

# Journalism Professor Rates Health Studies

By ACSH Staff — March 31, 2009

Here at ACSH we've complained for years that health-related stories in the popular media often pay scant attention to the scientific accuracy and importance of the studies they report on. For example, we've seen preliminary studies reported at scientific meetings given equal weight with studies that have undergone peer review and are published in respected scientific journals. As <sup>[1]</sup> we've noted <sup>[2]</sup> in several <sup>[3]</sup> publications, problems range from misleading and alarmist headlines to a basic misunderstanding of the difference between association and causation in the results of epidemiologic studies.

Now we've come across some valuable help -- an Internet site published by journalism professor Gary J. Schwitzer at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. Professor Schwitzer has an extensive background in journalism and puts it to good use on his [Health News Review](#) <sup>[4]</sup> site. The good professor analyzes and critiques health-related news stories, explaining why a particular article presents its topic accurately and clearly -- or why it doesn't. He rates stories with up to five stars, and details what the standards are for the ratings. We're pleased to find such a useful resource and hope our readers find it valuable as well.

*Ruth Kava, Ph.D., R.D., is Director of Nutrition at the American Council on Science and Health ( [ACSH.org](#) <sup>[5]</sup>, [HealthFactsAndFears.com](#) <sup>[6]</sup>).*

See also: ACSH's report on [Good Stories, Bad Science](#) <sup>[7]</sup>.

[Good Stories, Bad Science](#)

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[4] <http://www.healthnewsreview.org>

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