Rethinking Education in the Age of Technology: The Digital Revolution and Schooling in America
by Allan Collins and Richard Halverson, Teachers College Press, 2009, 176 pp., ISBN 978-0-8077-5002-5

This book offers timely and compelling perspectives to launch an important and much-needed conversation devoted to rethinking schooling and learning in the age of technology. The authors do not propose solutions for reorganizing our outdated model of schooling. Rather, they knowledgeably share a well-organized and concise history of schooling in America from educating the masses during the Industrial Age to a more personalized, lifelong learning model characteristic of our current Knowledge Revolution. Additionally, the authors argue for a new vision of education that includes rethinking learning outside of school, understanding how technology encourages individuals to take responsibility for learning, knowing how to find and evaluate information, and rethinking careers. Clearly, the authors view education as a lifelong enterprise separate from schooling.

Collins and Halverson explain that the digital world has already transformed learning outside schools through evidence such as Internet cafes, distance education, home computers, interactive simulations, home schooling, and learning centers. These clearly and succinctly outline innovations and plant seeds that visionary educators could use in designing a new, yet "equitable and coherent [educational] system" (p. 89). Likewise, they caution educators that "simply inserting technology into classrooms and schools without considering how the contexts for learning need to change will likely fail" (p. 140). The ways in which technology can be used to reconfigure traditional teaching practices can either open up new avenues for learning or simply preserve the institutionalized "paper and text culture" (p. 34). Children come to school knowing more about a diverse array of topics than ever before because they informally and voluntarily seek information needed "just-in-time" using technology. "Schools foster *just-in-case* learning . . . to teach us everything we might need to know later in life" (p. 48).

The book presents two polarizing perspectives—that of the technology enthusiasts and that of the technology skeptics. Initially, I cringed at what I perceived as the stereotypical and artificial dichotomy characteristic of many ideological arguments in the educational arena. In spite of my initial reaction, both perspectives were fully and logically explained and did contribute to understanding the basis of the authors' arguments.

Chapter 7, "What May Be Lost and What May Be Gained"; Chapter 9, "What Does It All Mean"; and Chapter 10, "Rethinking Education in a Digital World" are especially insightful, informative, and engaging. Each chapter helps the reader understand the complexity and nuances of schooling in our current information revolution. Readers are encouraged to carefully consider their current beliefs and practices in relation to the roles of technology, learning, and schooling. These chapters challenge both experienced and novice teachers, as well as administrators and policy makers, to face the range of possible outcomes of the digital revolution and to collaboratively seize the opportunity to direct the future of education. If educators are part of the creative class that Collins and Halverson describe, this visionary book offers convincing explanations useful for taking the actions necessary to transform our nation's schools. This is a thought-provoking read recommended to anyone interested in rethinking education. (AD)