

# Frack is wack

Business



The philosophy of egoism is the belief that decisions should be made to benefit oneself. Egoism emphasizes a highly individualistic society in which people focus on themselves and their own desires. An egoistic society would never be successful because in order to have a functioning community, decisions must be made which reflect and support the wellbeing of the larger group or society. In capitalist societies, corporations act as individuals who make decisions that benefit themselves. The corporations' egoistic modes of operation drain natural resources—benefitting the corporations and depleting the assets of the society as a whole.

Clean air and drinking water are threatened by the actions of self-serving corporations. Hydraulic fracturing companies such as Exxonmobil exemplify this kind of exploitation. Fracking companies pump water and other chemicals into bedrock in order to obtain oil. This contaminated the air and water, destroying resources essential for survival. Corporations that frack are like super powered individuals whose power must be limited to protect the common good of the group.

Fracking has dramatically increased in the United States due to the desire to decrease the dependence on foreign powers for oil. As a result, earthquakes have become more abundant around these fracking sites, specifically in Oklahoma. Between 2014 and 2015, 567 earthquakes of a magnitude of 3.0 or greater hit Oklahoma, a state which generally receives fewer than two earthquakes each year (Montgomery). This rapid increase in seismic activity can be attributed to the wastewater that is produced as a result of hydraulic fracturing.

Under high pressure the water can seep into faults and cause earthquakes. These quakes have destroyed homes along with killing families who live near the faults. Although destruction is occurring around the sites, few changes have been made in the regulations in regards to fracking because the city gets a portion of Continental Resources'-the corporation behind the fracking in Oklahoma-profit. As a result, the government is less likely to limit the corporation's influence. The individual corporations have become intertwined with the government creating a corrupt setting.

Fracking corporations are able to exploit the resources and people located around them without consequences because they are paying off the people in charge. This is similar to a central theme developed throughout Animal Farm by George Orwell; power corrupts those who possess it. The pigs seize power because they believe they are smarter. Once they establish their Supreme role in society, they increase the workload of the other animals.

They also change the change the Seven Commandments of Animalism. One commandment originally stated that "All animals are equal" (Orwell 9). However, they change it to, "All animals are equal, but some are more equal than others" (Orwell 51-52), emphasizing their believed superiority over the rest of the group. The government is failing to recognize the social contract which has put them in government. When a person runs for a position, their campaign should be true to what they intend to achieve.

However, if they disregard their previous ideals, they are breaking the social contract, and as a result deceiving the people who put them in office. As a result, the needs of individuals take the front burner, while the rest of the

society is marginalized. The drinking water of towns can also be destroyed due to fracking. Towns in Texas and Pennsylvania both experienced increased levels of methane in their tap water. Steve Lipsky brought attention to this by sharing a video of him lighting the water which came out of his tap on fire (Schlanger). This methane was traced back to a leaks in steel pipes which were supposed to protect against ground water contamination from fracking.

Robert Jackson, a professor at Stanford University, who is also mentioned in Schlanger's paper, claims that " Sometimes drillers encounter a problem when they're drilling and they have to make a decision about whether to stop and address a problem or keep going. Sometimes people can cut corners to keep the drilling moving along." The fracking corporations disregard the common good of the people because they are so focused on making a profit. This distorted analysis of dangerous situations emphasizes the need for stricter regulations in regards to fracking. If the power to assess situations rests in the hands of individuals, unfair decisions which only benefit certain people are more likely to occur. A major misconception which individual corporations have is that their profit is more important than the welling being of a society as a whole.

They fail to acknowledge the common need for resources to enable survival. In an experiment done by Michelle Bamberger and Robert E. Oswald, the true danger of the chemicals used in fracking was exemplified. They used cows as the subjects of the experiment. In one herd of cows, 60 were exposed to fracking chemicals in their drinking water.

Of those, 21 died and 16 did not reproduce. The remaining 36 cows that were not exposed to the chemicals had no changes in health or reproduction (Bamberger and Oswald). This study helps to show the impacts which the chemicals released during fracking can have on the environment and our health. The corporations are putting their desires for money over the health of the society. In Anthem, by Ayn Rand a society is created which puts the needs of the group as the main priority rather than the individual. As a result, everyone has food, clothing and a place to sleep.

None of their resources are being exploited for the benefit of a few individuals. Instead, each individual within the society works for the common good of their community. In this society, Equality, the main character, flees from what he believes to be an oppressive community (Rand 76). In doing so, he isolates himself from the group. By removing himself, Equality does not dismantle the already present system of government, nor does he destroy the environment of those around him.

The fracking companies on the other hand, seek out their own interests while destroying the resources which do not belong to them. The main argument that fracking companies pose to defend their position is that the process stimulates the economy. They claim that new jobs can be created in the United States which will decrease the reliance on foreign powers. This is a valid statement. However, jobs can be created to perform a variety of functions, they do not have to focus on the drilling of oil.

Also the pros of creating more jobs does not outweigh the cons of destroying drinking water and causing earthquakes. Another pro fracking argument is

that the fluids used to frack are not dangerous because they are made up of 99.5% sand and water (Loris). It is true that the liquids which are injected into the shale are primarily water and sand. However, because fracking is increasing so rapidly, 140 billion gallons of fluid are used each year in the United States for fracking (“Fracking Impacts: Water Quality”).

That means that there are 700 million gallons of chemicals which are also being used each year for fracking purposes. As a result, 700 million gallons of chemicals have the potential to be released into the environment destroying clean water which is crucial to survival. Fracking companies have arguments which portray true facts. However, they don't inform the people of destruction that is occurring to the environment. For this reason many citizens are blindsided by the atrocities which are occurring without their understanding.

The common good is defined as a shared well being of all members of a society or community. Due to the initiative taken by hydraulic fracturing, decisions are being made which only benefit a few people, while the rest are being stripped of resources necessary for survival. In order to stop the destruction of pivotal natural resources, the power of individual fracking corporations must be limited. Laws should be put in place to protect the common good of the people. This way a society can be created where individuals are not able to seize the power and exploit the group. Instead, individuals can work together to create a society which emphasizes a shared well being.

Hydraulic fracturing is a process in which water and other chemicals are pumped into shale at high pressure in order to collect the oil which is present (Hydraulic Fracturing). Although this process allows for more oil to be collected from the earth, other natural resources such drinking water, and clean air are contaminated in the process, snatching away vital resources which are necessary for the survival of humans.