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GREENER GRASS: EXPLORING ENVIRO-CHEMICAL INJUSTICES POSED TO MIGRANT FARM WORKERS

Neil Stein

Mentor: William Lowry

Though they do not receive as much attention today, the struggles of migrant farm workers have been, for many years, a topic that has captured the attention of media and society. Most commonly associated with dynamic leaders like the late Cesar Chavez, the leader of United Farm Workers, migrant labor supporters fought passionately for environmental health and safety standards to be equally applied to all workers, regardless of origin or nationality. The primary thrust of Chavez's work, as well as mine, centers on the plight of migrant workers in grape orchards and vineyards. My research is focused on the years since his passing in 1993, tracking the changing agricultural industry in California. By means of a Geospatial Information Systems (GIS) analysis conducted on a variety of longitudinal data sources, this paper analyzes how chemical agents are affecting migrant and undocumented workers, and finds a positive relationship between the growth of the California wine industry and the increase in chemical exposure risk to migrant populations.