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Review of *Fighting for the Farm: Rural America Transformed* Edited by Jane Adams

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Fighting for the Farm: Rural America Transformed. Edited by Jane Adams. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003. vi + 338 pp. Notes, bibliography, index. \$55.00 cloth, \$22.50 paper.

Fighting for the Family Farm brings together the contributions of scholars from several disciplines to provide an overview of political processes within North American agriculture.

Beginning in the Imperial Valley of California, Alan Rudy provides a well-documented snapshot of state and federal governments' roles in changing the face of agricultural support of industrial food and fiber production models. Rudy illustrates how ecological damage and state policies converge to shape new agricultural policies, arguing that a spatio-temporal construct is necessary

for determining responses to the many forms of ecological, social, and infrastructural crisis as well as for more fully understanding how the state acts to mediate fiscal and legitimation crises.

Continuing in rural Saskatchewan, K. Murray Knuttila studies the movement from National Policy to Continentalism and then to Globalization, advancing the hypothesis that agricultural policy can best be explained by a historical consideration of agricultural functions and that by grasping the “uses to which agriculture has been put” we can better comprehend why agriculture was encouraged in specific forms and neglected in others. Examining the context of the world capitalist system, Knuttila illustrates the cycles the world has experienced evolving to the current global capitalism model: Industrial capitalism, he contends, displaced mercantilism; corporate capitalism evolved in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries; Keynesian capitalism followed.

The book’s second part illustrates the evolution of the federal farm loan act and provides a good summary of policy development from the original farm loan program through the farm crisis of the 1980s. Readers will enjoy the discussion of sustainable agriculture in a Canadian context.

The final section, titled “The Political Implications for Daily Life,” offers a more anthropological view of food and fiber production through the issues of entrepreneurship. It includes a useful dialogue on genetic engineering and how private corporations have been able to move rapidly forward primarily because they are not connected to multiple interest groups.

The volume’s closing chapter focuses on developing a conscious arrangement of human relationships and practices to enhance our habitats. The subject of polycultures involves a tremendous paradigm shift, but the book affords insight into the difficulties facing those who work diligently towards this goal. While incomplete in its overview, *Fighting for the Farm* provides a glimpse of the power plays and political processes affecting the character of North American agriculture. **John C. Allen**, *Center for Applied Rural Innovation, University of Nebraska-Lincoln*.