Prospective readers of Ernst Conradie’s *Christianity and Ecological Theology: Resources for Further Resources* face a unique challenge: trying to get their hands on a copy of this first rate reference guide to the burgeoning field of Christian ecotheology. (Or does this book prove that it is now a firmly established one?) Sadly, this obstacle stems not from the fact that it is selling like hot cakes on Amazon or at your local university bookstore, but rather because it is only available through a small, largely Dutch speaking, South African Press, SUN PReSS, a division of AFRICAN SUN MeDIA, in various formats (Note: the all caps accents the “e,” as in “electronic,” character of the press). Yet, interested scholars should not let the hassle of locating this press and converting South African Rands (ZAR) to dollars, euros, pounds, etc., stop them from acquiring this essential work, in either “irl” or “e-” format.

“Still,” you object, “all of this effort to acquire a book billing itself as a ‘resource guide for further research’?” Yes, that’s correct. For unless you have been reading and cataloguing everything in the field since the 1995 publication of Engel and Bakken’s indispensable yet even more difficult to acquire hardbound *Ecology, Justice, and Christian Faith: A Critical Guide to the Literature*, you will be hard pressed to find anything this valuable in two key respects: first, for getting a sense of the state of current ecotheological discourse (especially from a systematic theology approach, which is Conradie’s academic background and strong suit), and second, for acquiring access to a most comprehensive bibliography, better than anything on the world-wide web. Yes, even in this “digital age,” the “real” in this case proves superior to the “virtual.” A further ecological and technological word on that later though.

The guide divides neatly into two equal two-hundred page sections. In the first, “Christianity and Ecological Theology: A Research Guide,” Conradie briskly ushers the reader through a three-part survey: an assessment of “environmental degradation” (Part A) followed by an exposition of Christian biblical, doctrinal, and pastoral responses (Part B), and lastly, an
examination of current Christian environmental ethics and spirituality (Part C). Conradie locates the centerpiece of this rather conventional narrative of things ecotheological in Chapter Nine, “Ecology and Christian Doctrine.” Here Conradie outlines what he takes to be the “six core doctrinal problems on the agenda of ecological theology” followed by an outline of the three key “challenges for an ecological reformulation of Christian doctrine.” As one may be able to guess, the six problems revolve around perennial doctrinal issues: the Creator-Creation relationship, the Creation-Redemption issue, and the nature and role of the human creature within Creation. The solutions, towards which Conradie only makes suggestions, lie in an ecologically-minded retrieval of trinitarian, Christological, and pneumatological thinking.

After this quick but comprehensive narrative of the “state of the field,” Conradie leaves readers to their own devices with his massive “indexed bibliography.” The adjective “index” proves critical here, for without the fifty page index accompanying this unannotated one hundred and fifty page bibliography, locating a citation for further research, be it on “sustainability,” “harmatology,” or “Hildegard of Bingen,” would end in utter frustration. As it stands, while Conradie provides no index to the index, a little hunting and pecking in the index usually ends in satisfaction.

However, such scholarly gratification here depends largely on one’s orientation and preferences. While we have come to recognize the contextuality of theology as axiomatic, Conradie’s guide, both in its exposition and bibliography, appears a bit too idiosyncratic. In spite of its noble effort to acknowledge the contributions of “indigenous ecological theologies” and other non-Western European theologies, the guide leans heavily on the Afrikaans, South African, systematic theology, and Lutheran-Reformed sides of things. Yet, even this expected orientation surprisingly does not completely unsettle the overall balance Conradie achieves in his presentation. Not for a moment does he give in completely to the temptation to turn the guide into a convenient forum to present his own ideas, though he does frequently refer the reader often to his 2005 Ashgate monograph, *An Ecological Christian Anthropology: At Home on Earth?* But as the subtitle of this other book of his suggests, Conradie remains content in the guide to raise more questions than provide answers. In regard to the notion of humanity’s role within Creation as “earthkeepers,” a influential theology within the South African context, Conradie humbly confesses: “Despite