

**BUSINESS AND SOCIETY IN RETROSPECT: MORE RELEVANT THAN
EVER, BUT STILL STRUGGLING (A TENTH ANNIVERSARY TRIBUTE)**

Jean Pasquero

Ecole des sciences de la gestion
Université du Québec à Montréal
C.P. 6192, Succ. Centre-ville
Montréal, QC
Canada H3C 4R2
Tel.: (514) 987-3000 ^ 3893#
Fax: (514) 987-3343
pasquero.jean@uqam.ca

For the tenth anniversary of IABS, the Past Presidents have organized a panel around the field of Business and Society. My part addressed the strengths and weaknesses of the field, as we can retrospectively identify them. In order to give a historical perspective to my comments, I have chosen to reproduce and comment upon a discussion paper I had written for a private seminar with some Past Presidents nearly ten years ago. Looking back, I submit that the field is more relevant than ever, but still struggling.

In November of 1990, a few of us gathered in Pittsburgh for two days to discuss the field. Among those present were Phil Cochran, John Mahon, Donna Wood, and Steve Wartick. Each of us had to respond in advance to a set of questions supplied by Phil. In preparation for the Past Presidents' panel celebrating the tenth anniversary of IABS in Paris, I have found again my contribution to Phil's questions. Upon reading it, I have come to the conclusion that it was still relevant in several ways. Above all, it could provide a benchmark against which to evaluate the progress made by the field over the last ten years, in the spirit of IABS's anniversary.

The statement which follows is personal. In no way does it represent or seek to represent the thoughts of the other participants. Nor has it taken into account the long and passionate discussions that the group conducted around the issues of the time, or the surveys of the field produced since then. It is presented here mainly as a raw historical document, for each reader to be received with the knowledge we now have of the field. The essay follows the seven question format suggested by Phil nine years ago. It reproduces the original version with only a few cosmetic editorial changes, and is completed with some recent comments in the epilogue. The sometimes ironic tone, originally meant for the sake of discussion, has been preserved.