

Interview and hydraulic fracturing essay sample

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Gasland, by Josh Fox, a Strong Argument against Hydraulic Fracturing

Gasland, a documentary by Josh Fox, details the dangers of hydraulic fracturing. The film starts when Fox receives an offer from a gas company to rent his land and drill for natural gas. He travels across the United States investigating the affects in places where fracturing has is already established. Fox provides a strong argument that hydraulic fracturing is a danger to the environment and residents where the drilling occurs. He explains the level of government control and procedure of hydraulic fracturing and interviews residents and experts from the areas he visits. To explain the process of hydraulic fracturing Fox uses facts, numbers and pictures to make a solid impression. Illustration of the shale breaking apart is shown while Fox describes the process. Fox says that over 596 chemicals are mixed and lists many of them that are hard to pronounce, are unknown or are known as carcinogens.

He uses the amount of water, between one to seven million gallons, used to drill each well to shock the viewer. Fox shows the math which amounts to forty trillion gallons of water used so far on wells. All of these facts help to strengthen Fox's argument, demonstrating knowledge and helping to create an impressive picture for the audience. The description of the process is only a start to providing a strong argument, Fox continues by interviewing residents. Fox attempts to interview individuals involved with hydraulic fracturing. Clips of recordings from phone calls made to hydraulic fracturing companies are played. The unsuccessful attempts create an image of avoidance on the part of the companies. Fox begins his journey in the town of Dimock, Pennsylvania. He interviews Pat, Rob, Jean, Norma and Debbie,

residents of Dimock with drilling sites on or near their properties and whom have had health problems. Many of the residents also share water reports with Fox that list high levels of toxins.

Clips of television news reports from Dimock were shared. The residents have had health problems, animals with health problems and water well explosion. Fox receives an anonymous call and was given a jar of water to test. The recording of the call is played and images of the people's feet are shown. Fox lists all the problems in Dimock related to hydraulic fracturing. While each individual interview would not be strong evidence, they are strengthened by the number of interviews and the documentation of tests that are filmed. The television news report also helps to add merit. Fox realizes that this is only one town and could be considered a fluke. Fox continues to interview residents in other states including Colorado and Wyoming. Multiple residents of Colorado are able to light their faucets on fire. Fox also shares jars filled with tap water showing the sediment in the water.

A television news clip is played that has residents lighting their tap water on fire. Lisa Bracken, a Colorado resident, gave Fox dead animals she froze from Divide Creek to have tested for hydraulic fracturing chemicals. She also believes her father's cancer was caused by the toxins in the creek. Families in Wyoming with glycol ethers, a chemical used to make plastic, in their well water. A farmer from Wyoming shared the effects on his crops and animals. Fox included images of many endangered animals in Wyoming being affected by the hydraulic fracturing. While none of these individuals are experts, each individual has been directly affected by hydraulic fracturing

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and shares their story. The number of individuals sharing their stories and the videos of lighting the water on fire are very convincing evidence supporting Fox's argument. Fox continues to add strength by interviewing experts. Fox interviews a variety of experts that have varying levels of association to hydraulic fracturing. Calvin Tillman, the Mayor of Dish, Texas, discussed the results of an air quality study that their town commissioned.

Wilma Subra, an award winning chemist and first responder, discusses the negative effects of hydraulic fracturing with Fox. Doctor Al Armendariz from Texas and Doctor Theo Colborn also discuss the negative effects of hydraulic fracturing. The most compelling expert is Weston Wilson, an employee from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), who speaks out about an investigation done by the EPA. Wilson noted that five out of the seven on the panel that reviewed a study, stating that no further investigation of hydraulic fracturing was needed, had a conflict of interest. The interviews of these experts helps to create an effective argument regarding the negative effects of hydraulic fracturing. Fox builds a persuasive picture of the negative effects on hydraulic fracturing and the lack of control by the government. Fox describes the process of hydraulic fracturing to help build a platform for his argument. He adds strength through an array of interviews with residents from across the country and video footage of the physical effects of the contaminations. The argument is more formidable with the testimony of multiple experts from many states across the country. Fox provides a very well rounded argument with many facets.