

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF'S PAGE

“Would you take energy advice from the woman who broke up The Beatles?”

On a car ride from Maryland to Indiana recently to visit my son Eric and collect his “stuff” at the end of freshman year at college, I saw a billboard about Yoko Ono on the Pennsylvania Turnpike emblazoned with this somewhat startling message. The billboard is part of a new ad campaign by the “Big Green Radicals” showcasing what they describe as the disconnect between celebrity environmental activists and the average American. To say the least, I was surprised at the current level of discourse on fracking.

Yes, Yoko Ono and Sean Lennon gathered nearly 150 fellow artists to join them in the founding Artists Against Fracking in 2012. And yes, that organization works to stop the practice of fracking for natural gas and oil through mass awareness and peaceful democratic action. The recent billboard appears to be, in part, a response to a billboard in New York funded by Ono and others urging Gov. Andrew Cuomo not to rush a study on fracking. It read, “Governor Cuomo: Imagine There’s No Fracking.”

It is disappointing to see all the mistruths being injected into the debate on hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling. These practices have unleashed quickly unprecedented amounts of natural gas and oil into the marketplace with far-reaching national security, geopolitical, and other implications. The opaqueness of many companies’ disclosures about the chemicals involved in such practices is also disturbing.

I’m pleased to report that one mistruth can be easily addressed. Paul McCartney told us in an interview with David Frost in 2012 that Yoko Ono “certainly didn’t break the group up, the group was breaking up.” McCartney went further and observed that without Ono opening up the avant-garde for Lennon, “songs such as *Imagine* would never have been written.”

Now, I’m not suggesting that the debate over fracking must be conducted with the seriousness of purpose reflected in *Energy Law Journal* articles. What these dueling billboards illuminate to me, however, is that a material part of the problem is a lack of transparency and meaningful public disclosure with respect to the chemicals involved in the fracking process.

You may say I’m a dreamer, but I’m not the only one. My sense is the tide is beginning to turn on the value of such transparency. Let’s imagine a world of transparency and more robust public disclosure with respect to fracking, and work to make it happen.

Respectfully,

Bob Fleishman