

Fighting fracking

By [Debra Bendis](#)

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[Sandra Steingraber](#), ecologist, activist and author, was in Joliet, Illinois, Wednesday to present a lecture on our era of “extreme energy extraction.” (See the [Century interview with Steingraber](#).) According to Steingraber, we’re acting more and more foolishly as we hold on more and more tightly to our dependence on fossil fuels. The latest methods--deepsea oil drilling, oil extraction from tar sand, mountaintop removal and fracking--only prolong a necessary move away from fossil fuels, says Steingraber. In the meantime, they wreak havoc on our water, on our air and on us, the human beings in the drama.

For the last four years, Steingraber’s fight has been on one of these methods: she’s part of the effort to repel proposed fracking of the Marcellus Shale in New York State. For four years, the industry has been stalled by New York’s activist efforts, but the extraction of natural gas from one to two miles below the earth’s surface will be hard to hold at bay for much longer. The gas waiting underground could be worth \$3 trillion--energy companies have already leased 40 percent of the land in Tompkins County.

To read more about why the fight is worth fighting, see [this report from West Virginia](#) and multiply times 31: fracking is now being done in 31 states.