

EDITORIAL

Conversation and Intersection: Introducing the New M@n@gement Book Reviews Section

Sophie Michel¹ and Pierre-Jean Barlatier²

¹HuManiS (Humans and Management in Society), EM Strasbourg Business School, University of Strasbourg, Strasbourg, France; ²EDHEC Business School, Nice, France

Launching a book review section is an important step for a journal. It provides an opportunity to reflect on the forms of knowledge production, circulation, and discussion that we value as an academic community. In management, strategy, and organization studies, journals remain the primary institutional space through which scholarly conversations are recognized, evaluated, and sustained. Yet, the scholarly life of our fields has never been reducible to journal articles alone. Books, edited volumes, essays, and increasingly other knowledge artefacts have long played a decisive role in shaping concepts, theories, debates, and public understandings of organizations and management (Darnton, 2009; Coslor et al., 2022; Suddaby & Trank, 2013).

This matters especially in a context where the logic of rankings, metrics, and audit culture increasingly governs academic work. The 'publish or perish' imperative has contributed to making journal articles the dominant currency of academic evaluation, often at the expense of other forms of intellectual contribution (Adler & Harzing, 2009; Edwards & Roy, 2016; Grey, 2010). As several scholars have noted, books may appear to be less significant in formal evaluation systems, still they continue to matter deeply for the development of ideas, for the transmission of knowledge, and for the imagination of alternative futures (Colombo, 2026; Suddaby & Trank, 2013). In line with our editorial commitment to revitalizing responsible research as a reflexive stance (see vol. 29, issue 1), M@n@gement seeks to reaffirm books as vital sources of inspiration, theoretical creativity, scientific dialogue, and academic freedom.

Books offer something that the standard journal article cannot always provide: room. Room to unfold an argument, develop a theoretical architecture, explore empirical detail, take stylistic risks, and connect scholarly analysis to broader social, political, ethical, or managerial concerns. In that sense, books remain essential vehicles for knowledge dissemination, not because they stand outside academic debate, but because they can sustain forms of depth, continuity, and intellectual freedom that

are difficult to achieve within more compressed publication formats (Holt & den Hond, 2013; Lindebaum et al., 2018).

Book reviews matter because they bring books into scholarly conversation. A strong review helps readers to understand a book's argument, its place within the literature, its contribution, and the questions it leaves unresolved. Yet, as Suddaby and Trank (2013) observed when seeking to reinvent the book review at *Academy of Management Review*, the genre risk losing much of its value when confined to a passive overview of a book's content. Our ambition is therefore to publish reviews that engage critically with the works under discussion and use them as a starting point for further reflection and debate.

The experience of M@n@gement itself confirms this point. Among the journal's most consulted articles are book reviews, including R. Edward Freeman's 'My own book review. Strategic management: A stakeholder approach' (2022), devoted to his seminal contribution to stakeholder theory, and Roger Friedland's review of Thornton, Ocasio, and Lounsbury's *The Institutional Logics Perspective* (2012). Their visibility suggests that book reviews can attract sustained scholarly attention when they engage with works that have shaped, and continue to shape, major conversations.

This is the ambition of the new Book review section at M@n@gement. We aim to create a complementary space for critical reading, reflexive engagement, and scholarly dialog around books that matter for management, strategy, and organization studies. Moving beyond the conventional 'one book, one review' model, the section will feature five formats organized around two complementary modes of engagement: *Book conversation*, which approaches books through authors' perspectives, critical scholarly dialogue, or practitioner experience; and *Book intersection*, which creates connections across books or brings them into conversation with other media. Table 1 provides an overview of the five formats, each of which is presented in greater detail in the following sections.

*Corresponding author: Sophie Michel, Email: sophie.michel@em-strasbourg.eu.

Table 1. Book review formats at M@n@gement

Format	Focus and positioning
<i>Book conversation</i>	
My own book review	Authors revisit their own books, reflecting on their central arguments, the choices behind them, and how their thinking has evolved since publication. ¹
Critical book conversation	Scholars engage in a critical exchange around a book, bringing together different readings, perspectives, and points of disagreement.
BusinessVoice book conversation	Practitioners and academics critically discuss a practitioner-authored book, bringing managerial experience into conversation with management research.
<i>Book intersection</i>	
Book intersection review	A review essay brings several books into conversation around a shared question, concept, or contemporary issue.
Book + media review	A book is examined alongside another medium, such as a film, podcast, exhibition, or documentary, to explore complementary perspectives on a management or organizational issue.

Book conversation: Engaging with books through dialog

The first family of formats we introduce is the *Book conversation*. The point of a conversation is not simply to report what a book says, but to open a dialog between a text, an author, a reviewer, and the M@n@gement community of readers.

This understanding of the book review as a space for dialog reflects a broader evolution across management journals. Rather than simply asking what scholars are reading, book review sections are increasingly seen as catalysts for critical reflection, dialog, more informed management research, and meaningful connections between scholarship and practice (Bartunek & Rags, 2015; Colombo, 2026). In this perspective, book reviews become thought-provoking pieces where ideas are debated, assumptions challenged, and the intellectual pathways leading to new ways of thinking are revealed (Bartunek & Rags, 2015; Lindebaum et al., 2017).

In this spirit, the M@n@gement Book reviews section will welcome several forms of Book conversation. One of them, *My own book review*, already occupies a distinctive place in the history of the journal. Originally developed in M@n@gement Unplugged as an experimental format, *My own book review* offers invited scholars the opportunity to revisit one of their own classic or field-shaping books. Its purpose is not self-promotion, but reflexive engagement: what was the

intellectual project behind the book? How has it been received? What does the author now see differently? What questions remain open? By inviting authors to recount the making, circulation, and afterlife of their own work, this format gives readers access to the craft of research, including its doubts, renunciations, ambitions, and intellectual turning points. The contribution by Stewart Clegg (2026) to this issue, 'Frameworks of Power: Redux', illustrates how returning to a book can become a way of revisiting the intellectual trajectory of a concept, a theory, or a debate. Clegg takes readers behind the scenes of the book's genesis, revisiting the intellectual and personal journey that led him to write it and to extend prevailing understandings of the circuits of power framework. Moving from the first edition to the second, he offers a reflexive account of the book's enduring influence on contemporary debates about power and organizations, while revisiting its conceptualization through new reflections on power relations.

Then, the *Critical book conversation* format invites reviewers to engage critically and constructively with a book that speaks to significant scholarly or societal issues. Rather than merely assessing a publication, these contributions seek to open thought-provoking and engaged debates, extending the conversations initiated by the book itself. Sophie Bollinger's (2026) conversation about 'Businesses facing the challenge of integral ecology: Thinking and acting for an economy of the common good'² (2024) illustrates this ambition. Here, Detchessahar, Ezvan, and Frémeaux's (2024) book becomes an entry point into a larger conversation on the role and transformation of organizations in responding to environmental challenges. Bollinger (2026) highlights how the book enriches these debates through the lenses of the commons and the 'good life', while articulating multiple levels of analysis and action for advancing ecological transformation. Yet, her contribution goes beyond the book itself. By engaging the book in dialog with previous scholarship and the ecosystem perspective, she raises a central question about how the initiatives situated at different levels can be articulated to foster deeper and lasting organizational transformation.

Finally, the *Business Voice book conversation* format extends this dialogical ambition by bringing practitioner perspectives into scholarly discussion. Although management scholarship is closely connected to practice, academics and practitioners often remain part of separate conversations. In line with M@n@gement's commitment to fostering dialog between these communities, and echoing Bartunek and Rags's (2015) call to bridge scholarship and practice, this format builds on the philosophy of the journal's Business Voice section. It takes

¹ This format is available by invitation from the editorial team only.

² Original title: *L'entreprise au défi de l'écologie intégrale : Penser et agir pour une économie du bien commun* (2024) by Mathieu Detchessahar, Cécile Ezvan, and Sandrine Frémeaux.

books written by, with, or for practitioners as starting points for critical exchanges between managerial experience and management research.

The conversation by Lionel Garreau and Éric Soubeiran (2026) about Pascal Demurger's 'The twenty-first-century company will be political or will cease to exist'³ (2019), published in this issue, illustrates this approach. Their contribution does not treat managerial testimony as a substitute for scholarly analysis. Instead, it brings Demurger's experience and arguments into conversation with management research, using his claim that companies are inherently political to reconsider strategy and managerial decision-making through a political lens. Garreau and Soubeiran (2026) invite us to recognize economic activity itself as a form of collective organization, thereby repositioning politics not as an additional responsibility layered onto strategy, but as an inherent dimension of strategic decision-making: managerial choices inevitably shape relationships among organizations, territories, institutions, resources, and society beyond the boundaries of the firm. The authors connect Demurger's reflections with scholarship on the commons, grand challenges, and regenerative business, turning the book into a starting point for a broader scholarly conversation about the nature of strategic action and the role of managers.

Book conversations thus treat books as living objects of debate. They recognize that books do not simply transmit ideas; they provoke responses, reinterpretations, disagreements, and extensions. They invite us to ask not only 'What is this book about?' but also 'What conversation does this book make possible?'

Book intersection: Connecting works, themes, and media

The second family of formats is organized around the idea of *Book intersection*. Some debates cannot be adequately captured through a single book. They emerge at the intersection of several works, traditions, disciplines, or public conversations. In such cases, the task of the reviewer is not only to assess one contribution, but to construct a meaningful intellectual crossing.

The *Book intersection review* format is designed for this purpose. It brings several books into dialog around a shared theme, question, controversy, or societal challenge. Rather than reviewing each book separately, contributors examine the connections, tensions, and complementarities among them. By constructing an intellectual conversation across several works, this format can reveal broader theoretical developments, contrasting perspectives, or emerging research questions that may remain less visible when books are considered in isolation.

³ Original title: *L'entreprise du xxi^e siècle sera politique ou ne sera plus*. Pascal Demurger is chief executive officer of MAIF, a leading French mutual insurance company.

In this new *M@n@gement* Book reviews section, Pascale Tugayé and David Huron's review of Simon Porcher's 'The end of water' (2024) and 'We are made of water'⁴ (2026) illustrates this intersectional approach (Huron & Tugayé, 2026). The point is not simply to compare two books by the same author; but to show how, read together, they frame water as an ecological, political, economic, and *organizational* issue. The first book lays out the institutional and economic foundations of water management, while the second extends the discussion to the accelerating quantitative and qualitative pressures affecting the resource. For management and organization studies, their main contribution is to move water scarcity beyond a problem of efficiency, investment, or technical innovation. Water becomes a question of business model, governance arrangement, collective responsibility, and the very purposes of management, inviting us to consider common goods and historical perspectives as important lenses through which to address these challenges. Together, the two books shift the discussion from managing a scarce resource more effectively to questioning the institutional and organizational arrangements that have long structured water management.

Book intersection may also include carefully justified engagements with other media. In recent years, organization and management journals have begun to recognize that knowledge circulates through a growing variety of artefacts, including films, documentaries, podcasts, exhibitions, lectures, artistic works, and digital media (Bartunek & Ragins, 2015; Coslor et al., 2022). We see such media not as substitutes for books, but as complementary resources when they help to illuminate management, strategy, and organization studies.

The *Book + media review* format should therefore be understood as a focused extension of the Book reviews section without diluting its scholarly purpose. The central object remains the development of a rigorous, critical, and relevant discussion. A media artefact may be included when it deepens the analysis, opens a new interpretive angle, or helps connect a book to broader cultural, artistic, managerial, or societal conversations. The proposed review by Raffi Duymedjian, Sylvain Colombero, and Amélie Boutinot (2026) illustrates this possibility by bringing Bob Dylan's musical world into dialogue with Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia* (1987), opening new ways of understanding organizational and institutional dynamics. In particular, by bringing Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of indiscernibility and segmentarity into dialog with Bob Dylan's singular experience of receiving the Nobel Prize, Duymedjian et al. (2026) invite us to rethink how organizations respond or transform themselves when indiscernibility challenges established configurations and systems of recognition. The authors stimulate a theoretical debate on indiscernibility as an active practice of escaping mechanisms of capture opening new avenues for thinking about

⁴ Original titles: *La fin de l'eau* and *Nous sommes faits d'eau*.

institutional work, the micropolitics of resistance, rituals, and field configuration. In doing so, this original contribution perfectly illustrates how books, especially when brought into conversation with other media artefacts, can become valuable sources of inspiration and foster theoretical creativity for organization studies.

Book intersection thus recognizes that intellectual life is rarely linear: Ideas travel across books, disciplines, languages, media, and communities. The role of the reviewer is to make these travels visible, intelligible, and useful for the readership of *M@n@gement*.

Writing reviews that matter

The *M@n@gement* Book reviews section welcomes contributions that are concise, critical, and intellectually engaging. Rather than sales-oriented texts or neutral summaries, we envision book reviews as 'short and sweet' but substantive insights into the qualities, weaknesses, and relevance of the book or books under discussion. Reviews not only help readers decide whether a book is worth reading but also illuminate how it may matter for research, teaching, practice, or public debate.

We see three core expectations that the book reviews included in this inaugural issue illustrate in different ways.

Firstly, a review begins by presenting the work. This means identifying its object, thesis, structure, intended audience, and location within a scholarly, managerial, or social debate. Description is necessary, but it should remain selective and purposeful. For example, Sophie Bollinger's review provides readers with a clear understanding of the book's argument before developing a critical discussion, while Raffi Duymedjian and his co-authors concisely present the book's structure before focusing on the chapters that underpin their theoretical contribution.

Secondly, a review offers a reasoned assessment of the work. What does the book contribute to? What does it illuminate? What assumptions does it rely on? What does it leave in the shadows? Where are its tensions, limitations, or blind spots? Evaluation does not require harsh judgment, but it does require a position. For instance, David Huron and Pascale Tugayé show how Porcher's two books contribute to reframing water not only as a scarce resource but also as a political, economic, ecological, and organizational issue. Similarly, Sophie Bollinger acknowledges the book's distinctive contribution in linking management transformation to reflections on work, ethics, and the common good, while questioning how the proposed initiatives can be coordinated, institutionalized, and scaled up.

Thirdly, a review extends the conversation opened by the work. A valuable review shows what questions the book opens, what

debates it renews, what future research it may inspire, and what implications it may carry for management practice or public discussion. In this sense, the review itself becomes a contribution to knowledge. This is particularly evident in Duymedjian et al.'s reinterpretation of indiscernibility and in Lionel Garreau and Éric Soubeiran's discussion, which reorients the book's argument toward strategic decision-making and invites a reconsideration of the political dimension of strategy.

Contributions to the *Book conversation* or *intersection* should therefore engage with books, and – where appropriate – other media that are clearly relevant to management, strategy, and organization studies. In our view, a book review situates the discussion within broader scholarly debates, including debates in the social sciences when relevant, and develops a critical and well-argued perspective. It also moves beyond purely descriptive, celebratory, or promotional accounts to emphasize the potential relevance of the reviewed work for research, practice, teaching, or public debate.

By launching this Book reviews section, *M@n@gement* seeks to create a space for scholarly and managerial dialog, for the circulation of important ideas, and for the recognition of books as vital contributors to our intellectual community. Books help us slow down, think more deeply, and engage differently with the questions that shape organizations and societies. *M@n@gement Book conversation* and *intersection* can henceforth help these books travel further, speak to broader communities, and generate new debates. This is the purpose and spirit of the section: not simply to review books, but to make room for the conversations and intersections through which *M@n@gement* knowledge continues to evolve.

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