

EDITORIAL

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I want to call to your attention several articles from other references that may be of interest to many of our readers. These articles discuss and/or provide information concerning a number of relevant issues.

The first article, *Girls Closing Gender Gap in Math*, provides information concerning recent gains in mathematics scores by females on tests such as the National Assessment of Educational Progress. The article, from the Miami Herald (<http://www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/living/education/7634256.htm>), goes on to discuss that although females generally perform as well as males, fewer women take higher-level mathematics courses.

A second article, *Study Shows Textbook Prices Skyrocketing*, summarizes a recent report that focuses on the price of textbooks and their impact on students (from the Daily Online Californian — <http://www.dailycal.org/article.php?id=13995>). The article discusses recent trends in textbook prices, reasons for the relatively large increase in prices, and makes suggestions for helping to make textbooks more affordable for students.

Finally, an article from the December 14, 2003 New York Times discusses recent findings concerning the content of Archimedes' treatise, the Stomachion. The article, *In Archimedes' Puzzle, a New Eureka Moment*, focuses on the findings by Dr. Reviel Netz, a mathematics historian from Stanford. (<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/12/14/science/14MATH.html?ex=1072846800&en=906e434458ccbfc1&ei=5070>). Dr. Netz's interpretation of the treatise concludes that its focus was on combinatorics, a field that did not develop until much later. His conclusions suggest that Archimedes work was not, as has been commonly believed, about an ancient children's puzzle that involved putting strips of paper together in different ways to make different shapes. Instead, Netz asserts, that Archimedes was actually trying to determine the number of ways the 14 irregular strips of paper could be put together to make a square. The article also discusses previous efforts to make sense of Archimedes treatise as well as the techniques used to reconstruct the original Greek text.