

Introduction to Volume 6, 2013

by Diane Kelly-Riley and Peggy O'Neill, Editors

To kick off Volume 6, we have a piece that examines automated essay scoring (AES), a timely topic in light of the recent NCTE "Position Statement on Machine Scoring". This piece, "Automated essay scoring in innovative assessments of writing from sources," by ETS researchers Paul Deane and Frank Williams, and Vincent Weng and Catherine S. Trapani of Fordham University specifically links their work to the testing demands of the Common Core State Standards, an ongoing topic of interest. The authors examine the use of AES for writing from sources. They reason that automated essay scoring can achieve similar levels of accuracy to human raters in certain contexts, but they found that this level of accuracy does not remain the same when examining the application of general and genre-specific rubrics in different contexts. Automated scoring, they conclude, needs to be supplemented by additional sources of evidence (or assessment) in order to ensure that the entire construct of writing is assessed.

Next, Carla Hall and Jaffer Sheyholislami of the University of Ottawa examine rater comments on essay tests written by students learning to speak English as a Second Language in "Using Appraisal Theory to Understand Rater Values: An Examination of Rater Comments on ESL Test Essays." Their work furthers the scholarship to examine how raters construct what makes up "good writing" especially as it applies to multi-lingual writers. Their work continues the interesting exploration of how teachers' values can serve as the basis for assessment criteria, and they provide an innovative application of appraisal theory as a methodology to guide the assessment of raters' evaluation of student work.

Currently, the *Journal of Writing Assessment* has a call for manuscripts in response to the writing assessments connected to the Common Core State Standards. Please read more about this call for scholarship [here](#). Likewise, we maintain the ongoing "JWA Reading List" which provides focused reviews of publications important to writing assessment and contextualizes their relevance to writing assessment practitioners. Recent volumes reviewed on the JWA Reading List include *Race and Writing Assessment* (Eds. Inoue & Poe, Peter Lang, 2012) and *Writing Assessment in the 21st Century: Essays in Honor of Edward M. White* (Eds. Elliot & Perelman, Hampton Press, 2012). If you would like to do a JWA Reading List review, please review the [submission guidelines](#).

We would like to thank reviewers who volunteered their time and expertise to review and comment on manuscripts submitted to JWA. We are indebted to their generosity and hard work.

Linda Adler-Kassner, University of California Santa Barbara
Arthur Applebee, University at Albany-SUNY
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Brian French, Washington State University
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Carol Severino, University of Iowa
John Webster, University of Washington
Carl Whithaus, University of California Davis
Sara Weigle, Georgia State University
Edward Wolfe, Pearson
Kathleen Blake Yancey, Florida State University

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