



**Burtchaell, James Tunstead. (1998). *Dying of the Light: The Disengagement of Colleges and Universities from Their Christian Churches*. Grand Rapids, MI : William B. Eerdmans.**

This book is mostly history, as Burtchaell visits 17 college of 7 different denominations to chronicle their religious life. He chooses to concentrate on major denominations: Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Lutherans, Catholics and Evangelicals; picking at least two colleges for each. The author does a remarkably thorough job, looking not just at the administrative decisions the colleges made but also at the student and professorial life of the campuses. His essays about each campus, while following a roughly chronological format, do not follow a single framework which would facilitate comparison.

In a final chapter Burtchaell attempts to pull together the lessons this exercise has provided. He points out that many church affiliated schools were not founded so much to advance religious beliefs as to provide an education for the children of believers. He emphasized the poor quality of the religious education many of these schools provided. Many did not integrate religious studies into the curriculum, but treated religion as a separate discipline, studied in isolation if at all. Burtchaell makes clear that he finds the weakening of bonds between church and college unfortunate, and hopes that his research will lead readers to the in-depth analysis he feels is necessary to reverse the trend.

Pages: **806** Price: **\$45.00** ISBN: **0-8028-3828-6**

**Reviewed by Kate Corby, Michigan State University**

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***Gender Gaps: Where Schools Still Fail our Children*. (1999). New York, NY : Marlowe.**

With page after page of tabular data showing gender differences on course-taking, standardized tests, sports participation and college plans, *Gender Gaps* is less readable than its predecessor *How Schools Shortchange Girls* (1992). In *Gender Gaps*, an AAUW Educational Foundation team takes the recommendations of the earlier report and looks for progress in the intervening six years. It also looks at emerging issues such as technology in the classroom and American demographic changes that bring larger numbers of some ethnic and racial groups into the schools.

As did the 1992 report, this volume includes an extensive bibliography (22 pages) of research relevant to girls and education, in this case published in the last six years. Anyone interested in issues related to girls in schools will find this a valuable synthesis of current research.

Pages: **208** Price: **\$13.95** ISBN: **1056924-665-3**

**Reviewed by Kate Corby, Michigan State University**

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**Gilkey, Susan N. & Carla H. Hunt. (1998). *Teaching Mathematics in the Block*. Larchmont, NY : [Eye on Education](#).**

Eye on Education publishes a number of books on block scheduling. *Teaching Mathematics in the Block* is one of the first to focus on a single subject. Choosing one of the "boring" subjects that students find hard to love, even in 50-minute intervals, is a good test of the block scheduling concept. The results are mixed. In their preface, authors Gilkey and Hunt admit that their original goal of presenting "ideas, possibilities, reproducible masters, resources—anything and everything," was unattainable within the covers of a single work. They chose to organize the book conceptually, from broad to specific. They begin with a brief discussion of the pros and cons of block scheduling in general and move on to curriculum planning, lesson plans, instructional strategies, technology, and assessment. Appendices offer more lesson/lab plans, resources, websites, and references. The enthusiasm and experience of the authors is evident throughout, there are basic suggestions and innovative ideas. They include many of their favorite strategies, some going back into the 1980s. Overall the book has a kind of hodgepodge feel. There is little transition between sections and different math levels and courses are discussed throughout. A suggestion for a typical geometry session might be followed by a sample algebra activity, forcing the reader to switch gears to put the suggestions in context. There is a detailed Table of Contents, but no index. The authors aim to impart an overall understanding rather than specific strategies, but readers are apt to tie their understanding to the specific example and be frustrated when they cannot quickly find the information within the complex structure. In short, the authors may still be trying to do too much in one book, leaving too much of the work of integration to the reader.

Pages: **186** Price: **\$29.95** ISBN: **1-883001-51-x**

**Reviewed by Kate Corby, Michigan State University**

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**Schwartz, James E. and Robert J. Beichner (1999). *Essentials of Educational Technology*. Needham Heights, MA : [Allyn & Bacon](#).**

This book begins with a very basic overview of the types of technology that have proved helpful in the classroom: spread sheets, word processors, graphics and Internet connectivity. It then goes on to look at how these technologies might be utilized in specific types of classroom: social studies, science, math, and language arts. By necessity, each of these sections is brief and generic. There are no specific software recommendations or details of implementation. This means that the text might serve as a sort of "consciousness raising" exercise for those not technologically literate, but it would not be adequate to permit readers to formulate an action plan and begin to utilize a new technology. It's not clear just who would find this book ideal. The authors aim it at pre-service teachers and faculty development for in-service teachers, but either group would require substantial additional materials to truly begin to use technology in the classroom. That noted, there are aspects to the book that add value beyond the practical

content. The book is built around an overarching discussion of the "Delta principle," the authors' name for the progressive influence of new technologies from facilitating existing tasks, to doing new tasks, and finally to reconceptualizing the task—doing things in ways that would not be possible without the new technology. This concept could be used to effectively introduce the importance of new technologies to resistant established teachers. Some of the examples the authors use, such as automobiles or the printed word, are excellent vehicles for making this point forcefully.

Pages: **212** Price: **\$24.00** ISBN: **0-205-27700-4**

**Reviewed by Kate Corby, Michigan State University**

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