GRADING GUIDE

FALL 2012 FINAL EXAM

DO NOT COPY OR TRANSMIT. FOR YOUR EYES ONLY.

INSTRUCTORS: This key is our summary of the preferred answers to the exam questions. In general, a student should get full credit only when her/his answer tracks with the preferred answer herein. **But**...We expect you to exercise independent judgment when a student's answer deviates in a spectacular way, arriving at a different conclusion through logical and skillful application of News Literacy concepts. -dm

PART I: Video Deconstructions (3 videos, 45 points)

Analyze the TV news clips based on our guidelines and discussions. Be aware that any story can have strong or weak elements...or both, but in the end a news consumer has to make a judgment about the story.

Video #1 "TSA Security Sting" (15 points)

http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/video/tsa-agent-found-abc-ipad-brian-ross-blotter-17336428?tab=9482931§ion=10268699&playlist=1299636

1. In what way does this reporter "open the freezer" or fail to do so? (2 points) Hidden cameras, iPad Finder app let us see the perp with the iPad, track it to his house, and find it at his house. It's hard to imagine a better example of opening the freezer.

GRADERS NOTE: THERE ARE SIX CHECKPOINTS ON A SOURCE EVALUATION. FOR EACH SOURCE EVALUATED, STUDENTS EARN UP TO THREE POINTS. YOU CAN PUT MORE WEIGHT ON A CORRECT OVERALL CONCLUSION AT YOUR DISCRETION.

2. Fill out the following evaluation chart. (3 points)

Source Evaluation Chart using IMVAIN rating scales

Put an "X" in the appropriate boxes, then explain each rating.

| Source: "TSA told us" (reporter says near the end of the report) | | | | | | |
|---|--------|--------|---------|----------------------------|--|--|
| Independent | | | X | Self-Interested | | |
| Explain: The agency is on the hotseat for not pr | eventi | ing th | eft. | | | |
| Multiple (Corroborated) | | | X | Lone/Solitary | | |
| Explain: Not only un-corrobrated, but anonymous | | | | | | |
| Verifies | | X | | Asserts | | |
| Explain: If anyone knows Ramirez has been fired, it would be the TSA. | | | | | | |
| Authoritative/Informed | X | | | Unauthoritative/Uninformed | | |
| Explain: Authoritative as to what happened to Ramirez, but not obviously informed as to theft by its employees. | | | | | | |
| Named | | | X | Anonymous | | |
| Explain: The reporter gives us short-hand for the TSA as a source, for no good reason. Why can't the TSA's spokesperson be named? | | | | | | |
| Overall, how reliable i | s info | ormat | ion fro | m this source? | | |
| Put an "X" in the appropriate box, then explain your rating. | | | | Very Unreliable | | |
| | | | | Somewhat Unreliable | | |
| | X | | | Somewhat Reliable | | |
| | | | | Very Reliable | | |

do I have to trust?

3. Fill out the following evaluation chart on the source. (3 points)

| Source Evaluation Chart using IMVAIN rating scales | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|----------------------------|--|--|--|
| Put an "X" in the appropriate boxe | Put an " X " in the appropriate boxes, then explain each rating. | | | | | | |
| Source: Andy Ramirez, T | Source: Andy Ramirez, TSA baggage screener | | | | | | |
| Independent | | | X | Self-Interested | | | |
| Explain: He'd like to stay out of jail and protect his rep | Explain: He'd like to stay out of jail and protect his reputation. | | | | | | |
| Multiple (Corroborated) X Lone/Solitary | | | | | | | |
| Explain: He throws his wife under the bus, but since you can't hear what she is saying, he is the only one who says she is the reason the iPad is in his house. | | | | | | | |
| Verifies | | | X | Asserts | | | |
| Explain: He says the iPad isn't there. It is. He says he d | Explain: He says the iPad isn't there. It is. He says he didn't take it. They have video of him holding it. | | | | | | |
| Authoritative/Informed | | | | Unauthoritative/Uninformed | | | |
| Explain: Students can be excused for rating him moderately authoritative/informed, as he is questioned about the contents of his own home. But because he obviously lies, he should be rated low | | X | X | | | | |
| Named | | | | Anonymous | | | |

| X | | | | | | |
|--|----|----|---------------------|--|--|--|
| Overall, how reliable is information from this source? | | | | | | |
| X | | | Very Unreliable | | | |
| | | | Somewhat Unreliable | | | |
| | | | Somewhat Reliable | | | |
| | | | Very Reliable | | | |
| | e? | e? | e? | | | |

4. What is missing from this story that would provide greater context? Describe at least two examples of missing context. (2 points)

What percentage of the TSA's employees have been fired for thievery. (Student is not expected to know, but TSA employs 55,600) What percentage of travelers who lose bags discover thefts?

5. Decide if you think this reporter is demonstrating fairness, balance or bias and then cite the evidence for your conclusion. (3 points)

The reporter includes nobody who defends baggage screeners, but the evidence is so overwhelmingly against this guy, that this is a case in which an imbalance is justified by the copious direct evidence.

6. Based on this report, can you conclude the risk of theft at TSA screening stations is unusually high? Using course concepts (as opposed to an emotional reaction to the story), explain your answer (2 points)

Context, of which there is none, is everything in this case. If Brian Ross had just given me a little more of the big picture, I'd know if theft rates are higher from dorm rooms, from locked cars, from checked baggage...Students aren't expected to know this stat, but there are more than 700 air travelers per year in the US alone. That probably makes TSA screening stations one of the least theft-prone public places in the country...

Video #2 (15 points) Ammonia Risks in Harris County

http://www.click2houston.com/news/121-Harris-County-facilities-registered-with-EPA-to-use-anhydrous-ammonia/-/1735978/19809774/-/9r5sIn/-/index.html

7. Who is missing from this report and what might their comments add? (5 points)

No one from the chemical industry or the big users of anhydrous ammonia is available to say if precautions are taken to protect the public from spills and leaks.

8. Fill out the following evaluation chart.(3 points)

| Source Evaluation Chart using IMVAIN rating scales | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|----------------------------|--|--|--|
| Put an " X " in the appropriate boxes, then explain each rating. | | | | | | | |
| Source: Dr. Rob Emery, University of Texas School of Public Health | | | | | | | |
| Independent | X | | | Self-Interested | | | |
| Explain: There's no sign that Emery has a financial or emotional stake in telling you that chemical burns are more worrisome to him than explosion/fire burns. | | | | | | | |
| Multiple (Corroborated) | | | X | Lone/Solitary | | | |
| Explain: It's just him, although a clever student will note that the fact EPA tracks anhydrous ammonia storage suggests someone else shares concerns. | | | | | | | |
| Verifies | | X | | Asserts | | | |
| Explain: He doesn't offer research or data, but the whole reason he's in the story is his expertise. Strictly speaking, he asserts, but a student who gives him a pass for speaking from experience might be forgiven if they express that clearly. | | | | | | | |
| Authoritative/Informed | X | | | Unauthoritative/Uninformed | | | |
| Explain: He is authoritative as to the public health concerns. It's his job. | | | | | | | |

| Named | X | | | Anonymous | | |
|---|---|--|--|---------------------|--|--|
| Explain: He is fully identified, name and title. | | | | | | |
| Overall, how reliable is information from this source? | | | | | | |
| Put an "X" in the appropriate box, then explain your rating. | | | | Very Unreliable | | |
| | | | | Somewhat Unreliable | | |
| | | | | Somewhat Reliable | | |
| | X | | | Very Reliable | | |
| Explain: Dr. Emery is about as good as it gets: no dog in the fight, appropriate expertise, calm language, full identification. | | | | | | |

9. List one example each of context and transparency in this report AND explain how each makes the story more useful to you are a resident of that TV station's community. (6 points)

The historical context, biggest industrial accident in US history, truck disaster, ice cream plant disaster lets me know this kind of thing does happen every so often and is not a surprise. Transparency, the EPA website of anhydrous ammonia storage at more than 100 facilities in our area, assures me they are not making it up and lets me know I could check my own street to see what is nearby

10. Can you conclude from this report that all stored anhydrous ammonia locations are equally risky? Explain using information from the story. (5 points)

No. The key context missing from this story is the range of amounts of anhydrous at all those locations and the amount it takes to create a deadly leak or spill.

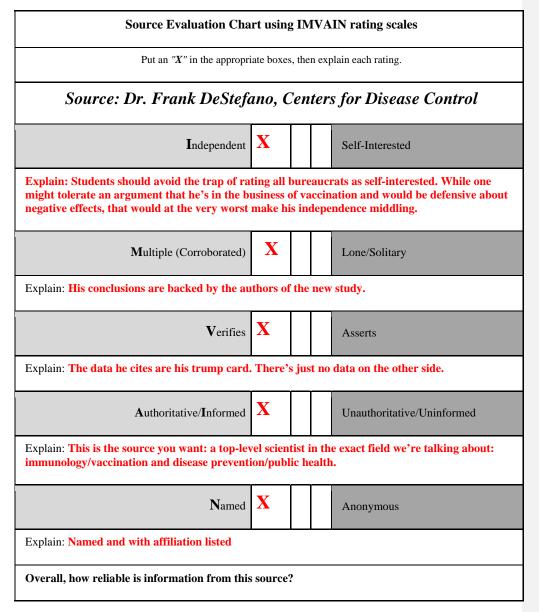
Video #3 (15 points) Autism/Vaccination Correlations

http://www.nbcnews.com/id/3032619/ns/NBCNightlyNews/#51376272

11. Decide if you think this TV news story is fair, balanced or biased and then cite the evidence for your conclusion. (3 points)

While we allow for the idea that students can come up with a range of correct answers, this one is a classic case of a story that eschews balance in order to be fair to the accumulating evidence that ex-Playboy Bunny Jenny McCarthy is wrong about a causal link between vaccinations and autism. Top scientific concensus says there's no reason to avoid vaccination.

12. Fill out the following evaluation chart. (3 points)



| Put an "X" in the appropriate box, then explain your rating. | | Very Unreliable | | | | | |
|--|---|---------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | Somewhat Unreliable | | | | | |
| | | Somewhat Reliable | | | | | |
| | X | Very Reliable | | | | | |
| Explain:This is a no-brainer. He's an expert and not talking about his own recently published paper, but someone else's. He has the right background and experience. | | | | | | | |

12. Fill out the following evaluation chart (3 points)

| Source Evaluation Chart using IMVAIN rating scales | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|-----------------|--|--|
| Put an " X " in the appropriate boxes, then explain each rating. | | | | | | |
| Source: "Dr. Tanya Altmann, Pediatrician" | | | | | | |
| Independent | X | | | Self-Interested | | |
| Explain: She has no apparent financial stake in this news. Her concern is that her patients, if not inoculated, might catch serious diseases or spread them. | | | | | | |
| Multiple (Corroborated) | X | | | Lone/Solitary | | |
| Explain: Both the CDC and the new study say the same thing: get kids inoculated. | | | | | | |
| Verifies | | X | | Asserts | | |
| Explain: At worst, she's midway across the scale. No, she doesn't cite a specific study of inoculation, but she is a pediatrician. | | | | | | |

| Authoritative/Informed | X | | | Unauthoritative/Uninformed | | | |
|---|--|---|--|----------------------------|--|--|--|
| Explain: Pediatrician discussing childhood immunization. Duh. | | | | | | | |
| Named | X | | | Anonymous | | | |
| Explain: Named, specialty listed. She's solid | Explain: Named, specialty listed. She's solid | | | | | | |
| Overall, how reliable is information from this s | Overall, how reliable is information from this source? | | | | | | |
| Put an "X" in the appropriate box, then explain your rating. | | | | Very Unreliable | | | |
| | | | | Somewhat Unreliable | | | |
| | | | | Somewhat Reliable | | | |
| | | X | | Very Reliable | | | |
| Explain: Dr. Altmann stays within her expertise, which is considerable and appropriate. This is who you want to hear from on the question. | | | | | | | |

13. Identify an example of transparency the report provides and describe how it affects your judgment of the reliability of the report. (2 points)

- A. The photos of the pages of the study from the Journal of Pediatrics.
- B. The "CDC" logo on Dr. Destefano's screen.
- C. The "Source: CDC" chiron that appears when statistics on vaccination are being provided

The journal article shows me where this story comes from: a new study that confirms the safety of immunization. The CDC logo suggests Dr. Destefano was interviewed in his office, which bolsters our analysis of him as an authoritative and informed person with direct knowledge of the subject. The Chiron shows me the source of the data the reporter is reciting.

14. There are political activists who say scientists have under-stated the risks posed by vaccinating children. Are their doubts fairly addressed in this news report? Using course concepts, explain your answer . (2 points)

Students are given a little latitude on their answer, providing their evidence and arguments are sound.

If, for instance, a student says skeptics don't need to be included in this story, they have to use the News Literacy definition of fairness to the evidence and then cite the extensive evidence provided in the report and the underlying "Journal of Pediatrics" study.

If, on the other hand, the student says the report should have included doubters and skeptics, the student would need to build an argument around the idea that skeptics' claims are equal – in evidence – to the claims of science.

15. Can you conclude from this report that you should have your children vaccinated? Using course concepts, explain your answer. (2 points)

A student can conclude in favor of vaccination because this is only one of several studies that found vaccination does not raise risks of autism. Both the CDC and another group of scientists find there is no elevated risk. The pediatrician points out the risks inherent in not acting.

In fact, if a student concludes there's still enough doubt, they have to cross a high bar.

PART III: Text Deconstructions (questions for 35 points)

Read the accompanying story before answering the following questions. Be aware that any story can have strong aspects and weak aspects or elements of both, but in the end a news consumer has to make a judgment about the story. BE SPECIFIC IN YOUR RESPONSES AND SUPPORT YOUR CONCLUSIONS by referring to the paragraph number where your support is found. Hand the print-out of the story in with your answer sheet, with your name on both.

16. Given there are 36,000 acres of farmland and almost 600 farms on Long Island alone, plus large immigrant and African American communities on Long Island, what kinds of cognitive dissonance or audience bias might a reader of this article fall prey to? Explain, using course concepts and at least two references to specific paragraphs in the article. (5 points)

Those who sympathize with farmers would be inclined to listen to Brian Stanley and the other farmers who say they should be left alone to hire whomever they want. Those who share some of the racial prejudices expressed would shut out sources like Sherry Tomason, who describe the Mexicans as scared peasants or Jon Schwalls who says black people lack hard-working role models..

17. What News Literacy concept is **Paragraph 20** an example of? Explain your answer. (5 points)

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Context. The reporter is placing the lawsuits and debate in the bigger picture of national immigration policy, which is being debate in Congress. It precedes a graph in which he provides a host of statistics that give us a sense of he scope of the immigrant worker population in the onion industry.

- Who is missing from this story? (2 points) The story is missing a Mexican farm-worker,
- 19. Is this story balanced, fair or biased? Cite specific paragraphs and use News Literacy course concepts to explain your answer, (5 points)

This is a near-arithmetically balanced "he-said, she said" and that is okay because it is clear there is no factual solution and a lot of differences of opinion. This is a classic political story in which the reader wants both sides and plenty of it, in order to sift through their own feelings and political/economic theories and decide which side to support.

- 20. Did the reporters open the freeze? Cite specific paragraphs to support your conclusion and explain, using the concepts of direct and indirect evidence) how their opening or not opening the freezer affects the reliability of the article. (5 points) No. The reporter does not appear to have gotten out in the onion fields with the workers to see what the work is like and to see the difference between the workers the farmers prefer and those the farmers don't like to hire. Nor did they check the working conditions or the pay stubs of the various workers.
- 21. Which of the following sources do you consider reliable and which do you rate as unreliable? Use the IMVAIN rubric to explain your ratings of each source. (10 points)
 Brian Stanley: At best, middlin' reliable. He knows a lot, but has a lot at stake and is in the middle of a fight over it.

Lacks independence: He has money at stake as a farmer involved in using guest workers, PLUS he's a respondent in the lawsuit.

Multiple: There is evidence he has, indeed, tried to hire locally. Almost all the sources acknowledge Mexican farm workers are faster and more skilled.

Asserts: He claims, without numbers or other evidence, that he tried to use local workers. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission decreed that Stanley Farms had to make changes. Doesn't verify.

Authoritative & Informed: He not only has a lot of experience with the guest worker program, having used it for years, he is directly informed as to what's happening in Moultrie, GA.

Named: He is fully identified.

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Jim Knoepp: Lower reliability. We know his group has issues with guest work, but have no way to know that he has engaged in learning about the program, nor the situation in Moultrie or anywhere else.

Non-independent: Knoepp works for a group that takes a policy position against the guest worker program and as such, his self-interest may be in the way.

Multiple: Knoepp and Morton both say it's hard work that should pay better. Interestingly, they don't precisely challenge the guest-workers' superiority. Instead, they say Americans would do the work if it paid better.

Verifies: Knoepp juses an analogy to make his point, but it's still just opinion and lacks verification.

Authoritative/Informed: Knoepp, as part of an organization that campaigns against the program, may be informed about how it works, but he does not demonstrate that he is informed. He opines.

Named: He's fully identified.

Cindy Hahamovitch: A three out of three. Very reliable.

Independent: High marks, especially compared to the other sources. She has no financial or emotional stake in the outcome.

Sole: She's the only one providing factual information. So, while she's a solo source, she has the backing of the research she cites.

Verifies: She provides data regarding the shift in demographics of farm hands.

Authoritative: As an academic expert who studies this exact federal program, she has standing to provide context and perspective. She may not, however, be informed as to the specifics of Moultrie, Georgia

Named:She is fully identified

22. After deconstructing this article, can you conclude that onion farmers prefer Mexican workers because they work harder and tolerate mistreatment? Cite specific paragraphs containing the evidence on which you base your answer.(5 points) No. There appear to be differences in pay and in hiring rates, but there is not sufficient evidence to say why. There is no data showing they pick more per hour. There is no data showing they are treated worse than other workers. There is no evidence or data to show non-Mexican workers are less skilled or more willing to stand up for themselves.

Note to Students: For the purposes of this News Literacy exam, a New York Times article has been greatly altered, mostly by cutting it from 5,000 words to 1,700. Students are reminded to answer exam questions based on this version, not any version they may recall reading. Paragraphs are numbered to allow you to answer questions by making reference to specific paragraphs. Underlined words indicate hyperlinks that were built into the Times' online version of the report.

The New York Times

Published: January 25, 2012

Workers Claim Race Bias as Farms Rely on Immigrants

By ETHAN BRONNER Published: May 6, 2013 559 Comments

- VIDALIA, Ga. For years, labor unions and immigrant rights activists have accused large-scale farmers, like those harvesting sweet Vidalia onions here this month, of exploiting Mexican guest workers. Working for hours on end under a punishing sun, <u>the pickers</u> are said to be crowded into squalid camps, driven without a break and even cheated of wages.
- 2. But as Congress weighs <u>immigration</u> legislation expected to expand the <u>guest</u> <u>worker program</u>, another group is increasingly crying foul — Americans, mostly black, who live near the farms and say they want the field work but cannot get it because it is going to Mexicans. They contend that they are illegally discouraged from applying for work and treated shabbily by farmers who prefer the foreigners for their malleability.
- 3. "They like the Mexicans because they are scared and will do anything they tell them to," said Sherry Tomason, who worked for seven years in the fields here, then quit. Last month she and other local residents filed a federal lawsuit against a large grower of onions, Stanley Farms, alleging that it mistreated them and paid them less than it paid the Mexicans.
- 4. The suit is one of a number of legal actions containing similar complaints against farms, including a large one in Moultrie, Ga., where Americans said they had been fired because of their race and national origin, given less desirable jobs and provided with fewer work opportunities than Mexican guest workers. Under a consent decree with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the farm, Southern Valley, agreed to make certain changes.
- 5. With local unemployment about 10 percent and the bureaucracy for hiring foreigners onerous guest workers have to be imported and housed and require

extensive paperwork — it would seem natural for farmers to hire from their own communities, which they did a generation ago.

- 6. In fact, the farmers say, they would dearly like to.
- 7. "We have tried to fill our labor locally," said Brian Stanley, an owner of Stanley Farms, which is being sued by Ms. Tomason and others. "But we couldn't get enough workers, and that was hindering our growth. So we turned to the guest worker program."
- 8. The vast majority of farm workers in the country are not in the guest worker program but are simply unauthorized immigrants. The plan to place those workers on a path to legal status would reduce the chances of their being exploited, the bill's sponsors say, and thereby also improve the status of Americans who feel they cannot compete against vulnerable foreigners.
- 9. Mr. Stanley, like other farmers, argues that Americans who say they want the work end up quitting because it is hard, leaving the crops to rot in the fields. But the situation is filled with cultural and racial tensions.
- 10.Even many of the Americans who feel mistreated acknowledge that the Mexicans who arrive on buses for a limited period are incredibly efficient, often working into the night seven days a week to increase their pay.
- 11."We are not going to run all the time," said Henry Rhymes, who was fired unfairly, he says — from Southern Valley after a week on the job. "We are not Mexicans."
- 12. Jon Schwalls, director of operations at Southern Valley, made a similar point.
- 13. "When Jose gets on the bus to come here from Mexico he is committed to the work," he said. "It's like going into the military. He leaves his family at home. The work is hard, but he's ready. A domestic wants to know: What's the pay? What are the conditions? In these communities, I am sorry to say, there are no fathers at home, no role models for hard work. They want rewards without input."
- 14.Such generalizations lead lawyers and residents to say there are racist undertones to the farms' policies.

- 15."I am not arguing that agricultural work is a good job," said Dawson Morton, a lawyer who focuses on farm workers' rights at the <u>Georgia Legal Services</u> <u>Program</u>, a nonprofit law firm. "I am arguing that it could be a better job. If you want experienced people, train them. Just because people are easier to supervise, agricultural employers shouldn't be able to import them. It is not true that Americans don't want the work. What the farmers are really saying is that blacks just don't want to work."
- 16.To which J. Larry Stine, an Atlanta lawyer for Stanley Farms and other big farms, replied: "The farmers are not racist or against Americans. They have crops to be picked, and they see that domestics just don't have their hearts in it."
- 17.Jim Knoepp of the <u>Southern Poverty Law Center</u>, a nonprofit group that has campaigned against the guest worker program, said that farm work, like other difficult labor, could be made attractive to Americans at reasonable cost, and that farmers should not be excused from doing so.
- 18. "There used to be lots of American pickers who moved around the country," he said. "But wages have stagnated and conditions have deteriorated, and agriculture is unwilling to make these jobs attractive. Think of trash collection. That's not very appealing, either. But if you offer a decent wage and conditions, people do it."
- 19. Cindy Hahamovitch, an expert on guest worker programs at the College of William and Mary in Virginia, said that in the 1970s about two-thirds of farm workers were Americans and a third were foreign, and that a decade later the proportion was reversed. Today, she said, the vast majority of farm workers around the country are immigrants, although not in the guest worker program.
- 20.Republicans in Congress, mindful of the Democrats' desire to bring legal status to the nation's 11 million unauthorized immigrants, have made an expansion of the guest worker program a key element of any deal. Current proposals include increasing the number and category of temporary workers to the dairy and construction industries, and increasing their stays from a matter of months to three years so that employers have the workers they say they need.
- 21. The guest workers who are planting cucumbers for Southern Valley and harvesting onions for Stanley Farms are among 10,000 holders of H-2A visas in Georgia this

year and 85,000 nationally. They are generally guaranteed a minimum wage of just over \$9 an hour, but are paid per piece and can boost those wages by increasing their productivity. Other workers, known as H-2B and numbering around 65,000, labor in other businesses in which there is a demand for temporary or seasonal workers, including hotels.

- 22. Employers must show that they have tried to hire Americans through advertising and other means and that they could not attract enough of them before resorting to the H-2 system. In the litigation that resulted in the consent decree with Southern Valley, the federal government argued that the effort had not been made or had been intentionally not serious. Excuses were used not to hire locals or to fire them training was minimal, and people were fired when they were less skilled than others who had been doing the work for years.
- 23. "You've got some people who don't work as fast as Mexicans, but they don't teach you, and it can be learned," said Misty Johnson, who was fired and then rehired by Southern Valley as part of the consent decree.
- 24.For the past few months, Southern Valley has been required to provide daily bus transportation to the farm and demonstrate that it was training and retaining Americans. But a recent inspection of those efforts left federal officials unimpressed.
- 25.Southern Valley officials make no secret of their belief that the consent decree the free bus, the orientation program they now run and the training is a waste of their time and money. They assert that there is no discrimination and that they would prefer to hire locals if they could.
- 26.Lawyers for the local workers say the system is rigged to favor low-cost foreign labor because, given the conditions and the pay, no one else will do it.
- 27."If you can't find locals to do the work, why is the answer to bring in people who have little protection and not grant them legal status?" asked Mr. Knoepp of the Southern Poverty Law Center. "If we need them, why not bring them in and make them legal citizens with real protections? The answer is because then they wouldn't keep working in the fields given the conditions of that work. They would do something else. It doesn't have to be this way."