FROM THE EDITOR

T his fifth volume of *Research & Practice in Assessment* marks the first issue for the newly established editorial team led by myself and Katie Busby of Tulane University. Although it is delivered in both an updated form and format, these efforts would not have been possible without the foundational efforts of the previous RPA editors – Robin Anderson, Keston Fulcher, and Allen DuPont. The release of this issue continues the scholarly assessment tradition established by the previous team of editors, yet it unveils new aspects of RPA including our logo, aesthetic layout, and content areas including the special feature, reviews (book, media or software), and a concluding section we have entitled "Ruminate".

It is our desire that the diverse perspectives included in this issue will encourage a rich dialogue on education assessment. As such, the issue begins with a qualitative piece by Bresciani who utilizes a grounded theory approach to investigate whether the use of outcomes-based program reviews have an impact on institutional reward structures. This is followed by Smiley and Anderson who use factor analysis to investigate whether assessment instruments might be improved by incorporating facets of cognitive engagement. Weiner and Bresciani conclude the peer-review section with a comparative piece that analyzes program quality differences and whether outcomes-based assessments are necessary to demonstrate such.

The special feature for this issue is authored by a critical education scholar, Walter Heinecke, who asks assessment professionals and researchers to consider the extent to which numbers and measurement categories are a social construction as well as their possible political implications. Then, McConnell provides readers with a review of *Academically Adrift* (Arum & Roksa, 2011), while Paredes offers a review of *Higher Education Assessment* (Kramer & Swing, 2010). This issue of RPA concludes with a photograph by Casey Templeton entitled, "Standardized" in a section that aims to integrate education assessment and the arts.

The overhaul of RPA was accomplished through the diligent efforts of many individuals. These persons deserve mention for their consistent contributions over the past six months and include: Patrice Brown, Alysha Brubaker, Katie Busby, Kyle Doyon, Terrell Perry, Tisha Paredes, Jesse Rine as well as the blind reviewers and published authors within this issue. Please consider offering us your feedback or critique as with any effort there is always room for improvement. More importantly, we hope you would consider extending the greater assessment dialogue by submitting your scholarly piece to *Research & Practice in Assessment.*

Regards,

Joshua Brown

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