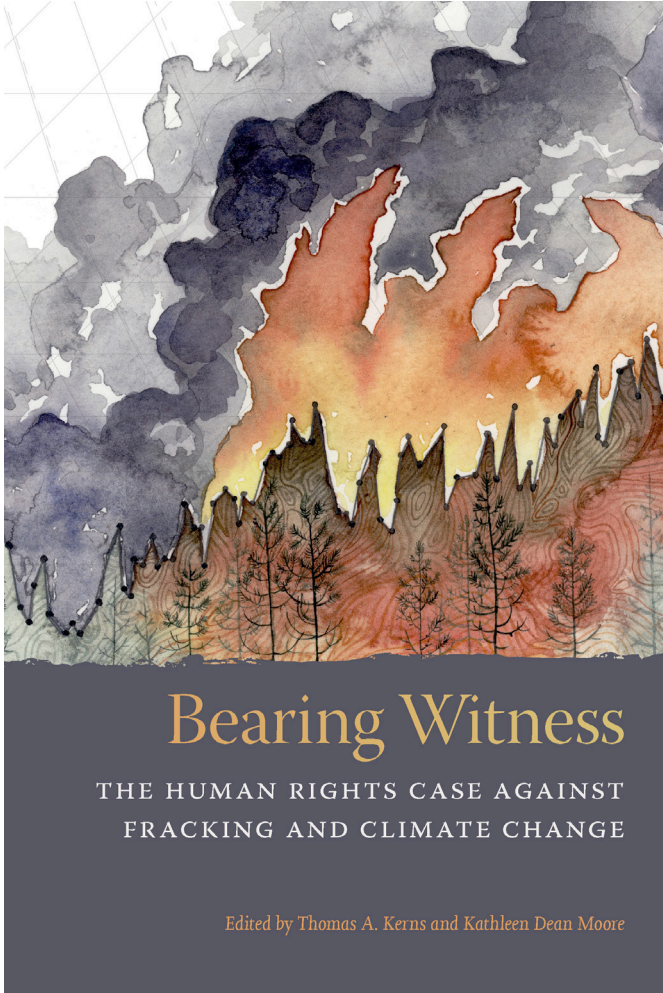


Bearing Witness

The Human Rights Case Against Fracking and Climate Change

Edited by Thomas A. Kerns and Kathleen Dean Moore



Fracking, the practice of shattering underground rock to release oil and natural gas, is a major driver of climate change. The 300,000 fracking facilities in the US also directly harm the health and livelihoods of people in front-line communities, who are disproportionately poor and people of color. Impacted citizens have for years protested that their rights have been ignored.

On May 14, 2018, a respected international human-rights court, the Rome-based Permanent Peoples' Tribunal, began a week-long hearing on the impacts of fracking and climate change on human and Earth rights. In its advisory opinion, the Tribunal ruled that fracking systematically violates substantive and procedural human rights; that governments are complicit in the rights violations; and that to protect human rights and the climate, the practice of fracking should be banned.

The case makes history. It revokes the social license of extreme-extraction industries by connecting environmental destruction to human-rights violations. It affirms that climate change, and the extraction techniques that fuel it, directly violate deeply and broadly accepted moral norms encoded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Bearing Witness maps a promising new direction in the ongoing struggle to protect the planet from climate chaos. It tells the story of this landmark case through carefully curated court materials, including searing eye-witness testimony, groundbreaking legal testimony, and the Tribunal's advisory opinion. Essays by leading climate writers such as Winona LaDuke, Robin Wall Kimmerer, and Sandra Steingraber and legal experts such as John Knox, Mary Wood, and Anna Gear give context to the controversy. Framing essays by the editors, experts on climate ethics and human rights, demonstrate that a human-rights focus is a powerful, transformative new tool to address the climate crisis.

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