

## Supplemental Digital Content 1: An Examination of Truth

In the theoretical critique of the *Integrated Practice Model for Forensic Nursing Science*, a conceptual model, Valentine (2014) noted that truth was listed as a theoretical foundation, an assumption and a proposition. For theory clarity, truth needs to be listed as only one theoretical component. In further review of the conceptual model, we propose that truth is most congruent within the theoretical foundations. As a foundational principle, Lynch (2011) defines truth as “the mantra of the forensic sciences and central to the field of all scientific investigation” (p. 11). While the quest for truth helps drive scientific investigations, agreement of what constitutes truth is not always clear. Truth within health care and criminal proceedings can be influenced by cultural and environmental paradigms, misinterpretations of data, substandard forensic crime laboratory practices, and implicit and explicit personal and societal biases (Gillett, 2006; Peterson, 2015).

Choi (2014) addressed the concerns related to how truth is interpreted in a thought-provoking Letter to the Editor in the *Journal of Forensic Nursing* in which she asked, “how should nurses define truth?” and “what is the role of nursing knowledge in forensic science?” (p. 243). Perhaps we must first consider the role of forensic nurses in terms of determining truth. We propose that the focus of forensic nursing is on caring for patients and collaborating with interdisciplinary partners, not establishing truth. In criminal justice cases, the determination of truth is not made by the forensic nurse but in a court of law. Yet, the information provided by forensic nurses may influence the decision or establishment of truth. ***Therefore, forensic nurses must be as objective as possible in their documentation and testimonies*** – perhaps this is forensic nurses’ role in establishing truth – objectivity. Yet, in our objectivity we should be keenly aware of our own experiences, cultural backgrounds, and implicit and explicit biases

which may influence our representation of findings. Does this diminish the role of truth within forensic nursing? We propose that it does not; rather, the focus on truth as a foundational philosophical foundation should serve as a continual reminder of our need to provide compassionate, respectful care while objectively collecting and documenting our findings and evidence.

## References

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