Law reviews make little effort to track new books, unlike other journals in other disciplines . So it's pretty much hit-or-miss whether you learn about relevant new books. I wanted to share some interesting finds that have crossed my desk, joined a growing pile of unread books, and then slowly left the pile.

The subjects of these books range from the challenges of preventing food poisoning to the creative response of the Dutch to the "Little Ice Age" (1300-1870 AD). As you'll see from the publication dates of some of these books, sometimes it takes a while, for me to bridge the gap between getting a book that looks interesting and actually diving into it. The books aren't beach reading, but they all have something interesting and distinctive to say. If you have other book suggestions, please add them to the comments — these are just the ones that happened to get my attention.

Frank Ackerman, *Worst Case Economics: Extreme Events in Climate and Finance* (Anthem Press 2018). Ackerman offers a short, readable introduction for the general reader into the world of fat-tailed distributions and what they mean for environmental policy. If you don't know what a fat-tailed distribution is, you should definitely read this book. It's crucial for understanding why scientists are so worried about climate tipping points and catastrophic outcomes. Without using any equations or assuming any background in statistics, Ackerman shows how the conventional methods used in economic models don't work for systemic risks like climate change.

Dagomar Degroot, *The Frigid Golden Age: Climate Change, the Little Ice Age, and the Dutch Republic, 1560-1720* (Cambridge 2018). How can societies cope with climate change? We're currently running a very large scale experiment with the planet that will show which societies will manage better than others. But we can learn something from earlier episodes of less drastic change. For several centuries in the middle of the last millennium, the Northern hemisphere suffered from a climate disturbance that has become known as the Little Ice Age. While larger and richer countries suffered greatly, the Dutch not only sustained themselves but thrived. This success was partly attributable to their experience in coping with environmental challenges, as a small coastal country, much of which was below sea level, that relied on extensive canal networks for transportation. The Dutch also showed an unusual ability to innovate to take advantage of new opportunities. I'll have another post next week with thoughts about the lessons of the Little Ice Age.

Eric T. Freyfogle, *Our Oldest Task: Making Sense of Our Place in Nature* (2017). Freyfogle has spent many years pondering the values that underlie environmental law, from a perspective that owes much to Aldo Leopold. This book is the fruit of that thought. His thesis is that "our ecological ills and our inability to think clearly about them — to think clearly about our rightful place in nature — are tied to . . . our self-images as morally worthy, rational individuals, different not in degree but in kind from all other life forms." *Our Oldest Task* calls for radical cultural change to de-emphasize the individualistic worldview of markets and political pluralism in favor of a more communitarian ethic that recognizes ecological values.

Timothy Lytton, *Outbreak: Foodborne Illness and the Struggle for Food Safety* (Chicago 2019). This book begins with the story of contaminated cantaloupes that killed thirty-three people, probing the role of the growers, food auditors, FDA, and tort lawyers. We also learn about a food-poisoning incident at a food safety convention. Unless you grow and prepare all of your own food, this is a book that should have personal relevance for you. Every year, food poisoning sickens 48 million Americans, puts 128,000 in the hospital, and kills 3000. Regulation faces many barriers: a fragmented regulatory system, special interest politics, an enormous number of food producers around the world, and not least, the fact that we have very little evidence on the effectiveness of food safety systems in preventing illness. Lytton recommends consolidating regulatory authority, digitizing the supply chain for better tracking, negligence liability for producers and safety auditors, and focusing enforcement on tracing and punishing outbreaks rather than on inspections. We also need much better evidence about which food safety systems are actually effective in preventing illness.

John F. Ross, *The Promise of the Grant Canyon: John Wesley Powell's Perilous Journey and His Vision for the American West* (2018). It's hard not to get drawn into the Powell's dramatic expedition into the unknown geography of the Grand Canyon, hauling battered wooden boats past the worst obstacles as their food supply dwindled and much of their equipment was lost. Powell himself was a remarkable character, a self-taught scientist as well as intrepid explorer and mountain climber despite having lost an arm in the Civil War. It was also the Civil War that indirectly enabled him to mount the expedition, because his connection with Ulysses S. Grant, beginning in the battle of Shiloh, was key to obtaining federal support. Powell was not just an explorer. He had a keen and respectful interest in American Indian culture, and he was also the first to appreciate how water scarcity

west of the 100th Meridian would shape Western states. At the time, what you might call "aridity denialists" won the day, but in the longer run, reality intruded and made it clear that Powell had been right all along.

Kimberly K. Smith, *The Conservation Constitution: The Conservation Movement and Constitutional Change, 1870-1930* (Kansas 2018). Like today, the Supreme Court was dominated by conservatives for many decades in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries, a period now known as the *Lochner* era after the most notorious case of the time. But unlike today's conservatives, the *Lochner* Court was very supportive of environmental protection in ways that left their mark on constitutional law. Smith provides a fascinating in-depth look at both federal and state developments. She links the success of conservationists in court to innovative lawyers and changes in judicial thinking prompted by the then-new science of ecology.

I'm hoping to do a post like this again, if only as a way of forcing myself to finally read the books that have accumulated on my desk. If there are other books you'd like people to know about, please post a comment after this post so other people can know about your find.