

Farm to Text Meeting Minutes 2/11/16—Fred Kirschenmann Preparation

*Word of the day: “ecolutionary”

1. Introductions/Attendees
 - a. John Linstrom (please write some speculative fiction about agricultural/capitalist meltdowns)
 - b. Leah Becker (try to find a farm to volunteer on this summer! (Sylvester Manor?))
 - c. Morgan Ch. (look up something about Slave Narratives!)
 - d. Jessica Zisa (bring us medieval texts!)
 - e. Andrea Crawford (please come back and bring us your expertise!)
 - i. Farm School NYC: community organizing and social justice, while also learning hardcore farming techniques (certificate program for adults)
 - f. Kim Adams (make your dissertation *electric*!)
2. Documentary Screening (*Food for Thought, Food for Life*)
 - a. Recommended by Fred Kirschenmann for subject of the place of art in sustainability and ecological conscience
 - b. Meant to be a communication tool: how is the film trying to communicate?
 - c. Urban Farming
 - i. Funding opportunities for farming at schools=teachers growing the food during the summer while the kids are home for the summer (kids don't see the seed the harvest aspect that is meant to be inspiring them)
 - ii. Urban Farms in poor areas vs. “urban farms” for personal families
 - d. What communication strategies can you use to show people that there *will be* an agricultural/capitalist meltdown when our form of fuels runs out?
 - e. The documentary felt like an advertisement for a specific farm (Stone Barns): is that the model? How do you model for others when the example has so much money as a nonprofit?
3. Readings
 - a. Kirschenmann's doctorate in philosophy and theology; utilitarian in the way he treats academic disciplines (what role do the arts play in sustainability and farming?)
 - i. Tries to speak in languages that will get things done (pandering to capitalist businessmen, when need be?)→strategic essentialism
 1. We should question him on this: if capitalism is abuse of labor/resources, why are articles like “Sustainability in Our Future Food System” giving capitalist industries leeway?
 - b. “Challenges Facing Philosophy as We Enter the Twenty-First Century: Reshaping the Way the Human Species Feeds Itself” (recommended before Fred's visit!)
 - i. 3 prevailing assumptions on how we relate to nature and current agricultural processes
 1. The culprit is agriculture itself (getting land to do what you want)
 - a. Civilization begins with agriculture, but also the nasty relationship between humans and the natural world
 2. It's genetic

3. It's language (invention of written language responsible for current relationship with nature)
 - a. Language cannot be isolated from how we see the world; alienates us from nature while justifying our taking over nature
- c. "The Industrial Economy's Swan Song, and the Resettling of America"
 - i. "Neo-caloric era"=now utilizing old energies ("old calories") originally used by dinosaurs (back when they might have been "current calories"), when we could potentially be using *our* current calories, rather than fossil fuel
 - ii. "Do it yourself" mentality has been lost, but might be coming back with the "do it yourself" farming→could lead to "do it yourself" electrical wiring (Kim), home improvements, building, etc.
 1. Issues=wealth disparity between farmers