



## Who knows what nurses do?

Global health depends on nurses using their advanced skills to save lives and improve patient outcomes. But few in today's society know this. So nursing is chronically undervalued and underfunded, starving nurses and their patients of the resources they need to achieve good health. Our mission is to empower nurses to improve public understanding of their profession. Long subject to "naughty nurse" and "handmaiden" stereotypes, nursing continues to be misrepresented and under-represented in the media, which research shows has a real effect on health-related views and actions. The Truth About Nursing analyzes the good, the bad and the ugly media portrayals of nursing. And we spearhead effective action to educate the media and improve its performance, to get nursing the resources it needs. Check us out at [www.TruthAboutNursing.org](http://www.TruthAboutNursing.org).

## Media influences views and actions

Public health research shows that the media affects what we think about health care. That in turn influences choices about careers, and how society allocates funding for clinical practice, education, residencies and research. All of these are currently abysmally funded. Financial

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decisions are central to the global nursing shortage and the short-staffing that drives it. A 2008 study at Scotland's Dundee University showed that television images of nurses as "brainless, sex-mad bimbos" seeking to romance physicians discouraged academically advanced primary school students from pursuing nursing. And a 2000 JWT Communications study found that youngsters' strongest impressions of nursing came from television dramas. Respondents wrongly considered nursing a lowly technical career for girls.

## We influence the media

**We advise media creators, and the media consults us and our website on nursing issues.** We give annual awards for the best and worst depictions of nursing. Our advocacy campaigns about media ranging from Mariah Carey videos to Hollywood shows regularly earn coverage in media from the *Los Angeles Times* to the *Times of India*. We have received two awards from the American Academy of Nursing for our advocacy campaigns.

**We've worked collaboratively with many companies, including Procter & Gamble, Heineken, Gillette, Walmart, and Coors, to improve advertising depictions of nursing.** We convinced the U.S. government to change its annual "Take a Loved One to the Doctor Day" campaign to "Take a Loved One for a Checkup Day" in order to include advanced practice nurses. And we've even had some effect on Hollywood, whose recent shows featuring strong, skilled nurses have generally been a step in the right direction, despite some flaws.

**In 2009, our leaders wrote the acclaimed book *Saving Lives: Why the Media's Portrayal of Nursing Puts Us All at Risk*, in order to further our mission.** The book was selected as a 2009 Book of the Year by the *American Journal of Nursing* and it received the 2009 International Award for Public Print Media from Sigma Theta Tau International nursing honor society. *All book royalties go directly to support our non-profit efforts to improve public understanding of nursing.*

Changing deeply held misimpressions about nursing is not easy. But when we all stand together to promote better understanding, we can have a powerful effect. And we must do so if we are to empower nursing to meet the challenges of 21<sup>st</sup> Century health care. Our patients are counting on us to strengthen the nursing profession--doing so is vital for their health. Please join us!

# THE TRUTH ABOUT NURSING



Changing how  
the world  
thinks about  
nursing



[TruthAboutNursing.org](http://TruthAboutNursing.org)

## TO FIX NURSING'S IMAGE

contacts to get results. Others take hundreds or even thousands. Collective action is especially important when media creators are powerful and resistant to improving their portrayal, as has been the case with many elite news organizations and popular television shows. Our efforts require the sustained voices of as many nurses as possible.

When you join the Truth, we send you news alerts by e-mail a few times each month. Our alerts feature analyses of a wide range of new media products. Many alerts also have information about new or ongoing advocacy campaigns for you to take part in. Learn more at [TruthAboutNursing.org/action](http://TruthAboutNursing.org/action)

We also need your financial support. The Truth is a small 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Our resources are limited, and we rely on 100% volunteer labor, with very little overhead. Our tiny staff works hard, and our board and advisory panel include many prominent experts on nursing in the media. But there is so much more we could do to improve public understanding of nursing with more resources. That's why we need your tax-deductible support. We also have cool free gifts when you join like our book *Saving Lives*, RN patches, pens, and videos. Please sign up for free news alerts or become a member today by mailing in the attached card, or going to [www.TruthAboutNursing.org/members](http://www.TruthAboutNursing.org/members). Our patients are counting on us!



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## LET'S WORK TOGETHER --

### What The Truth About Nursing does to improve understanding of nursing

The Truth is devoted to helping nurses improve public understanding of their work. We seek a world that understands the true nature of nursing and applies its resources accordingly. When we help the public and decision-makers understand nurses' central role in modern health care, more resources will flow toward clinical nursing practice, research and education. That will build a larger, stronger and more diverse profession, easing the shortage and improving our ability to save the lives of people all over the globe.

To achieve these key goals, the Truth monitors portrayals of nursing in the international media, including the news, entertainment and advertising industries. We give praise and encouragement. But we also explore the often subtle ways that the media can undermine and undervalue the nursing profession. We create provocative media analyses, post them on our extensive website, [www.TruthAboutNursing.org](http://www.TruthAboutNursing.org), and distribute them to thousands of subscribers in electronic news alerts. We work with the media through collaboration and advocacy. Where needed, we mount effective campaigns to educate media creators and motivate them to improve their performance. We encourage the media to use nurses as expert sources and consultants. At the same time, we seek to inform and empower nurses as media advocates. We spark vital discussion among nurses, the media, and society as a whole. And we promote compelling new nurse-driven media.

### We need you

Monitoring, analyzing and influencing the world's media is a huge task. We need the help of committed supporters to do it. For instance, some of our campaigns have required only a few

Sign-up below or at: [www.TruthAboutNursing.org/members](http://www.TruthAboutNursing.org/members)

☒ Yes! I would like to sign up for free e-news alerts from The Truth About Nursing. I understand that they will be emailed to me about every week or two and that I will have the opportunity to unsubscribe in each email.

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