

From the Editor

Pete Smith, University of Texas—Arlington



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pete Smith' in a cursive style.

As I mentioned in my column late last year, it is indeed both a delight and an honor to “follow on” after Read Gilgen and Marie Sheppard as Editor-in-Chief of the *IALL Journal*. I have watched as Read and Marie have moved the *Journal* toward greater levels of professionalism and visibility in the academic world. These are two key trends that I want to make hallmarks of my time here at the *Journal* as well. In fact, these two goals provide what I think is a nice dual emphasis: quality begets visibility, which in turn can result in greater quality for our publication. We will continue the blend of scholarly and professional—a path Read started us along—and add the new layout and thematic emphases that Marie brought to the publication.

In the coming months, I hope to develop the *Journal* even further. In a forthcoming issue, we will inaugurate a series of “keynote articles” in which major figures in IALL provide commentary and analysis on the “big questions” which face us all—topics such as our professional role in institutions of learning, technology and tenure, the role of language media in a campus-wide context, and the hot new fields of networking and the World Wide Web. Indeed, use of the Web is one of the areas in which I hope the *Journal* can take the lead, as we document exploration of the Internet and its many resources.

With the rapid appearance of the Web come two important questions. We clearly see more and more writers and scholars beginning to use the Internet to make their thoughts and writings available to a wider audience. In academia, this was a role formerly played solely by scholarly and professional journals. A colleague of mine here at the University of Texas—Arlington is even using a Web page to distribute her latest book manuscript. Is the paper-based, scholarly journal a dinosaur? What is the value of sending your article manuscript to the *IALL Journal*?

You can easily guess my answer to the first question: I believe fiercely in the importance of the role of the professional

journal. Quite apart from the news that not all of our members and readers have network access, publications such as ours are still the most commonly accepted standard for exchange of ideas in a broader academic setting. This is especially true when discussing promotion and tenure at most institutions. To this end, we are going to work to strengthen our process for review of article manuscripts. We *are* a fully refereed journal, with all of the weight that appellation carries. All manuscripts submitted are judged by reviewer-readers for possible publication in the *Journal*. Do think of the *IALL Journal* for your next article submission!

This is not to say that scholarly and professional journals still maintain a complete monopoly of the exchange of ideas. Many institutions are beginning to examine the Web as a way for teachers and academics to more quickly distribute scholarly work. IALL members are certainly on the "cutting edge" of this development as well, and IALL boasts a burgeoning home page. As Journal Editor, I will work closely with our new Web Editors—a relationship which I think will benefit both projects and IALL members as a whole.

In my next column, I plan to introduce you to the members of the Journal Board and to the columnists who regularly grace our pages. This issue certainly highlights their talents. We open with excerpts from two talks delivered at IALL '95. John Ashby's comments on copyright and Earl Rickerson's description of a government resource center make interesting reading. In our columns, Linda Jones discusses the Americans with Disabilities Act and offers practical solutions for facility managers. David Pankratz updates us on LLTI, Chris Higgins begins his tenure as a columnist with a discussion of the WWW in instruction, and Lynne Crandall examines the ideas that underpin copyright law. Last, Bill Wyman shares his expertise on software to start an email discussion group. I hope that you find this issue as informative and thought-provoking as I do! ■