

Three recent books provide fresh and interesting perspectives on environmental law. The authors all graduated from law school in the past twenty years, and they all have most of their careers ahead of them. All of this augurs well for the future of environmental scholarship.

The first book is Doug Kysar's [Regulating from Nowhere](#). Kysar argues that we need to replace reliance on cost-benefit analysis with an ethic of responsibility. He emphasizes responsibilities to other nations, to future generations, and to natures, while arguing for the precautionary principle as an embodiment of our moral obligation to think twice about the potentially disastrous consequences of our actions.

The second book is Jed Purdy's [The Meaning of Property](#), which probes the foundations of property law and argues for a new conception of property in terms of democracy and liberty. His discussion is all the more relevant because of the renewed calls from the Right for rolling back environmental regulation in the name of private property and individual liberty.

The last of these books is Rob Verchick's [Facing Catastrophe](#), which I blogged about in a [previous post](#). Building on the lessons of Katrina, he argues that we need to take better account of the role of "natural infrastructure" in sustaining our society. His prescriptions include more reliance on the precautionary principle, greater emphasis on environmental justice, and increased use of scenario planning.