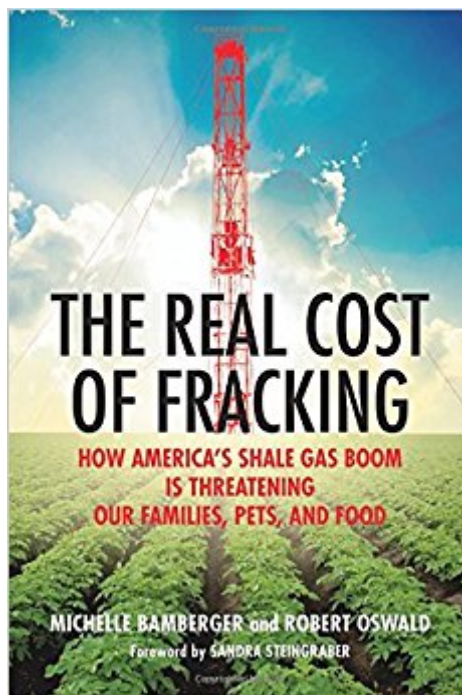




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The Real Cost Of Fracking: How America's Shale Gas Boom Is Threatening Our Families, Pets, And Food



Synopsis

A pharmacologist and a veterinarian pull back the curtain on the human and animal health effects of hydraulic fracturing, or “fracking.” Across the country, fracking—the extraction of natural gas by hydraulic fracturing—is being touted as the nation’s answer to energy independence and a fix for a flagging economy. Drilling companies assure us that the process is safe, politicians push through drilling legislation without a serious public-health debate, and those who speak out are marginalized, their silence purchased by gas companies and their warnings about the dangers of fracking stifled. *The Real Cost of Fracking* pulls back the curtain on how this toxic process endangers the environment and harms people, pets, and livestock. Michelle Bamberger, a veterinarian, and Robert Oswald, a pharmacologist, combine their expertise to show how contamination at drilling sites translates into ill health and heartbreak for families and their animals. By giving voice to the people at ground zero of the fracking debate, the authors vividly illustrate the consequences of fracking and issue an urgent warning to all of us: fracking poses a dire threat to the air we breathe, the water we drink, and even our food supply. Bamberger and Oswald reveal the harrowing experiences of small farmers who have lost their animals, their livelihoods, and their peace of mind, and of rural families whose property values have plummeted as their towns have been invaded by drillers. At the same time, these stories give us hope, as people band together to help one another and courageously fight to reclaim their communities. The debate over fracking speaks to a core dilemma of contemporary life: we require energy to live with modern conveniences, but what degree of environmental degradation, health risks, and threats to our food supply are we willing to accept to obtain that energy? As these stories demonstrate, the stakes couldn’t be higher, and this is an issue that none of us can afford to ignore. From the Hardcover edition.

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Customer Reviews

“In this cool, disarming and persuasive indictment of fracking’s widespread negative consequences, the authors provide an important addition to an ongoing debate.”
•Kirkus Reviews, starred review
“This pragmatic, cautionary analysis is recommended for general readers.”
•Library Journal
“Bamberger and Oswald’s message is clear: The canaries of the gas patch are wheezing and keeling over. We are being warned.”
•Slate
“Here, woven among the courageous words of human witnesses, is the unimpeachable story of science carried out in extreme and intimidating circumstances. It is the sound of silence breaking.”
•Sandra Steingraber, from the Foreword
“A must-read primer on fracking—the compelling interviews and informative narrative tell the heartbreaking story of how people’s lives are destroyed by fracking. If you care about the food you eat or animal welfare issues—read this book!”
•Wenonah Hauter, Director of Food & Water Watch, author of Foodopoly: The Battle Over the Future of Food and Farming in America
“Sometimes, just when we think we know enough about a very important subject, a book comes along that shows us—in urgent, even chilling, terms—how much more we need to understand.”
The Real Cost of Fracking is such a book. It cracks open the reality of fracking and seats us across the kitchen table from real people who have been poisoned—and who, despite being American citizens and taxpayers, can’t do a thing about it. The farmers, retirees and children we meet in these pages are canaries in the fracking mine—and they are in serious danger.
•Barbara Gottlieb, Director for Environment & Health, Physicians for Social Responsibility
“The Real Cost of Fracking adroitly documents the maladies that fracking inflicts on its neighbors and their animals, and Bamberger and Oswald convincingly connect these illnesses with current science and statistical studies. The authors provide a reasoned and impassioned call for government to stop toxic trespass by the fracking industry. The people will demand it after reading Real Cost.”
•Weston Wilson, environmental engineer and EPA whistle-blower
“Finally, here is the narrative that relays the tragic toll of the shale-gas boom in America; how ordinary people, who

lovingly care for children and animals, gardens and farms, find themselves imprisoned by the toxicity of the fracked landscapes they once called home. Our hearts break for the ruin they shoulder while we applaud Bamberger and Oswald for drawing back the veil on the injustice being wrought. —Amy Seidl, author of *Finding Higher Ground: Adaptation in the Age of Warming* From the Hardcover edition.

Michelle Bamberger is a veterinarian and the author of two books on first aid for cats and dogs. Robert Oswald is a professor of molecular medicine at Cornell University and the recipient of Fulbright and Guggenheim fellowships. They serve on the advisory board of Physicians, Scientists, and Engineers for Healthy Energy. Bamberger and Oswald live in Ithaca, New York. From the Hardcover edition.

This book is a Must Read! It is the best treatise on fracking I have read. It describes what happens to real people when their property is fracked, with devastating the results, versus the false promises that were made to get people to sign up. The cost in terms of human and animal health needed to be told. The questions raised about the safety of our food supply are still waiting to be answered. The book describes the methods the fracking companies use to con people into leasing their land, and when they have enough surrounding properties signed up, the land of others can be drilled without their consent. Pure well water is ruined, the land is ruined, people may get a "water buffalo" from the drilling company which is small compensation for their health being ruined. Their animals died or had reproductive problems. The fracking companies deny that these outcomes are causes of fracking, they are just correlations.

Well written. Few think about the damage done to pets, farm stock and wildlife. This book explains what is happening to them and their environment. I had the opportunity to have the authors visit us so the book is especially nice to have.

Eye-opening expose of the truth, from one who already suffers from an environmentally acquired illness.

This book should be required reading for every high school student in America.

Very telling book revealing the true costs to the environment and the unfortunate people who live

near these wells and pipelines! People are rendered sick and dying and their homes become worthless! You won't see this in the glittering TV ads extolling "clean" natural gas!

In 2012, veterinarian Michelle Bamberger and Cornell University professor of molecular medicine Robert Oswald published their study, *Impacts of Gas Drilling on Human and Animal Health*. Their report documented cases studies with animal owners in Colorado, Louisiana, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Texas. In 24 cases they found evidence of animals affected by drilling and fracking operations. However their report received little media attention. So they wrote a book. In *The Real Cost of Fracking: How America's Shale Gas Boom Is Threatening Our Families, Pets, and Food*, Bamberger and Oswald tell the stories of those people whose lives and the lives of the animals they loved and cared for were changed forever by drilling and fracking. They even go so far as to mask the identities of people who signed non-disclosure agreements, and who are in some cases speaking out for the first time. The people in these stories are farmers. They raise livestock and pets, and/or grow organic fruits and vegetables that end up on dinner tables across the country. But how safe is food that has been grown and raised in an environment that contains toxic chemicals? In some cases the crops and cattle were contaminated directly from spills of drilling fluids and wastewater, and they went to market anyway. Bamberger also pays a visit to a tiny community without water after a company fracked in the aquifer underneath the town and blew up all the wells, then walked away from the mess. It is inconceivable that she is describing a town in the United States. Further evidence that fracking is transforming rural America into the Third World. This book speaks to people who live in the gas patch. Where I live in Silt, Colorado, we are surrounded by more than 10,500 oil and gas wells. My own experience and the experiences of my family, friends and neighbors echo these stories. Yet no matter how much I've learned about this issue, no matter how much I think I know there is always something new to learn. I came away from this book with a better understanding of the cumulative effects from exposure to drilling and fracking chemicals in water and air, not only on humans but also animals and plants. How insidiously, over months, then years, the air and water become contaminated and people and animals become sickened. Moreover *The Real Cost of Fracking* has something for everyone – believers and non-believers alike. Readers who want to stick to the facts about drilling and fracking will find *A Primer on Gas Drilling*. Spoiler alert -- you cannot reach the end of this book and believe fracking is safe. Unless you think it's all lies. But Bamberger and Oswald

Oswald's research is well-documented and included. With fracking happening in 32 states, plus the proliferation of interstate pipelines, silica sand mines (for fracking), bomb trains and earthquakes, and with natural gas exports on the horizon, the impacts of oil and gas development are coming to a neighborhood near you. I advise you to read "The Real Cost of Fracking" as soon as possible.

XXXXX(1) "Water dispensers and water buffalos have displaced our water sources"(2) "All my puppies were born dead"(3) "I have no calves this year"(4) "My vet can't figure out what's happening to my animals"(5) "We had to leave our home to escape the bad air"(6) "We all have headaches, nosebleeds, and rashes"(7) "We are not living; we are merely existing" The above common complaints of people living in fracking (the extraction of natural gas by hydraulic fracturing) areas are found in this revealing book by Michelle Bamberger and Robert Oswald. Bamberger is a veterinarian & author and Oswald is a professor of molecular medicine at Cornell University. In the beginning chapters of this book we sit across the kitchen table from REAL people who have been seriously affected by fracking, families with children (including babies) and with pets--dogs, cats, horses, goats, pigs, chickens, and a donkey. The middle chapters encompass farmers and food-producing animals (largely beef cattle). In the last chapters, the authors analyse the issues surrounding unconventional gas drilling (which fracking is) and delve into environmental justice. By giving a voice to people at ground zero of the fracking debate, the authors show us the consequences of fracking and issue an urgent warning to all of us: fracking poses a serious threat to--(1) The air we breathe(2) The water we drink(3) The food we eat This book superbly illustrates society's modern dilemma: We require energy to live with our many modern conveniences, but to what degree of environmental degradation, health risks, and food supply threats do we want to accept to obtain that energy? Finally, for those who want to know the technical details behind fracking, there is an informative appendix entitled "A Primer on Gas Drilling." In conclusion, it all comes down to this with respect to fracking: Do the costs outweigh the benefits? Do we welcome oil and gas companies when they come to our neighbourhood with open arms, or do we tell them to "FRACK OFF?" (First published 2014; foreword; introduction; 9 chapters; epilogue; main narrative 180 pages; appendix; acknowledgements; notes; index) XXXXX

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