

English 4610: Western American Lit. & English/Hist 6610: Seminar in the American West
Spring 2011

TR 1:30-2:45, Ray B. West 306

Dr. Evelyn Funda
Office: R.B. West 312G
evelyn.funda@usu.edu

Phone: 797-3653 (office & voice mail)
Home Phone: 750-6044
Office Hours: TR 10:30-12, W 1-2:45

Literature and Culture of the American Farm

“To forget how to dig the earth and tend the soil is to forget ourselves.” ~Mahatma Gandhi



Course Description: Thomas Jefferson called farmers “the chosen people of God” and claimed that they were inherently virtuous, the best citizens for the new republic. Even if we think Jefferson’s claims exaggerated, there’s no denying that the American imagination has endowed farming with profound and enduring symbolic significance. This course is based on the theory that no other occupation—with perhaps the exception of motherhood—so fully spans the imaginative range of human experience or is so profoundly invested with symbolic significance in our culture, even by those who have never worked or lived on a farm. Thus, farming is a kind of imaginative shopping cart into which we carry around a whole host of rather romanticized ideas, expectations, and beliefs. It is a shimmering ideal and a cardinal

experience, one that has been endowed with meaning deeper than merely placing seed into soil. Understanding how our culture continues to mythologize the American Farm can offer insights into everything from public policy to the popularity of country music to current “back to the land” & “local food” movements. Therefore, this interdisciplinary course will examine the story of the American farm in literature, history, mythology, art, film, folklore, music, and popular culture in order to consider how and why our culture idealizes rural landscape and lifestyle so fully, even in our increasingly urban nation.

Required Texts for all students:

My Ántonia, Willa Cather

The Botany of Desire: A Plant’s Eye-View of the World, Michael Pollan (Note: only Chapters 1 & 4)

A Thousand Acres, Jane Smiley

The Complete Works of Tomás Rivera, Tomás Rivera

The Grapes of Wrath, John Steinbeck

Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life, Barbara Kingsolver, Steven L. Hopp, & Camille Kingsolver

*Additional Course Reading Packet (available in USU bookstore)

Required for Graduate Students:

The Art of the Commonplace: The Agrarian Essays, Wendell Berry

*Additional Readings available only in Course Reserves (you are required to *print these out and bring them to class*)

Requirements:

Participation and Preparation (15%)

This portion of the final grade is cumulative, rather than a single assignment, and it is based on your overall performance throughout the course. I consider factors such as your attendance and tardy record (see policy below), completion of any in-class writing assignments, and participation in the class. Be prepared to discuss in class. I try to encourage discussion during my “lectures” and with group work, and I expect you to actively participate in exploring, questioning, encouraging, even arguing with the text, each other, and me. You should think of class as an intellectual community of which you are an important member. Your opinions and contributions matter, and I aim to create an atmosphere in which you can offer thoughtful, perceptive contributions and questions that are respectful of the authors and your classmates. My motto for this portion of the final grade is: “How can I know *that* you’re thinking unless you tell me *what* you’re thinking?” I am serious about this grade, and I will give you a midterm grade on this assignment so you can improve, if needed.

Farm Journal (25%):

Your Farm Journal assignment is part research, part reflection and meditation, part visual creation, part theoretical exploration, and wholly an interdisciplinary project. The object of the assignment is to extend our class discussions and get you to consider how far-ranging are our notions about farming. In it, I want you to record your own ponderings about how we conceptualize farming, so at the beginning of the semester, you need to set up some kind of portfolio, loose leaf notebook, Powerpoint document, regular blank journal, or scrapbook where you can gather additional materials related to our subject. You should be working on this project throughout the semester (don’t save this until the end!). You may arrange these materials in any way you wish. However, your journal must have the following:

- ❑ **Cover and Preface.** Decorated cover or opening page that reflects some important aspect of our topic AND a “preface” (at least one single-spaced page) that discusses why you’ve chosen this as your cover. Your cover should “make a statement” about what you’ve learned this semester. Does it represent a theme that I can find in your journal as whole or perhaps a theme in the class that particularly struck you.
- ❑ **Collect and Gather—Contemporary.** Collect and gather contemporary materials related to our subject. This could be a letter to the editor about local farms, the text of a news story on the opening of a farmers market, a “farmer’s daughter” joke you recently heard, the lyrics of a new country western song, etc. You should gather a minimum of *five* documents in this category; *make sure that you are properly citing these documents in your journal.* Then, for at least three of your materials you need to write a short reflection/meditation. The objective here is to have you choose some topics from what you have gathered for your farm journal and ruminate on in some extended way. Each reflection/meditation should be about a page long (between 250-350 words). You may want to look to our “Theorizing the Farm” exercise or the “Questions & Prompts” provided for consideration at the end of this syllabus. Use these ideas to probe more deeply into a topic, analyze the rhetoric of a document (visual rhetoric of photo or painting, perhaps, or the rhetoric of a letter to the editor or lyrics to a song, etc), apply what you’ve learned to new materials you are putting into your farm journal, extend the class discussion by bringing in related documents, compare and contrast Farm Journal

materials with the literature we are discussing in the class, etc. Your Reflection should be a well-written, unified essay with a good sense of a thesis (see Reflection/Meditation below). Also, you may want to think about these assignments as a way to “try out” a topic for a final paper assignment (see below).

- ❑ **Collect and Gather—Historical.** Collect and gather historical materials related to our subject. In this case, I want you to do a little bit of research. Go look up *The Farmer’s Wife* magazine, for instance, and examine/copy the covers or the advertising. Interview a retiring farmer. Find out something about the beginning of the John Deere company. Do some digging/research about some historical topic that you think we mentioned all-too-briefly in class. Briefly research some interesting fact about a food or crop, alá Michael Pollan (what is the cultural history of the banana, for instance). You should gather a minimum of *five* documents in this category; *make sure that you are properly citing these documents in your journal*. Then, for at least three of your materials you need to write a short reflection/meditation. The objective here is to have you choose some topics from what you have gathered for your farm journal and ruminate on in some extended way. Each reflection/meditation should be about a page long (between 250-350 words). You may want to look to our “Theorizing the Farm” exercise or the “Questions & Prompts” provided for consideration at the end of this syllabus. Use these ideas to probe more deeply into a topic, analyze the rhetoric of a document (visual rhetoric of photo or painting, perhaps, or the rhetoric of a letter to the editor or lyrics to a song, etc), apply what you’ve learned to new materials you are putting into your farm journal, extend the class discussion by bringing in related documents, compare and contrast Farm Journal materials with the literature we are discussing in the class, etc. Your Reflection should be a well-written, unified essay with a good sense of a thesis (see Reflection/Meditation below). Also, you may want to think about these assignments as a way to “try out” a topic for a final paper assignment (see below).
- ❑ **Visual Rhetoric.** You need to include some significant degree of the visual throughout your journal. I’m happy to see some of you illustrate these with your own drawings, if you’d like, but that isn’t required. More of you, I imagine, will fulfill this part of the assignment by finding visual components elsewhere. Perhaps you could do a collage of comics about farming, take your own photos, make a collage of family farming photos, find important advertising we didn’t discuss, a painter who portrays farmers in a unique way, a new victory garden poster, perhaps. You should gather a minimum of *five* documents in this category; *make sure that you are properly citing these documents in your journal*. At least one of your journal Reflections from the two categories above should discuss some form of visual rhetoric.
- ❑ **Outside Writing assignments.** These will be short homework assignments, typically of a creative, sometimes personal nature. The assigned number of these will be determined over the course of the semester, but you may have 3-5 short assignments (2-5 pages).
- ❑ **“Theorizing the Farm” Exercises.** Include your complete list (to be explained).
- ❑ **Other.** This is anything else I tell you to put in your journal over the semester and may include revised in-class writing assignments.
- ❑ **For Graduate Students Only: Film review and Reflection.** Choose and watch a pre-approved farm-related film. Then write an extended Reflection/Meditations about it (about 1000 words). The goal here is for you to consider how well the film you watched fits what we are discussing in class.

The Farm Journal will be graded as a whole. I will judge presentation of your materials, completeness, effort, how well the journal reflects what you have learned over the semester, and, perhaps most importantly, your ability to present a sophisticated, interesting, deeply-considered, and multi-faceted *analysis* of our subject.

Reflection/Meditation (5%): One of the Reflection/Meditations from your Farm journal will be turned in early in the semester, so I can grade it and give you feedback (see schedule). If you get below an A (90%) on this assignment, you may revise it for the final Farm Journal. This will not change the original grade, but a revision will reflect well in the Farm Journal's overall grade.

One-Pager Analysis Papers (Grads do two for 20%; Undergrads do one for 10%):

You will write “one-pager” essay—that is, one full page maximum length for the assignment; these will be single spaced, one inch margins, and use a font no smaller than 10 point. These papers must:

- 1) be about the works we have studied to that point (either literature or other “texts” like film, folklore, posters, photography, etc.) ;
- 2) have a very narrowed, focused topic (crucial for such a short paper);
- 3) have a clearly outlined thesis (i.e., a significant, arguable point you are trying to prove);
- 4) demonstrate how that focused topic illuminates our reading of the work and our understanding of its basic themes (shows how the part relates to the whole);
- 5) fully support the thesis with specific details (and quotes in literature) from the works; and
- 6) go beyond class discussion in scope and therefore give new insight into the work.

Analysis is a “close reading” of a text that both examines constituent elements of a work (analysis) and then considers how these components function in terms of the whole (synthesis); in other words, this kind of essay examines a specific part and then relates the part to the whole. Papers may be stylistic analysis, comparison/contrast, thematic analysis, symbol or motif analysis, etc. We will discuss topic possibilities and approaches to writing such papers (what makes a good thesis and the idea of “part to whole”) as due dates near. While these papers may sound like a “breeze” (after all it is just one page, right?), be aware that you will be expected to make a complete and convincing argument *in a very limited space*; that means: make sure that everything you say is essential and significant to your point. Please note: this is a literary analysis paper and is *not* a personal response paper (“I liked the book because . . .”) or an “issues position” paper (“Now that I’ve read the book, I think we/ the character should (not) do or think X”). The emphasis is on objective analysis, not personal agenda.

Note: If you receive a grade lower than an 80% on this assignment, you may rewrite the essay; however, your rewrite will be due one week after papers are returned, and rewrites can get no higher than a B+.

Note for Undergrads: You may choose *either* of the two due dates for your one-pager analysis.

Interdisciplinary Final Research Project (Grads worth 35%; Undergrads worth 25%):

Grads will write a 12-15 double-spaced page paper (or equivalent) with a minimum of four sources and Undergrads will write a 6-8 double-spaced pages paper (or equivalent) with a minimum of three sources. *Your final papers must critically analysis* some significant aspect of one of the works we examined (I mean “works” in the broadest sense; for instance, you are free to write a paper about the rhetoric on Farm Aid website or Victory Garden posters). They also should show some level of interdisciplinary study (such as using Jeffersonian historical rhetoric

to understand a text like contemporary farmer's market posters). Essays should be well-written, have a clear thesis you are setting out to prove, substantiate that thesis with textual evidence, offer fresh insight into the text (do not simply recycle class discussion), be grounded in the relevant criticism and outside research (literary, historical or cultural criticism or research that goes beyond what we covered in class), and provide a compelling extension of that scholarly discussion. Examples of other interdisciplinary approaches: how might Elinore Pruitt Stewart's autobiography from 1914 have influenced a modern "text" like the MaryJane's farm website? Or how does essayist Wendell Berry recast the historical agrarianism of Jefferson and his contemporaries? Or how does the film *The Real Dirt on Farmer John* and the writings of John Peterson draw upon traditional agrarian folklore practices?

If you wish, you may do a "project" for your assignment. That is, the creation of some kind of substantial "document" that requires outside research and/or substantial work in another genre or medium. For instance, consider these possible topics:

- If you are a photographer or you were intrigued by our discussion of the marketing of the farm, you could create a portfolio of local farm photographs that are accompanied by interpretive text (for instance, giving history of the area or specific farm).
- *Alá Troublesome Creek*, you could film a documentary about agriculture that you will narrate (This might be an interview of your grandfather on his farm, or it might be about how urban school children think about farming, or it might be about visitors at the American West Heritage Center).
- You might create an "agricultural curriculum," in which you write a curriculum plan with lecture notes, reading questions, classroom activities, outside teaching resources, etc. for a teaching unit (this should still have some research component).
- You could do a folklore fieldwork project in which you interview people about their opinions on the "local food" movement, or visitors to the American West Heritage Center, or people who think they have seen (or who have executed) a crop circle, or analyze the evolving feminist rhetoric of "Farmer's Daughter" jokes over time.
- You could focus on western photography, research historical rural photographers & analyze how they depict the American farm; for instance, Clarence Bisbee (Idaho), J.E. Stimson (Wyoming), J.C. Allen (Indiana), or Albert Schlechten (Montana).
- You could analyze the rhetoric of specific agriculturally-related websites; for instance, www.wifeline.com is the website for WIFE, or "Women Involved in Farm Economics."
- You might look at the rhetoric of a periodical like *The Farmer's Wife* magazine (published from 1905-1939 and available in our library).
- If you're a musician, you might compose a set of songs about the American farm or use the farm songs of Woody Guthrie to write a "farm opera."
- If you are a creative writer, you might write a memoir about your family farm or a short story that uses a rural setting as a significant component of the story (there must be a significant element of cultural studies in such a project—see me).
- If you are a lit person and you just want to read more on this subject, you might read Wright Morris's *The Home Place* (which has a substantial element of photography in it, by the way) or something by Mary Clearman Blew or.... (see me for lots more ideas).

Sometime during the semester you should schedule a time to talk to me or email me so we can discuss your topic and a potential thesis for your paper. If you do a "project" for one assignment, you must clear your topic with me beforehand.

Final Exam (20%--for Undergrads Only):

Undergrads will have a final exam (Thursday, May 5 at 1:30). This will be comprehensive and cover both the literature and the culture we have discussed over the course of the semester. Be sure to have a good sense of the “Terms.” The exam will include multiple choice, short answer and 1-2 short essays.

Attendance & Tardy Policy:

If you are gone, for whatever reason, it is an absence. Those who miss class, even for legitimate reasons, lose something which is reflected in their work and thus in their grade. My classes rely upon discussion, and that is something that cannot be satisfactorily “made-up.” I believe that attendance illustrates how committed you are to the class and to the literature.

I will excuse two absences; however, quizzes or other assignments cannot be made up for those days. I expect you to provide proper documentation for university-related events (i.e., sports, university-related conferences, etc.) and doctor’s excuses for illnesses of longer than two class periods. Moreover, if you have more than two absences during the semester, for whatever reason, I will deduct 2 points for every subsequent absence from your final percentage. If you have an absence rate of more than 25%, even if they are for legitimate reasons like illness, you should consider dropping the class because that kind of absence rate means you will likely fail the course due these deductions, missed class discussions and lectures, and missed participation points.

A Note about the Flu: Should the campus suffer another outbreak of the flu this year, we ask that you to please stay home if you have a confirmed or strongly suspected case. Emailing me when you believe you have the flu allows me to alert your classmates to a possible outbreak; you and I can also discuss possible ways to make up missed assignments, if possible. Also, it is vital that you update your email address on the university Banner system and that you regularly check this email account; this allows me to email the entire class if we have to change the schedule, due to the flu or other unforeseen events.

General Make-up policy: If you know ahead of time that you must be absent, please let me know; your absence will still count, but at least you will be able to get a sense of what you will miss and a list of any homework assignments due upon your return. If you know you will be gone on a day when an assignment is due, please make arrangements for me to receive the assignment by 5 p.m. that day (they can be dropped off at the English office or slipped under my door). When students are absent, they are still responsible for homework assignments or papers that are due upon their return. I will provide students who have been absent with handouts they missed (these are often located in the bin hanging outside my office); however, I do not recap lectures, so you should look to classmates for class notes. In general, unannounced quizzes cannot be made up if you are absent; however, I will drop the single lowest grade in this category.

Finally, regarding lateness, please make an effort to come to class on time. I take attendance by passing around a signature sheet, and tardy students are responsible for seeing me *after class* to sign the signature sheet (you don’t have to worry about giving me an excuse—just ask for the signature sheet). Remember, however, that arriving late is disruptive to the class as a whole, and consistent tardies, to my mind, are indicative of a carelessness about your own education and a sign of disrespect to me and the class, as well. Naturally, the occasional tardy is sometimes unavoidable, but be aware that 3 tardies will be figured in your final grade as an absence (six tardies equal two absences, etc.). If you have more than 6 tardies, I may ask you to not interrupt the class if you are late again and see that the door has been closed (this, of course, would result in an absence).

Grading Policies:

Grade Scale: A	93-100	B+	88-89	C+	78-79	D+	68-69
A-	90-92	B	83-87	C	73-77	D	60-67
		B-	80-82	C-	70-72	F	0-59
		I Awarded in accordance with University policy					

Final grades higher than a "C" mean that the student exhibits a genuine commitment to writing, the literature and the class with attendance and participation. The writing shows depth of thought, keen analysis, new insight, and spark as well as those qualities that should be a given for college writing: coherence, organization, and clarity. Ideas expressed in writing or in class discussion are fresh and inventive; the argument is convincing and complete. An "A" grade for the course means the student has excelled in all areas of evaluation: they've written insightful, thorough papers; they have demonstrated that they have read the works with care and understanding; they have offered thoughtful comments in class on a regular basis; they have worked well with their peers in groups; and they have an attendance record that is good (including few or no tardies).

Plagiarism is using someone else's words or ideas (whether those of a scholar or another student) without acknowledging the source. Plagiarism includes using any books or articles without citing them in your paper, as well as the utterly stupid attempt of purchasing papers from Internet sites or from other students. In an intellectual community, our most sacred commodities are our ideas, and to use the ideas of others without citation is, plain and simple, theft. Naturally, as scholars we draw upon the writings of other scholars, but it is necessary to give credit where credit is due. The general rule is, if you're not sure you should cite the source, then cite it. If a teacher finds language and phrasing that does not seem to fit what you've written before in class, a simple web search will usually reveal the original source in short order. The *Code of Policies and Procedures for Students*, Article V, Section 3A.1 identifies plagiarism as knowingly "representing, by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one's own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgement. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials." Please be aware that the department and the university takes this transgression very seriously. The penalties for plagiarism are severe and can range from a departmental hearing, to a failing grade for assignment and course, to a report filed with the Dean of the college. Other penalties may also be imposed at the Dean's discretion. These include probation, suspension, expulsion, withholding of transcripts, denial or revocation of degrees, referral to psychological counseling, and other appropriate disciplinary actions.

For questions about withdrawal, pass/no pass, incompletes, grade appeals, or plagiarism, please see the school's policies listed in either the university bulletin or schedule.

The Americans with Disabilities act states: "Reasonable accommodation will be provided for all persons with disabilities in order to ensure equal participation within the program." If a student has a disability that will likely require some accommodation by the instructor, the student must contact the instructor and document the disability through the Disability Resource Center (797-2444), preferably during the first week of the course. Any request for special consideration relating to attendance, pedagogy, taking of examinations, etc., must be discussed with and approved by the instructor. In cooperation with the Disability Resource Center, course materials can be provided in alternative format, large print, audio, diskette, or Braille.

American Lit. & Culture—The American Farm

Dr. Funda

Schedule—Unless otherwise noted or announced in class, *you should have read the entire work by the first day it is listed on the schedule.* This schedule is subject to change as needed.

- 1/11 Intro to class & syllabus
Topic: “Breaking Bread” & “Giving Thanks”
Overview of Global and American agricultural history; farm statistics
- 1/13 Topic: “The Chosen People of God”: Roots of the American Yeoman Farmer Image
Film Short *Fields of Plenty*, Michael Ableman
Discuss: Virgil, Jefferson, Emerson, Thoreau, and Henry Nash Smith (see the Course Packet; hereafter noted as CP)
- 1/18 Topic of the Week: “In Dirt We Trust: Farm History”
Lecture and Discuss: Jared Diamond and Freida Knobloch
- 1/20 Lecture and Discuss: Selections from *Farmers in a Changing World* (CP)
Grads: Read essay from Mark Fiege’s *Industrial Eden* (on Library Reserves; hereafter noted as LR). Be prepared to describe Fiege’s thesis for the rest of the class.
- 1/25 Topic: Literary Sod-busters (Short Stories and Excerpts from Novels and Memoirs)
Discuss: Rolvaag’s *Giants in the Earth* & Stewart’s *Letters of a Woman Homesteader* (CP)
- 1/27 Discuss: Cather’s excerpt from *O Pioneers!* & Foote’s “The Watchman” (CP)
- 2/1 Topic: “The Tragedy is Surrounded by Glories”
Discuss: Hamlin Garland’s “Under the Lion’s Paw” Annie Greenwood’s from *We Sagebrush Folk*, and Mary Wilkins Freeman “The Revolt of ‘Mother’”
- 2/3 **DUE: One-Pager Analysis #1**
Topic: What’s Michelangelo’s David Doing at the Farmer’s Market?: Visual Culture, Part I
Lecture on: Posters from the Women’s Land Army, the Victory Garden movements, and Farmers Markets; paintings by Grant Wood and Thomas Hart Benton; paintings and photos for Commercial Club pamphlets, Clarence Bisbee & other photographers
- 2/8 Visual Culture, Part II
Discuss: Wood’s “Revolt Against the City” (CP)
DUE: Reflection/Meditation
- 2/10 Topic: Madonna of the Wheat Field
Discuss: Cather’s *My Antonia*
Grads: Read Mary Neth from *Preserving the Family Farm* (LR); Be prepared to discuss in class
- 2/15 Continue Cather
2/17 Continue Cather
- 2/22 No class. University follows Monday schedule
- 2/24 Topic: “Industrialized Eden”: Politicizing the Literature of the American farm
Discuss: John Steinbeck’s *The Grapes of Wrath*
- 3/1 Continue Steinbeck
3/3 Topic: “Get Big or Get Out”: Agribusiness & the History of Post-WWII Agriculture (Lecture)
- 3/8-3/10 SPRING BREAK WEEK!

- 3/15 Topic: The Modern Jeffersonian Ideal, Part I
Farm Aid, *The Meatrix*, and Agritourism
- 3/17 MaryJane's Farm, *Hobby Farming*, Coffee Table Books, and Crop Circles
Discuss Irving and Lundberg (CP) and handout on crop circles
- 3/22 **DUE: One-Pager Analysis #2**
Topic: The New Agrarian & The New Realist
Discuss selections from Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (CP), Wendell Berry selections (in CP) and "The Pleasures of Eating" (Handout for Undergrads; in the text for Grads)
- 3/24 Undergrads: Watch part of a film (either *Food, Inc.*, *The Future of Food*, or *Fed Up!*)
Grad day: Discuss assigned readings from Berry's *The Art of the Commonplace* ("The Unsettling of America," "Think Little," "The Body and the Earth," "People, Land, and Community," "Conservation and Local Economy," "The Whole Horse," "Solving for Pattern," "The Use of Energy," and "The Gift of Good Land")
- 3/29 Topic of the Week: "When We Arrive": Migrant Farm Workers
Discuss: Tomas Rivera's *And the Earth Did Not Devour Him* (page pp 63-124)
- 3/31 Discuss: Rivera's "The Salamanders," "On the Road to Texas: Pete Fonseca," "The Harvest," "Zoo Island," "The Rooster Crows en Iowa y en Texas," "Odio," "Seeds in the Hour of Seeds," "The Overalls," and "The Searchers"
- 4/5 Topic of the Week: "A Machine for Agriculture": Challenging the Myth
Discuss: Jane Smiley's *A Thousand Acres*,
- 4/7 Discuss: Smiley and William Kittredge's "Owning it All" (CP)
- 4/12 Topic: The Farm Crisis
Film in class: *Troublesome Creek: A Midwestern*
DUE: Farm Journal
- 4/14 Topic: Voting with Your Fork: The Culture and Politics of Food in Contemporary Nonfiction
Discuss: Michael Pollan's *The Botany of Desire* (just read Chapters 1 & 4, Apples and Potatoes).
- 4/19 Read: Barbara Kingsolver's *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle* (Undergrads only need to read part of the book—TBA)
- 4/21 **Undergrads: Final Exam**
Grads: Continue with rest of Kingsolver. Also discuss excerpt from *The Farmer's Market Book* by Robinson & Hartenfeld (LR)
- 4/26 Topic: Back-to-the-Land Movement
Discuss: Helen Nearing, Noella Carpenter (show beginning of the *RDFJ*)
- 4/28 Film: *The Real Dirt on Farmer John*
(Write a paragraph response to the film for your Farm Journal; be sure to give some sense of how the film is related to issues we've been discussing)
- May 5 1:30 **DUE: Final Research Project**
Final Exam Time will be used for a tour of First Frost Farms, Nibley, Utah
Optional Group Dinner afterward (TBD)

Questions & Prompts: Consider these questions as you read the literature, as we discuss farm culture in class, or as you write your Reflections/Meditations, One-Pager Analyses or your final projects.

- ◆ What are the metaphors we use for farming?
- ◆ What symbols (literal things representing an idea) do you recognize in our cultural discussion of farming?
- ◆ Where do we use other rhetorical devices in our discussion of farming, such as overstatement and hyperbole (exaggeration)? Do we ever personify aspects of farming in surprising ways? Does our language about farming ever use metonymy (i.e., “the pen is mightier than the sword” means that written language is greater than warfare) or synecdoche (i.e., a part of something is used to represent the whole as when we refer to “the crown” to mean a king or “All hands on deck!” as an order for sailors)?
- ◆ What meaning or purpose does farming give our lives?
- ◆ What “relationship” does farming suggest between humans and the land or the things a farmer does? I emphasize “relationship” because I think we conceive of our human association to farming by thinking of it in terms of human relationships. For instance, do we see the act of farming as paternal, maternal, fraternal, or other? What other human relationships come into play here?
- ◆ What stories, myths, tall tales, legends, etc. do we associate with farming repeatedly or seem at the heart of our cultural thinking about farming?
- ◆ What kind of language do we use to talk about farming? Where do we use loaded language—that language that appeals to emotion rather than logic?
- ◆ How do we conceptualize the various acts associated with farming (planting, tending, harvesting, for instance)?
- ◆ What does it mean to be successful as a farmer? What innate qualities does a good farmer have? What powers? What does being successful at farming prove?
- ◆ By contrast, what does it mean to be a failure as a farmer? What essential things does that mean the farmer lacks?
- ◆ Farming seems to have *cultural* as well as personal/individual significance. Why is farming a notion linked to our cultural identity? Why does it seem to be important to us as a country? In what ways does American farming seem to differ from agriculture anywhere else in the world?
- ◆ Are there notions about farming that are shaped by issues of gender, spirituality, politics, patriotism, popular culture, etc.?

Terms for “Lit and Culture of American Farm”

Be able to define, provide synonyms, discuss importance of, identify the main figures in, discuss history of, identify related terms, and generally organize the following by period.

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 100 th Meridian | <input type="checkbox"/> “Forty acres and a mule” | <input type="checkbox"/> Ruralesque |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1862 in Ag History | <input type="checkbox"/> GE or GMO | <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific Farming |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1920 census | <input type="checkbox"/> Gentleman farmer | <input type="checkbox"/> Seed banks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4-H | <input type="checkbox"/> “Get big or get out” | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Silent Spring</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agrarianism | <input type="checkbox"/> Golden Age of Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Slow food |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agribusiness | <input type="checkbox"/> Grange | <input type="checkbox"/> SOLE food |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural Adjustment Act | <input type="checkbox"/> Green Revolution | <input type="checkbox"/> Subsistence farming |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agritainment | <input type="checkbox"/> “He who controls the food controls the people.” | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Agriculture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agritourism | <input type="checkbox"/> Heirloom & open-pollinated plants | <input type="checkbox"/> Terminator Seeds (Suicide seeds) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> “Back-to-the-land” movement | <input type="checkbox"/> Homestead Act | <input type="checkbox"/> Turner’s Frontier Thesis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boosterism | <input type="checkbox"/> Husbandry | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban farmer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bucolic | <input type="checkbox"/> Hybridization | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Millennium |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carey Act | <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial Eden | <input type="checkbox"/> USDA established |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chemical farming | <input type="checkbox"/> Irrigation history in US | <input type="checkbox"/> Value-Added products |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commodity farming | <input type="checkbox"/> Locovore | <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetannual |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cooperative Extension Service | <input type="checkbox"/> Manifest Destiny | <input type="checkbox"/> Victory Garden |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Country Life Commission | <input type="checkbox"/> Monoculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Virgil’s pastoral |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crop circles | <input type="checkbox"/> Morrill Land-Grant Act (Land Grant Universities & Land-Grant Mission) | <input type="checkbox"/> Women’s Land Army (WLA) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CSA | <input type="checkbox"/> NFO | <input type="checkbox"/> Yeoman farmer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cyber-farming | <input type="checkbox"/> Nitrogen-based fertilizers | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DDT | <input type="checkbox"/> “One man, one farm” ideal | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Demeter | <input type="checkbox"/> “Rain follows the plow” | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic Economy | <input type="checkbox"/> Reclamation | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dust Bowl | <input type="checkbox"/> Role of WWII | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> “Egg money” | <input type="checkbox"/> Roundup-ready plants | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Factory Farm | <input type="checkbox"/> Rurban | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Farm | | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Farm Aid | | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Farm Bureau | | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Farm Crisis of the 1980s | | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Farmer citizen | | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Farmer’s Market | | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fertile Crescent | | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |