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Geography Illiteracy in America?

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Introduction

By now many of us have seen the Jimmy Kimmel bit where many Americans mislabel countries on a map. My research focuses on if Americans really are as geographic illiterate as the media and society portrays Americans to be.



A woman being asked to locate America on Jimmy Kimmel's show

Purpose

The purpose of this research is to, or contribute information to, answer if:

- Americans are geographic illiterate?
- Should geography be taught more in school systems in an age of globalization?
- Is US geographic illiteracy a security threat?

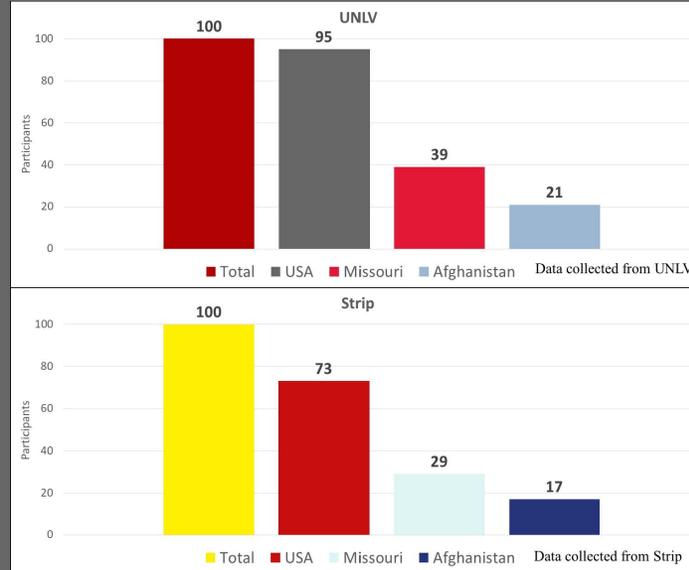
Methods

100 students were randomly questioned at UNLV. Each student was asked to identify on a map: 1. The United States, 2. Missouri, 3. Afghanistan. The experiment was then recreated at the strip right outside the MGM.

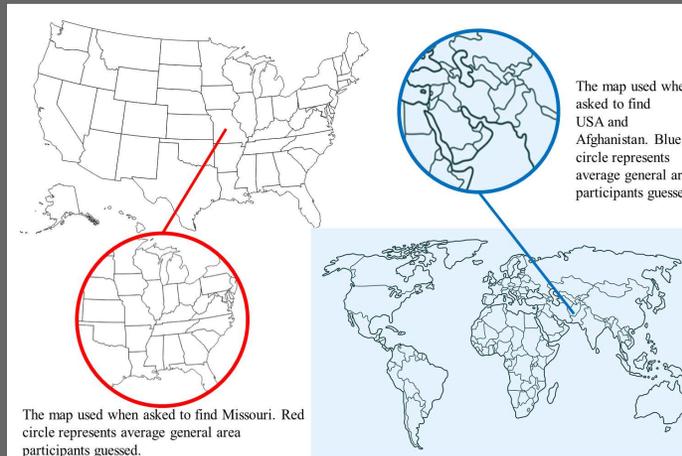


Lied Library at UNLV where the experiment was conducted. MGM at the Strip where the experiment was conducted.

Results



Image



Discussion

Are Americans geographic illiterate?

-According to the data UNLV students score higher compared to people asked on the Strip. Most Americans can find USA but have a hard time finding farther locations.

Should geography be taught more in school systems in an age of globalization?

-Personally, I think it's fine the way we are right now. Unless your field requires geographic knowledge it's something most Americans can get through without.

Is US geographic illiteracy a security threat?

-Again, most Americans can get by without great knowledge of geographic locations. But the few Americans whose field relies on geographic accuracy should make sure their knowledge is accurate.

Conclusions

Most Americans tend to stay and focus within the general area they're familiar with and their awareness of global geography varies from poor to passing depending on how much interest they have in the subject.



NBC News mislabeling Beijing and Shanghai

CNN mislabeling Alabama as Mississippi