Abstract

Fracking on Indigenous Reservations:
Sarah DuJordan, dujordans@duq.edu, Dr. MacMillen, Intro to Peace and Justice; SOCI 222

What is fracking?
the process of injecting liquid at high pressure into subterranean rocks, boreholes, etc. so as to force open existing fissures and extract oil or gas. (developed in the late 1940s)

Why?
Indigenous communities are at high risk of being targeted for fracking possibilities. These areas see high rates of poverty, so the economic incentive provided by the government is often hard to deny.

“Because tribal lands hold about 20 percent of U.S. fossil fuel reserves, they’re often the battleground for energy fights, as in the Dakota Access pipeline case,” (earthjustice.org).

Dangers of Fracking?
• Contaminated ground water, methane pollution, exposure to toxic chemicals
• Tribe members are concerned about the environmental harms, as well as societal harms increasing on the reservation.
• Reservations are seeing a spike in drug-related and violent crime.
• Studies are being conducted about a potential connection of fracking to an influx of earthquakes.

How are they responding?
• Some tribes have teamed up with environmentalists to rebuke the fracking in their area in order to maintain sustainability of the land and their surroundings.
• Other tribes have turned to protests and suing. This has been seen more often during the Trump Administration as he has repealed a lot of the environmental progressions made during the Obama Administration.
• Indigenous women are among the people leading the resistance to fracking as they believe women and Earth are one. Integral development is vital to them, they believe in living off of nature. Fracking would greatly harm the land they live on.