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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

"You make me hairy, you knitter!"

Did that get your attention? I suspect so. It certainly got mine when my smart-phone supplied that sentiment in place of the text message I had intended to send: "You make me happy, you know!"

Communication is such a slippery thing.

I read, teach, and edit writing across disciplines and have always been fascinated by the errors that can slip into the most assiduously prepared manuscripts. Sometimes our technology is the culprit, "helping" us by completing our thoughts in novel and entertaining ways, accomplishing the change so expeditiously that we continue our writing, blithely unaware that our ideas have taken on an entirely new character on the screen.

Our brains can also commit us to saying things we never intended. By the time we have stared at a manuscript for days, weeks, months, these fine organs are not entirely cooperative in identifying errors and oversights. Instead, our brains are quite happy to affirm the clarity of what we have written. Where there are ambiguities of language, they supply meaning; where words are missing, they fill in the blanks...not on the screen, of course, but in our thinking. Like our smart-phone technology, our brains tend to "finish" ideas for us, and sometimes the product is, shall we say, surprising?

A large part of my job as Copy & Production editor is to ask authors for clarifications, and these types of errors, typically generated either by helpful technology or our brains' equally helpful tendency to gloss over ambiguities, constitute much of the content for that dialogue. I find the process invigorating. Every time I engage with an author in clarifying ideas, I learn more about how that scholar, speaking out of his or her discipline, perceives, pursues, and articulates knowledge. Every such encounter broadens my own intellectual world.

We, the board of the AIJ, believe in the value of sharing knowledge across disciplines, but communicating *between* disciplines—sending messages that communicate clearly outside our own knowledge domains—is challenging. Having an editor is never a bad plan because we need someone to help us see what another reader sees, no matter how enthusiastically our own brains reassure us that everything we've written is crystal clear. We need to read the writing of other disciplines for the same reason: we need something outside of our own minds, our own disciplines, and our own intellectual agendas to help us remember that the world itself is not "crystal clear," to help us see the world outside of our own articles and offices from a fresh perspective. Enjoy the articles in this issue. We hope you find, within them, something to broaden your world.

Kelly S. Moor, D.A.

Copy & Production Editor