The impact of reality television shows on beachgoers knowledge of surf hazards

*Bondi Rescue* is a logie award winning television reality show about professional lifeguards that is entering it’s 6th season. Surf Patrol is the equivalent show for volunteer surf life savers and has aired for 3 seasons. Most of these shows involve watching lifeguards and lifesavers rescuing beachgoers from rip currents, deep water and large waves, and treating people with injuries suffered from dumping waves and jellyfish stings. Both shows are extremely popular and are watched by large television audiences. The question is: how effective have they been at increasing or improving beachgoers knowledge of the common hazards found on beaches?

This project seeks a highly motivated and independent student who is prepared to design and implement surveys of potential beachgoers at various locations using a mixed methods approach. This may involve face to face surveys at beaches, schools, and other public places and/or surveys done via the internet. There will be an opportunity to conduct interviews with some of the Lifeguards and Surf Lifesavers associated with both shows.

This project is best suited for a student with an interest and background in human geography.

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