

Impact of Shifting Agrarian Ideologies on Agricultural Education

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Introduction

- Recent cultural disruptions in the United States have impacted the collective values associated with agrarian ideologies
- Agrarian ideologies directly impact the work of agricultural educators because their work is often situated in agriculture topics and/or the agricultural sector
- Researchers need to investigate these changes and communicate how the work of agricultural educators will be affected
- The purpose of this philosophical study was to explore how the shift to second wave Neo-agrarianism and Agrarian Populism will impact the work of agricultural educators

Conceptual Framework

- This philosophical study was framed by Agrarian ideology
- Currently, two Agrarian ideologies are widely present in the United States
- Neo-agrarianism emerged in the 1990s, valued organic & local agriculture, environmentalism, food awareness, connecting with consumers
- Agrarian populism emerged as a response to Neo-agrarianism and argued for protecting farming practices, rural morality, efficiency of food production, as well as linking individual agriculturalists to multi-national corporations
- Both ideologies have strong elements of Neo-liberalism

Methods

- This abstract employed a philosophical methodology to analyze how agrarianism is evolving and ways agricultural education will be impacted by those changes.

Findings - Shifting to a 2nd Wave of Neo-Agrarianism

- The shift to second wave Neo agrarianism is the reconceptualization of liberal agriculture
- The values of the first wave of Neo agrarianism including local agriculture, organic production, and animal welfare are still important
- There are Neo-agrarians who would prefer to keep the focus on these values
- However, those in the second wave Call for greater accountability within agriculture along economic, environmental, and racial lines
- They are more progressive in their demands for equality and demand that changes happen faster than the force of the free market
- Thus, the second wave Neo agrarianism shift is directly challenging the Neo-liberal tendencies
- This second wave is being characterized by movements such as the 1619 project which connects the racial injustices and legacy of enslaved people from Africa to agriculture
- Another example would be the growing movements to protect undocumented workers who provide the bulk of the low-wage agricultural labor

Findings - Shifting to a 2nd Wave of Agrarian Populism

- The evolution to a 2nd wave of Agrarian Populism is also a rejection of Neo-liberal ideals
- Mirroring the conservative populist movement embodied by President Trump, they identify governmental institutions to be a problem
- Free trade agreements, which are a hallmark of Neo-Liberalism, have come under strong scrutiny
- 2nd Agrarian Populist are growing increasingly more skeptical of multi-national corporations
- There are still people who align more with first wave of Agrarian Populism, which puts these two groups at odds on certain issues

Conclusion

- The impact of these shifts will lead to more fractured audiences
- There will be people ideological positioned at the 1st or 2nd wave of either Agrarian ideology as well as many people who do not prescribe to either
- Ideas and arguments which might have appealed to followers of the 1st wave might be less appealing or unappealing for those who identify with the 2nd wave.
- Agricultural educators should be prepared for possible conflicts within groups
- The ability to comprehend agricultural values, facilitate discussion, and resolve conflict will become more important tools for educators