

## NUCLEAR POWER

**Decommissioning discourse***Geoforum* **106**, 234–243 (2019)

Nuclear power plant construction in the US peaked in the 1970s. Many of the nuclear power plants constructed during this period are facing the end of their design life, raising questions about nuclear power plant closures. To better understand the decommissioning process, Angelica Greco and Daisaku Yamamoto from Colgate University compared the cases of two nuclear power plants in the northeastern United States that shared site and plant characteristics and were owned by the same company when decommissioning was announced, but experienced different outcomes: Vermont Yankee in Vermont was decommissioned while Fitzpatrick in New York was acquired by another company and is still operational.

They find that both local host communities strongly supported the power plants, but there was a strong state-level anti-nuclear movement in Vermont, and a 'save the jobs' movement in New York. Nuclear decommissioning was also framed differently by state actors in each case: narratives about Vermont Yankee focused on safety and corporate accountability, drawing comparisons to the recent Fukushima meltdown, while narratives about FitzPatrick promoted the role of nuclear power in producing clean energy to reduce the state's contribution to climate change and jobs. Overall the analysis shows that closure trajectories are not determined by corporate motivations alone, but rather reflect various local and global contexts that form the basis of key actor discourse.

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