

Is She Worth Dying For?

Dear Potential Heart Attack Grill Patrons:

Many people enjoy the company of the sexy "nurse" wait staff at the Heart Attack Grill. But did you know that the endless stream of "naughty nurse" images like those at the Grill is making the huge shortage of real nurses worse—and threatening lives worldwide?

Recent research suggests that nursing is the most sexually-fantasized-about job on the planet. Naughty nurse images appear constantly around the world in general advertising, the entertainment media, the clothing industry, and the hospitality industry.

Why is that a problem? Because real nurses are college-educated professionals whose job is intensely difficult, mentally and physically. But linking sexual images so closely to their profession reinforces stereotypes that nursing is all about sex. And those stereotypes:

- discourage practicing and potential nurses, especially men;
- foster sexual violence in the workplace; and
- weaken nurses' claims to being a serious profession that needs adequate resources.

All this in turn makes the nursing shortage worse. The shortage is so damaging because, contrary to their popular image, nurses are skilled professionals who save lives and improve patient outcomes every day. Without nurses, people die.

The Grill's customers presumably know that the wait staff "nurses" are not really nurses. And some might say that it's all just a joke, that they really have great respect for nursing.

But all stereotypes have some effect. Studies show that even the entertainment media affects what people think about health care. Today, fewer than 10% of nurses are men. This is the difference between images of female nurses and, say, female FBI agents. The FBI is not in crisis because it does demanding work that few people really respect, in large part because they think its agents are brainless handmaidens and sex objects. Nursing is.

We believe that the Heart Attack Grill could probably do just as well if its wait staff uniforms were just, well, naughty. Please urge Grill owner Jon Basso to remove the "nurse" part of the imagery that the Grill uses in its uniforms and elsewhere.

Thank you for considering the concerns of the people who really can save your life!



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