

Kim Fortun: THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY ACTION

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So I often stress that addressing environmental problems requires a lot of different kinds of disciplinary expertise from the social sciences, from the physical sciences, from engineering, from the health sciences. But we also have to remember that the strongest push to recognize environmental problems and respond to them in disadvantaged communities has come from within those communities themselves. People, often with really limited resources, limited education, have come forward together and say to say we want things to change.

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And they've protested in a range of ways.

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And one of the first cases of environmental injustice that made the national news a community in North Carolina. predominantly black community, rural, poor. They learned that

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truckloads of contaminated soil was going to be trucked into their community, into a hazardous waste landfill, and they decided they were going to block those trucks they laid in the road.

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The preachers and other faith leaders in their community joined them. So there was a massive effort to use what resources they had, which was their knowledge of the roads, in the community and what it was important to protect. they lost that fight. The landfill, is there. but that kind of story of communities being creative with all the resources they have to step forward and tell the world that they have a problem and they're not ready to just take it on themselves.