



The American Association for Nude Recreation – Western Region

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Our Response To Often-Heard Objections to Social Nudity

We hear mostly support when talking to people at our trade show booths about social nudity. However, occasionally, we hear an objection that requires a thoughtful response. These usually fall into several categories:

1. “You will attract a ‘bad element’”
2. “Why should you get a special beach?”
3. “You will make my property value go down.”
4. “It is against the Bible.”
5. “No children should be allowed.”

We’d like address the ones we hear most often here.

Canard 1: “You Will Attract a “Bad Element”

At Clubs and Resorts

Most clubs do a cursory background check of their guests when they check in. This consists of search for the name on a state sex offender list or perhaps the FBI national list that includes persons convicted of selling drugs or of spousal abuse. Persons applying for membership undergo a much deeper check and usually an interview before being granted a card.

That does not filter out people who have never been caught, obviously. So many clubs have staff watch for behavior that is unusual or predatory and they get removed pretty fast from the premises. This happens a lot less often than an outsider might think because every member watches out for every other member, especially when there are kids around. People are much safer here than in a shopping mall or a public sports event!

See “*Behavior Guidelines*” under the “About Us” menu option above for more information.

At the Beaches

Like the parks and resorts, nudists at the beach generally look out for each other. Most lifeguards and rangers will tell you the nudist beaches are kept clean and quiet, and the loudest thing you heard were the volleyball players during a game.

When the occasional voyeur appeared on the beach or the cliff above, we made it immediately clear they aren’t welcome and we shamed them off the beach.

Because beaches are public places, you cannot run a background check on those who come to annoy or take photos with hidden cameras. But those of us on the beach know what to look for and when we see it, we can intercede quickly to strongly suggest the person move along to another part of the beach.

Some nude beaches (Haulover Beach in Florida, Sandy Hook in New Jersey, and Black's Beach in San Diego are prime examples) have Ambassador programs with formal training given to volunteers who walk the beach making sure everything is fine.

Bottom line is creepy people exist everywhere. All one must do is look at the Megan's Law database in your state to see sex offenders are in every community. Statistics show bad people haunt malls and playgrounds and clothed beaches also – wherever opportunities exist. It is unfair to blame nude beaches, because the facts show otherwise.

Canard 2. “Why should you people get a special beach?”

Open the Yellow Pages and look up how many municipal golf courses there are in Santa Barbara County: there are eight.

How many public parks have tennis courts on them for public use? Over a dozen.

How many bridle trails? How many bike paths? How many horse trails? Skateboard parks?

Our point is this: cities and counties traditionally sets aside land for use by special interest groups. It is done to **encourage a wide variety of recreational choices and to avoid user conflict.**

With polls showing wide approval for a nude beach set aside for that purpose, we believe nudists qualify for similar consideration!



We ask for is a sign, so people can choose to enjoy our special use, or not.



Canard 3. The “Property Value” Canard

“You will make my property value go down.” This is a variation of the NIMBY (not in my backyard) argument.

We have searched the Internet far and wide and have we never found any study on clothing-optional beaches and property values being published anywhere. We also asked some local real estate agents who are unaware of any such conclusions.



Nudists are good environmentalists. We keep the beach clean (many clubs participate in International Beach Cleanup Day each year) and by our very presence we reduce drug crime and sexual activity there and in the parking lot above. How can that hurt local property values?

And we aren't the ones who caused the 2008 collapse of the housing market!

We compare this charge to the ones from 40 years ago, about black people moving into a neighborhood. However, we will note that the latest census shows Carpinteria has a black population of less than 1% (Asians comprise 3% of the total).

Canard 4. The “Morality” Argument

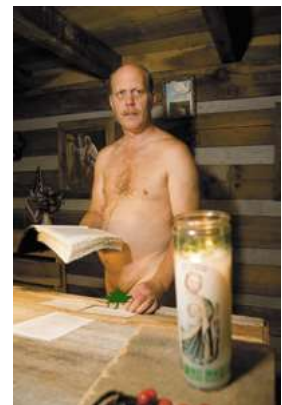
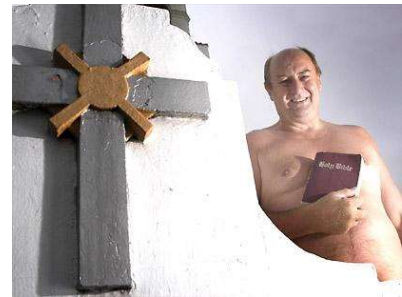
Is nudity immoral or un-Christian? We believe this is a question of personal belief and free speech protected by the Constitution.

In fact there are several Christian based nudist groups in the United States! On Google, search for “nudist Christian church” and you will get several pages of entries.

Christian naturists are Christians found in most branches and denominations of Christianity who practice naturism or nudism. (There is even a Mormon nudist church in Utah!) They find no conflict between the teachings of the Bible and living their lives and worshiping God without any clothing, believing that covering the body leads to its sexualization. Thus, the common notion that nudity and sexuality go hand-in-hand is seen as a worldly point of view. The Christian definition of the human body should be separate, distinct, and non-materialistic. If clothing truly controlled lust and immoral sexual activity, then these would not be occurring to any great extent.

Many Christian naturists have very little disagreement with the core beliefs of long-established churches, and may even be a member. They feel the error of mandatory dress is cultural, rather than anything related to salvation. Nor is such an error unprecedented. For example, in the 20th century, churches largely abandoned any teaching which promoted racial separation and segregation. Likewise, Christian naturists perceive a gap between scripture and Victorian era modesty (which to some extent is still observed today). Despite the efforts of movies, advertisers, and some politicians to link the two. Anyone who has gone to a nude beach, resort, or club knows there is nothing sexual about the experience at all.

Organized Christian naturism is known to exist in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Brazil. Public rules of conduct are similar to those of family-oriented nudist resorts. Any inappropriate sexual activity (including lust) is considered to be against God's Word. Although Christian naturists may frequent public beaches and secular resorts, most



Photos above are from churches in Virginia, Tennessee, and Missouri.

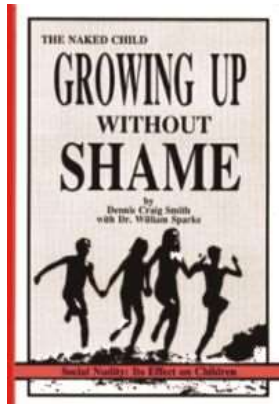
do *not* accept New Age and humanist philosophies which sometimes occur in other aspects of naturism.

These facts haven't stopped certain special interest groups from trying to enforce their own version of morality on the rest of us. We support the rights of others to their own beliefs and values, even if they differ from ours. We ask the same consideration in return.

Canard 5. "We Must Protect the Children"

Many opponents of clothing-optional beaches tell us that kids need protecting from not only the beaches but also from their own parents. These opponents believe seeing others nude leads to promiscuity, unstable homes, more criminal activity, and reduced mental health.

To the contrary, we KNOW that clothing-optional environments – including beaches – make kids safer here than on any clothed beach, or at a shopping mall, or even in some churches! And that they grow up more stable than their non-nudist counterparts. And we have statistical evidence to back this up.



**THE NAKED CHILD:
GROWING UP
WITHOUT SHAME**
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In 1996 Dennis Craig Smith published his 10 year study of children raised in a nudist park environment from 1986 to 1996. 100 nudist teens and young adults ages 17-27 were followed for the ten years to see how they turned out. They were compared with 100 non-nudist college students of the same age and gender balance. Here are some of the major findings:

Marital Status: In 1996, both test groups described themselves as to be just entering marriage and childbearing ages, so questions about their own children were inconclusive as the aggregate numbers were too small to sample.

The nudist group indicated 48.3% had never married while 38% were currently married. Far from being promiscuous, most of the nudists (68.3%) did not yet have children, whereas 31.7% had one or more children. 90% of these respondents had been married only once.

Perceptions were interesting, as the college groups thought that nudists had less happier marriages than themselves, however, point in fact, the degree of marital satisfaction for these two groups did not indicate any differences between the two groups as 80% of the nudist group characterized their marriages as "very" or "somewhat successful or happy."

Employment: In 1986, a majority of both groups (67.2%) were unemployed and had no yearly income. By 1996, the nudists group reported that they perceived their careers as "very successful" (38.3%) or "somewhat successful" (23.3%) while some 6.7% of them said they were unsuccessful and 18.3% reported "unfulfilled careers."

Religion: As a group, the social nudists did not view themselves as being very religious: 53.3% of them labeled themselves as "agnostic" or "atheist," while only 8.3% attended church regularly. The non-nudist group was not much different, with less than half of the non-nudist group reported religious affiliation and 18.3% of them never attended church (about 23.4% attend "frequently.")

Crime Stats: Only three of the social nudists (5%) indicated having been jailed for more than two days, while 21.7% stated that they had been arrested. However, only two persons reported being convicted of a major crime. This statistic is in line with that found in the general population for this age bracket.

Mental Health: To the question "Have you ever been treated for mental illness?," 90% of the social nudist group responded "No," and 71.7% answered they had never sought the services of a psychiatrist. This statistic is in line with that found in the general population for this age bracket.

Attitudes and Opinions about Nudity at Home: A higher percentage of the nudist test group than the college non-nudist group felt that growing up in a nude environment lead to positive rather than to negative feelings about one's body. The great majority (85%) of the social nudists were raised by one or both of their

natural parents. Nudity at home was a common practice, for 90% of the social nudists and 43% indicated it was common to dine in the nude. Some 28.3% of the social nudist group indicated that they had lived permanently with their parents in a nudist camp at some time during their childhood.

The respondents reported fairly stable family structures. Indeed, 66.7% of the social nudists labeled their adolescence as "stable" and/or "happy." Less than 18% of them report an "emotionally troubled" adolescence.

"Was there ever a time when you regretted being a nudist?" Yes: 6.7%, No: 86.7%

"Do you plan to raise your children as nudists?" Yes: 73%, No: 3%, Unsure: 18.3%

As found in earlier studies by Kinsey, Pomeroy, and Wardell, this study by Smith concludes being raised in a home that condones nudity may very well lead to a more calm acceptance of sexuality on a child's part, and that in fact young nudists often go to great lengths to avoid or suppress explicit sexual behaviors or even the suggestion of such activities while in nudist camps in order to repudiate the general public's belief that if one is nude one naturally has sex. Yet such nudists, in keeping with the attitudes of their middle-class peers, report a ready acceptance of human sexuality as natural and appropriate behavior among consenting adults.

Summary:

The attitude and opinion questions demonstrate **no major differences** in education, employment, income, marital status, or religious affiliation between the college group and the social nudists.

Both groups **share similar attitudes on sexual behaviors and sexual morality**, although the nudist group appears to see themselves as **healthier and with fewer sexual hang-ups or drug problems**. The nudist group had **more stable relationships** and fewer arrests than the sample of clothed college kids.

Finally, the social nudists provide an endorsement of their upbringing by having indicated that 73.3% of them plan to raise their children as nudists.

Everyone wants the best, safest environment for their children. We don't object to the way you are raising your kids so don't object to mine!