
Introduction

by [Erika Dawn Gernand](#)



This issue brings the first four years of *Crossroads* to a close. Started in 1994 by a group of students committed to giving other students an outlet in the publishing world, *Crossroads* has come a long way since its first issue on the Internet in the Fall of 1994. When *Crossroads* started, it was primarily an online publication. Students wishing a printed copy printed the postscript version from the *Crossroads* WWW site. Later, ACM began mailing printed copies to all of its students members as part of their membership package. Starting with issue 3.1, we got a color cover.

Our editors, too, have changed over the years. Since, in keeping with the spirit of the magazine, members of the Editorial Board are required to be students at some level, most editors serve one to two year terms before moving on. Many of them move on to bigger and better roles. Lorrie Cranor, one of the founders of *Crossroads* and its second Editor-in-Chief, has been appointed to the ACM Publications Board since receiving her Ph.D. and leaving *Crossroads*.

The transition to our fifth year of operation includes many such changes to our Editorial Board. We would say goodbye to John Cavazos, who, as our third Editor-in-Chief, has served *Crossroads* since issue 3.2. (He also did a brief stint as co-Managing Editor for issue 3.1) In addition to his *Crossroads* work, John also serves the ACM student membership with his hard work on the *Computing Surveys* student paper contest, now in its second year. John leaves us to devote more time to his Ph.D. work at University of Massachusetts, Amherst. We all wish him well. Taking his place is Lynellen Perry, a Ph. D. student at Mississippi State University. Many of you will recognize her name, as she has served as our Copy Editor since issue 3.1 in the Fall of 1996. She has also written several articles and reviews that have appeared in *Crossroads*. Lynellen has always demonstrated a strong commitment to *Crossroads* and we look forward to her taking the reins.

We also have some new faces on the Board. Ranjit Iyer has joined us as a General Editor and Wendy Edwards is our Assistant Graphics Editor. As of this writing, we are still in the process of hiring for the Copy Editor, Business Manager, and Publicity Manager positions, so look for some more new names on

the *Crossroads* site soon. Returning for another year are Managing Editor Erika Gernand, General Editor Randolph Chung, and Graphics Editor James Palmer. Visit the Road Crew pages for more information on each of these students.

Turning to this issue of *Crossroads*, we present a variety of articles in addition to our regular columns of "Objective View Point" and "Ask Jack." Marianne Petersen makes a case for focusing on usability issues in multimedia in her article, "Towards Usability Evaluation of Multimedia Applications." Jason Hong discusses Georgia Tech's recent switch to object-oriented Java as the first programming course for computer science students in "The Use of Java as an Introductory Programming Language." Phil Agre talks about making use of the many networking opportunities existing on the internet in "Networking on the Network." Adding to her growing collection of *Crossroads* articles, Lynellen Perry contributes a critique of the Turing Test. In "Objective View Point" this quarter, George Crawford talks about using SMTP for network communication in Java. Finally, Jack Wilson discusses the "job search in cyberspace" in "Ask Jack."

All of us on the Editorial Board are very excited about celebrating our fifth anniversary over this 1998-1999 school year. We hope you will continue to join us each quarter as we strive to make *Crossroads* even better.