

Lafayette College hosting fracking symposium Friday and Saturday

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Lafayette College is hosting a symposium on fracking Friday and Saturday.

(Lehighvalleylive.com file Photo)

[Lafayette College](#) is hosting a two-day symposium Friday and Saturday on the hot-button issue of fracking.

"A Place for Fracking?" events are free and open to the public. All of Friday's events, starting at 4 p.m., will be held in Williams Visual Arts Building on North Third Street in Easton.

Saturday kicks off with a community forum 2-3:30 p.m. at 248 North Third St., across from the Williams Visual Arts Building.

Lafayette is encouraging public participation because community input at the event could help shape the future of fracking in the Lehigh Valley region, said Alix Ohlin, associate professor of English at Lafayette College and one of the event's organizers.

"With broad public interest in the Marcellus Shale gas boom and its implications, and a new pipeline proposed for the Lehigh Valley and Hunterdon County, it is crucial to come together to examine the issue from all sides," Ohlin said in a news release.

The first event is a 4 p.m. Friday is panel discussion featuring David Yoxheimer, a geoscientist and shale gas development expert at Penn State University; Abby Kinchy, a sociologist from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, N.Y.; Lamar Herrin, whose critically acclaimed novel about fracking, *Fractures*, was released in 2013; and Brian Cohen, a photographer for the Marcellus Shale Documentary Project.

Then 7 to 8:30 Friday night, Herrin will read from his novel and Cohen will exhibit his photos and discuss his work with the Marcellus Shale Documentary Project at an exhibit of his work.

Saturday's keynote speaker is author, biologist and environmental activist Sandra Steingraber, a scholar in residence at Ithaca College. She has written *Living Downstream: A Scientist's Personal Investigation of Cancer and the Environment*. She is also co-founder of Concerned Health Professionals of New York and New Yorkers Against Fracking, and science adviser to Americans Against Fracking.

Lafayette says Steingraber has been "a vocal contributor to the public and scientific debate over fracking." Her presentation starts 5 p.m. Saturday in the college's Oechsle Hall auditorium, room 224, on Hamilton Street just north of High Street.

The symposium is presented in partnership with the Nurture Nature Center of Easton and funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and "a range of programs and departments from every division at Lafayette College," according to the college.

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