariest example of this is the study of economics after Keynes, which is sometimes referred to as Neoclassic economics. It seems clear to me that the major reason that banks, the financial sector and the organizations supporting this industry pay lip service to the study of modern economics is that it legitimizes a corrupt and close to bankrupt system that does little good to others outside of its own members. Any problem can be studied from the perspective of numerous terms. Often it does not matter which term we use as there are many terms that overlap and can be relevant simultaneously.

Instead of accepting this, academics strive to own the terms they chose to use and to disown others, especially those that are closely linked. As soon as we identify ourselves with one term, we start to oppose other, similar terms, treating them almost as competitors, as we often compete for the same or similar research positions and grants. New academics come along and pick their label, often by accident, for example, when adopting the preferred label of a supervisor, until each term forms or constitutes an academic tribe. These academic tribes then develop their own conferences and journals, and an internal struggle finds place, a race to establish legitimacy around an internal hierarchy most often built on the popularity (impact) of articles, and less so on the quality of the content or its relevance. It's also possible to be in several tribes at the same time, even though academics normally have a clear preference of one above the other, simply because it's difficult to excel in more than one area. As an example, authors in the field of collective intelligence also study artificial intelligence, collective behaviour, swarm intelligence, complex systems, machine learning, human-computer interaction, multiagent systems, sustainability, information systems design, crowd work, evolutionary computation, social decision making, empathy justice, foresight, futures research, crowdsourcing, information systems network, and/or democratic theory. Collective intelligence is used synonymously or in combination with co-creation, wisdom of crowds, opens source, social systems, and social complexity, all with their own tribes. Within intelligence studies we have sub-tribes in the form of competitive intelligence, market intelligence, competitor intelligence, business intelligence, enterprise resource planning, social intelligence, all of whom deal with the problem of collective intelligence. Close by there are the tribes of futures studies and foresight. In a corner sits the library sciences. Across the road there are the tribes of decision making, decision sciences, information sciences. All are quite familiar with the same phenomenon studied as collective intelligence. In other disciplines there are similar labels and key words, for example collective behavior in the study of sociology. The problem is that researchers seldom direct their attention outside of their own tribe. This is not only an odd scientific process, but we are witnessing an enormous waste of intellectual ability and potential. So, how do we solve it? To become more relevant academic research must redirect its focus from buzzwords to problems, not just smart "research gaps" in the literature. Instead of listing keywords, researchers, academic journals and academic databases should list problems (1), and the problems should be stated in full sentences (2) using as few (3) and as simple words as possible (4). We should also insist on clear, mutually exclusive definitions. By searching for problems instead of labels it will become much easier to find relevant research across different labels and disciplines. We need to be much stricter when admitting new labels. If a new term is not exact and not much different from a previous term it should be declined. Focus should be on what the Germans since the 19th century understand by "verstehen", as the "interpretive or participatory" examination of social phenomena, not on coining new terms. Today new terms often come to life because we did not read enough, or we thought more about internal marketing and our own self-promotion instead of focusing on problems that are important for humanity. We are all guilty of this to a certain degree as it's difficult to escape the logic trap that is our current social science research system. We need to instill a new critical process of thinking by asking: What problem does this field of study lay claim to? Are there other studies that lay claim to the same problem? If yes, go back to the previous field. If it does not exist anywhere, and if you are 100% certain, only then can you coin a new term after consulting with your peers. This process would lead to the merger of most of all existing social science research today. The same could then be done with conferences and academic journals. Larger academic groups will again improve the quality of journals and conferences, thus improve the advancement of science. To complicate things further labels are sometimes decided outside of academia. The world of business is basically changed by its practitioners, not by academics. As an example, competitive and market intelligence is now often replaced by competitive and market insights (CMI) in many major companies. The intelligence label was always problematic and the association to the world of spying never quite washed off. It did not help that many successful business intelligence companies functioned more as private eyes with aggressive methods despite organizations like SCIP setting standards to the contrary. Many were also skeptical to what they understood as an Anglo-Saxon and predominantly American agenda to spread the practice of industrial espionage advocated by consultants centered around Langley. The difference between the term intelligence and insights is not significant. It basically means the same: valuable information, need-to-know for the competitiveness of the firm. Put differently, there is hardly any part of insights that cannot be seen as intelligence and vice versa. However, it could be argued that market insight is a broader take on business information. It could be said that it brings together a wider group of fields, both practitioner and academics, some of whom were left behind in the process when smaller academic tribes were created. Market researchers, business intelligence specialists and all kinds of information scientists are now lured back together under the umbrella of

earlier pioneers like the visionary businessman Alvin Toffler, the mathematician Claud Shannon, and Gabriel Naudé, the father of library sciences, just to give a few examples. The “insight people” have already started to form their own group. Academics are likely to follow. Other academics are already finding themselves sitting in groups that are no longer relevant wondering what happened. The academic projects that are the most successful will always be those that follow the development in business life. The discipline of digital marketing is a good example. Digital marketing is fundamentally different from the old “brick marketing,” to the point that if you do not understand its logic today then your education is not relevant any longer. It took academia a long time to understand this and for a few years the whole discipline of marketing was terribly far behind reality. The advancement of the field still almost exclusively finds its place in business organizations. Academics are mostly trying to run after and catch up with the practitioners in this field of study. One reason for this is that advancements in digital marketing demand substantial IT infrastructure that academics do not have easy access to. The situation is similar in business intelligence, which is basically about new software today. The leading AI experts do not work in academia but in the major tech companies. It is all about being relevant and useful. In intelligence studies there is a demand on us that we integrate business practices with more technology (hardware and software). Only then can we hope to make real academic contributions in this field. We stand in front of an almost awkward situation: the intelligence field has never been more relevant in the history of mankind as information has become the most important ingredient for competitive advantage. And the more information, and the better information, the more valuable the company. All the new and major MNEs around us are living proof of this, whether it be Alphabet (Google), Netflix, Spotify, Facebook or Alibaba. To understand and be able to contribute to this domain we must be interested in the same problems that they are trying to solve. To this aim the labels are often just distractions, a semantic trap.”

The editorial note in Vol 11, No 1, 2021 raises a warning: “The internet is leading the world towards forms of totalitarianism: How to fix the problem”. The problem is real, also in the Western world, as we have seen through a series of revelations, not only those of Mr. Assange and Mr. Snowden. As an example, after the editorial note was published, the head of Danish intelligence was arrested, it seems, for having told the press that his employer not only cooperated with NSA but had become a mere tool for American espionage in Europe. He is still in prison. Needless to say, the intelligence services in the Western world are confronted with a real legitimacy problem as part of a democratic political system. How did surveillance go wrong?

“It is difficult to imagine intelligence studies as separate from information technology as we enter the third decade of the 21st century. The current issue of JISIB bears witness to this integration with a strong focus on big data applications. Hardly anyone today would or could do without the internet, but the project that started with US government financing in the 1960s, with packet switching, and in the 1970s with ARPANET and saw commercial light in the 1990s is helping countries turn into totalitarian systems where totalitarianism is defined by a high degree of control over public and private life. Public life is influenced by hacking, troll factories, fake news/propaganda, and interference in elections. Private life is influenced by massive surveillance. To borrow the title of the book by Zuboff (2019) we now live in “the age of surveillance capitalism”. Business intelligence systems lie at the heart of this transformation, but so do artificial intelligence and robotics. And the trend is global. In the West the suppressors are mostly private monopolies (e.g. Google, Facebook), while in the East it is primarily the government that is snooping (e.g. China’s Social Credit System). Face recognition is likely to become as popular in the West as it is in the East. It is also easily forgotten that no city was better surveilled than London, which started to build its CCTV technology in the 1960s. The system is now being updated with facial recognition, just like the one we are criticizing the Chinese for having. Some forms of surveillance may also lead to great advances in our societies, like access to government forms and statements electronically and a non-anonymous Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC), which promises to reduce corruption and tax fraud, and could be used for easy distribution of universal basic income (UBI). Fintech promises to be highly disruptive. We are moving into an Orwellian world of surveillance more or less voluntarily, often applauding it. “I have nothing to hide” the young man says, but then he later becomes a minister and starts to worry about the traces he has left on keyboards. The Five Eyes intelligence alliance, or any other major service, can pull out extensive analyses of behavior and personality on most of us now as we continue to exchange our personal data for access to searches and social media, but also subscription-based services. Most Chinese think that the social credit system is a good thing. This is for much of the same reason: they believe it will not be used against them and think that they will

do well. We all tend to be overoptimistic about our abilities and opportunities. It's not before we fail that the full implications of the system are felt: lack of access, credit, housing, and no more preferential treatments. The result threatens to worsen the lack of social mobility and increase the growing conflict between the super-rich and those hundreds of millions who risk slipping from the middle class to being counted among the poor, many of whom live in the Western world. The truth is another essential part of our civilization that we are now tampering with. On the internet, few users can tell facts from lies, but we think we can. Most of those who grew up only with the internet never really learned how to think critically. The old library of physical books was the best guarantee that lessons learned from history would be transferred to future generations without anyone mingling. For that same reason, books were also seen as real threats to tyrants and have been censured and burned. The last time that happened in the West on a large scale was in Nazi Germany, but it is happening again now in subtler forms as Amazon and other giants act as arbiter and refuse books with certain content based on value judgements. A world which relies all too much on the internet should recall that the information there can be switched off in a second. Old books are often not even accessible, having been exchanged for online solutions. The situation in the brave new social sciences is much the same, everyone is running after the latest articles without ever questioning if the same ideas have been published before (difficult to know now). Thus, much academic literature suffers, becoming a tedious process of repetitions under new brands. In a society where everyone is a writer, no one really reads or has much of importance to say at the end. How do we solve these problems? Step one on the internet is serious encryption as to make data private. Step two is to give all personal data back to the users, that is, to take it away from the private companies and then indirectly away from the security services. That will eliminate the "free" business model and lead to more subscription-based products instead. Step three is to break up the monopolies, and before that to tax them properly. Step four is to return to books that have stood the test of time (real peer-reviewed) whether online or offline. (The learning process is probably only half as good on the screen). We need to go from a culture of skimming data back to reading and discussing it. Technology and management practices should be a part of that solution. Otherwise, it looks like we will continue down the road that leads to totalitarianism. The internet right now is making shopping easier, but most people are becoming less aware of realities, less smart, less critical. Only a small part of the population is able to use it to their advantage for understanding the world around them. It would be great to see more articles develop ideas and products for how we as societies can go in this direction."

My last editorial note (Vol 10, No 2, 2021) is entitled "Intelligence studies as an alternative approach to the study of economics". It revisits an old favorite topic, but taken a step further: one learns much more about economics from good factual observations of reality as events happen around the world than by spending time reading economic theory. The reason is that most economic theory is inaccurate or irrelevant:

"I am sitting at home looking through two thick books used in business education a hundred years ago and wondering how they are outdated. They are full of detailed knowledge about markets, products, production, and legal issue between countries. Today everything is lifted to a more abstract level and many parts have become their proper disciplines. How successful has this change been when it comes to understanding business and economics? The study of economics, but even business and management today, are too far removed from the reality they are trying to describe. To study economics has instead ironically become a guaranteed way not to understand much about real economics; for example, how money is created and is distributed through private banks or how the gold market works. Instead scholars know econometrics, or they adhere to some group with a favorite journal. As we know, far earlier than Adam Smith, for example with Marco Polo, at the heart of economics lies the notion of competitive advantage. In the thick books I am sifting through that notion is never lost. It's all about understanding markets to find an opportunity or a niche. Intelligence studies suggests that the way to become competitive is to learn about the world by focusing on cultures, history, geography, people of influence, markets, resources and knowledge. There is a strong relationship of causation between the survival of companies and that of a nation state, as the latter can be seen as the sum of the former. If we take one more step, the notion of competitive advantage has always been related to the study of geopolitics, realpolitik and today what we understand by geoeconomics. It is also closer to the German and English tradition of political economy, seeing that it is counterproductive for any attempt to understand societies to separate politics from economics, or from psychology for that matter. They are all parts of the same social system, as Luhmann argues. Try to take out any part and you miss the picture. The study of culture today is part of anthropology or sociology; thus, business students seldom learn much about it. The

geography they are supposed to have learned in high school (but few do). The same for history. So, it is becoming clear that too many bits and pieces are missing in our education for us to be able to draw valuable conclusions about how to make money on a grand scale. When Austrian economists wanted to take out history from economics there was a serious battle in European universities (“Methodenstreit”). Those arguing for removing history and ever more specialization won, in part because Germany had lost WWII and the new superpower wanted to set its own rules, even in the study of people and society. The separation between micro and macroeconomics is now close to complete. And, what else is “marketing” but a subset of geography? Students today study “marketing” instead of actual markets, in Lagos or Mumbai, assuming that all are more or less the same and that the models that university professors and consultants make up are universal. “Entrepreneurship” is studied like an exciting new fruit, not as an ancient game of willpower, sweat and tears. Do these studies really help young men and women become entrepreneurs? I doubt it. In the meantime, companies in the Western world are being surpassed by their Asian competitors, whose employees often do not have a business education. For as long as the Western world was doing well economically, no one really questioned the subjects, models and theories presented at business school. It was assumed there was some sort of correlation, I guess, even though most successful entrepreneurs had a natural science background or no diploma at all. Now things are different. A good way to start is by going back to the main question of competitive advantage. It’s there that intelligence studies are, defining methods for how to understand markets and events as they unfold before us. JISIB has always tried to reflect this shift by publishing articles on markets, industries, different countries, new technologies, and especially software that shows how companies can become competitive. How to obtain a competitive advantage is still about gathering intelligence. What happened this week with the coup-d’état in Guinea when President of Guinea Alpha Condé was captured by the country's armed forces? No one at business school can tell you because they don’t study that. It shows the irrelevance of most modern social science. If we really want to understand economics, we should study what happens in the world’s many markets and countries. In that sense intelligence studies is a better replacement for the study of economics in its current form.”

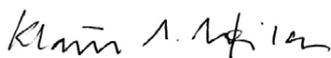
You learn economics best by gathering as much experience as you can from people who work with actual economic problems, either in the private or public sector. Thus, intelligence studies is also a method for how to study economic behavior.

In the article by van der Pol entitled “Collaboration Network Analysis for Competitive Intelligence”, the author proposes a method that allows for the identification of collaboration strategies in a static and dynamic setting that also makes it easier to communicate on the results. The article by Olaleye et al. looks at how strategic thinking and competitive intelligence can result in innovating capabilities through management support. Faris Muhammad and Sri Hartono look at purchasing factors for Instagram users. Majidfar et al. look at an intelligence management model for national level organizations and found that attention to the managerial and operational levels is more important than environmental factors.

As always, we would above all like to thank the authors for their contributions to this issue of JISIB. Thanks to Dr. Allison Perrigo for reviewing English grammar and helping with layout design for all articles.

This is by no means the end of intelligence studies in business. For my own part, last year was my most productive in more than a decade and I hope to continue with the same number of hours spent on research. However, there will be other outlets for these articles and publications, as there will be for all those papers presented by colleagues at intelligence-related conferences that take place every year.

On behalf of the Editorial Board,
Sincerely Yours,



Prof. Dr. Klaus Solberg Søylen
Halmstad University, Sweden
Editor-in-chief, JISIB

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