Discussion Questions for *Fraccidental Death*

1. Summer Cassidy is a young woman of unusual strengths as well as weaknesses. Discuss her best and worst moments in this novel. Does she mature in any appreciable ways?
2. Early and Joe Glover represent opposite sides in the debate over hydraulic fracturing. What benefits has the new technology brought to Joe? What are some downsides of fracking that concern Early?
3. How does County Commissioner PJ Wine seem to be caught in the middle of the fracking debate?
4. As a young adult still in college, Summer interacts with various older adults in this story.
   1. Did any adults exert a positive influence on her or provide unexpected support?
   2. Which ones betray her or let her down? Did you find their motivations understandable?
5. Several romantic interests pop up in Summer’s life. Do any have potential for long-term relationships? Why or why not?
6. Dayita Patel and Hank Walsh are Summer’s allies. How important are their contributions to her goals and her life?
7. Compare and contrast the oilmen Boomer Walsh and Kit Corbett.
8. How do Boomer’s family members (Nadine and Hank) betray him? Were their decisions moral?
9. What pieces of information help Summer piece together the truth about Corky’s murder? How is it accidental—and yet, in some respects, tied to fracking?
10. Headlines about polluted drinking water have proliferated in recent years. Cancer-causing PFOA (Dupont’s Teflon) in the water in manufacturing towns like Parkersburg, WV, Bennington, VT, and Petersburgh, NY. Leaking chemical tanks along the Elk River in West Virginia. And everyone’s heard about the lead leaching from pipes in Flint, Michigan—but the contaminant has also shown up in unsafe, sactionable amounts in one-fifth of all drinking systems in the US. Whose responsibility is it to ensure safe drinking water? Why is protection of this vital resource proving so complicated?

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