

Oral History Collection

Mr. William Hensley

Interviewer: ?

Date: Fall 2015

Place of Interview: Denton, Texas

Mr. Hensley: Josh Fox was showing his movie *Gasland* here in Denton, because of its relevance to the, the Frack movement and things like that. And his film was shown at--I think it was shown in the Sundance Film Festival. And then he came to Texas, to do the Texas Festival tour. And he started with Thin Line, which is an all documentary film festival. So I saw *Gasland*, and that kind of raised my awareness of fracking and sort of the effects on the community and on the environment.

Interviewer: Watching that is what educated you on kind of what fracking does and doesn't do, how it affects the environment?

Mr. Hensley: For sure. I was kind of aware of natural gas

and how beneficial it was—

Interviewer: Yeah.

Hensley: —for the industry and for heating homes and everything. I was always aware that natural gas was its resource, but I didn't really know anything about how they captured natural gas and how they drilled for it. That's where fracking came in, because fracking is a process where they um—it's basically like drilling for oil, but they are drilling for gas. The best place to get this gas is in the Barnett Shale, here in Texas. [Break].

Hensley: The Barnett Shale, it's, I mean I'm not a geologist or anything.

Interviewer: It's to your knowledge.

Hensley: It's this pocket of natural gas, basically, in the shale that they can't get to any other way besides hydraulic fracturing. And my thing is, I don't really have a problem with the process, it's just these chemicals they use to make it easier, and more profitable, and I guess it expedites things. They're dangerous, and I don't think we should be putting them in the earth because if we mess

up our water and our air, we don't have back-ups for those things.

Interviewer: Yeah. Would, would you feel like... you think you'd be more comfortable with it if it was not around such a highly populated area?

Hensley: Yeah, for sure. I mean it's not good to pollute the groundwater or the air, anyway, but the fact that it was raised to our attention is because it's so prevalent here in North Texas, especially. If it gets in the groundwater there can be detrimental effects on, you know, the people that drink it, the animals, and plants and everything. [Break].

Hensley: The evidence that he had in the film, the most striking evidence that he used, which has kind of been contended, as kind of sensational, is people lighting their faucets on fire. Basically, people turn on their water faucet, light a match underneath it, and it has this big ball of fire that comes out and burns. But that's something that has actually been around for a long time. There's other gasses that can seep into water that will burn. But that's, that was one of the

striking images of the film. He raises the other things that affect the environment, including the noise pollution from the wells, the low frequency in populated areas, and he had a number of people who were affected, basically in a negative way, have cancer.

[Break].

Hensley: I voted against fracking in the Denton city limits, and unfortunately--that was for the fracking ban, which was later overturned. Which I completely agree with, because it was kind of unconstitutional, to say that a business can't operate. Because it kind of set a dangerous precedent in that sense. But I still feel like these chemicals that they are using need to be regulated, and they're not being regulated.

[Break].

Hensley: If they could change the method that they use, and they don't use these harsh chemicals, then it would be more helpful for the environment and for people. Because there are a lot of people who are worried about the long term effects. And I mean, in the short term, we've already seen some things like higher levels different chemicals in

groundwater. It's like a poison, basically.

[End of interview]