

SOURCES

Recommended for libraries where there is interest.—Stacey Marien, *Business and Economics Librarian, American University, Washington, DC*

Encyclopedia of Catholic Social Thought, Social Science, and Social Policy. Ed. by Michael Coulter, Richard Myers, Stephen Krason, and Joseph Varacalli. Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow, 2007. 2 vols. alkaline \$150 (ISBN 978-0-08108-5906-7).

This encyclopedia is a striking work. It “represents an attempt at a comprehensive and broad-ranging analysis of how the Catholic religious, moral, and intellectual tradition can and should shape society and social life” (ix). This analysis, while in itself noteworthy, is meticulously completed through this work.

The articles, varying in length, provide good overviews of the topics. But what stands out in this work is that it applies “a Catholic sensibility and critique to a wide variety of aspects of social existence, from intellectual and scholarly disciplines, to cultural and institutional structures, to the strategies and possibilities of government intervention in the lives of citizenry” (ix). For example, the article on Charles Darwin gives a brief overview of issues related to Darwinism and evolution, just as any reference work would. But the article then goes into social issues that the article argues are related to Darwin, such as racism and foundation of ethics. It also provides a brief yet good bibliography and cross-references to other articles in the work, including evolution and moral relativism.

New Dictionary of Catholic Social Thought (Liturgical Press, 1994), while similar in title, is quite different in depth and date. Needless to say, much has changed in the socioeconomic sphere in the thirteen years since that work was published; the newer work is more up-to-date. The *Encyclopedia* also covers issues with more depth than the *New Dictionary* does. For example, both have articles on euthanasia. *New Dictionary* records how the Catholic church has looked at euthanasia through the last 1,500 years and how it has justified its position using its various historical documents. The article briefly gets into the social aspects of euthanasia in the last section. But the *Encyclopedia* integrates social issues in its discussion from the beginning. *Encyclopedia of Catholic Social Thought, Social Science, and Social Policy* in many ways replaces the *New Dictionary*. Many of the articles that appear in the *New Dictionary* appear in the *Encyclopedia*. The articles in the *Encyclopedia* are typically superior, have fuller bibliographies, more cross-references, and tend to integrate the social concerns that are raised with these various issues more thoroughly.

This title would be useful for any library that has a religious major or minor. Although it is specifically a Catholic work, many of the ideas that are presented represent a Protestant perspective as well. It would be a great starting point for both students and faculty looking for a religious perspective on social issues of the day.—Garrett B. Trott, *Reference/Instruction Librarian, Corban College & Graduate School, Salem, Oregon*

Encyclopedia of Environment and Society. Ed. by Paul Robbins. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2007. 5 vols. acid free \$695 (ISBN 978-1-4129-2761-1).

It’s deucedly difficult to keep up on environmental hot topics (forgive the pun); this month the news is about melting ice caps, the incipient demise of the polar bears, and the feasibility of a real Northwest Passage more than five hundred years after John Cabot’s voyages. Next month there will be new issues, theories, proposals, meetings, regulations—the intermingling of the biogeochemical and socioeconomic spheres. Paul Robbins’s *Encyclopedia of Environment and Society* is an attempt to bring together cogent discussions of the most important issues into what he calls an integrated vision of our times. The work is focused on North America, with lesser emphasis on the rest of the world, although it does have entries for nations (rather than global eco-regions). It is particularly useful when it addresses issues that have come to the fore in recent years, such as environmental justice.

Some special features are the “Readers’ Guide,” which groups individual entries into concepts; full indexes to the set (taking up 92 pages) in each volume; and a resource guide, chronology, glossary, and tables of United Nations main environmental indicators (because these last are static once printed, a URL to the source page would have been more useful.) The illustrations are not always apposite (what does the hand on the tree on page 507 have to do with ecofeminism?) but do contribute to the user-friendly feel of the set.

At \$695, this is a non-trivial purchase. On the popular-scientific continuum of recent encyclopedias dealing with the environment, biogenic global change, and societal impacts and reactions, *Encyclopedia of Environment and Society* falls toward the popular end. Its language is simple, its bibliographies are short and tend toward popular level materials, and its typeface is relatively large. Of roughly comparable reference sets, Shepard Krech’s three-volume *Encyclopedia of World Environmental History* (Routledge 2004) is very close in price but focuses more on what has happened than what is happening—as is logical, given the research interests of the three editors, who are well known in environmental history. Andrew Goudie’s more scholarly two-volume *Encyclopedia of Global Change: Environmental Change and Human Society* (Oxford Univ. Pr., 2002) is a very good value at half the price for very close to the same coverage and extent, while Ted Munn’s five-volume *Encyclopedia of Global Environmental Change* (Wiley, 2002) is much more expensive and far more scientific. Both the Goudie and the Munn sets are already a half decade old, and given the pace of change in global environmental change research, economics, and politics, that is a long time. *Encyclopedia of Environment and Society* would certainly find use in high school, public, and academic libraries as a solid introduction to some very complex topics.—Cindy Stewart Kaag, *Head of Science Libraries, Washington State University, Pullman*