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205 Arguments and Observations

In Support of Naturism

**Extensively documented with quotes, references,
supporting research, and resources for further study**

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Preface

THE UNITED STATES LAGS FAR BEHIND most of the rest of Western Civilization in its negative attitude toward the human body. While most of Europe is comfortable with the concept of nude recreation on beaches and in vacation resorts, here in the U.S., conservative political action groups seek to criminalize even the most innocent exposure of the human body. Often these groups gain support by purporting to defend "family values" or "Christian morality."

Although these groups are growing in political power, they represent only a small portion of the American population. And participation in nude recreation is also growing. More and more Americans are discovering the pleasures of skinny-dipping with their families in the local reservoir, or sunbathing in the buff at the local beach. Membership in nudist organizations is growing by leaps and bounds.

More than ever, Naturists need powerful arguments to defend their chosen lifestyle against those who cannot see beyond their own misconceptions and preconceived notions. We need evidence and testimony to encourage others to give Naturism a try. For several years, I found myself making claims like these:

"Actually, Mom, taking the kids to a nudist park is good for them."

"The ideals of Naturism are consistent with the goals of women's rights."

"A lot of famous people don't think skinnydipping's such a bad thing."

"There's nothing in the Bible that says it's wrong to go nude."

"Naturism has some real psychological benefits."

"Not everyone in the world thinks nudity is so bad, you know."

I knew that these statements were true, but when pressed, I could not back them up with concrete references. And so, this project was born. Here are all the arguments in support of Naturism, backed up by up-to-date scientific research and supported by the writings of

leading thinkers in psychology, sociology, history, law, and philosophy. Here also you will find related musings on subjects including modesty, nudity in art, the history of fashion, women's rights, the benefits of breast-feeding, and the psychology of clothing.

This compilation draws on sources including nudist and mainstream publications, scholarly research, and my own thought. Some arguments are stronger than others. Taken as a whole, I think they make a compelling case in favor of Naturism. They support a perspective that sees the human body as complete and good in and of itself, regardless of how--or whether--it is adorned. They support an honest, open, and accepting attitude toward the human body, a perspective that is physically, mentally, and spiritually healing, socially constructive, and thoroughly freeing.

This compilation is by no means complete or comprehensive. All ideas, suggestions, comments, corrections, additions, references, and insights are welcome! Many of these quotes and ideas are taken from other sources or excerpted from larger works. An extensive bibliography and endnotes are included at the end of the document, and I strongly encourage anyone who is interested to refer to the original sources for more information.

These ideas should be shared freely. Every mother concerned about "family values" should know about the extensive scientific research demonstrating the positive benefits of nudism for children. Every woman concerned about pornography should know how strongly the philosophy and practice of Naturism repudiates the objectification of women's bodies. Every lawmaker concerned about honoring the original intent of our nation's founders should know that many of them were unabashed skinnydippers. Christians concerned about upholding sexual morality should know that the earliest Church leaders accepted nudity as a natural part of life, and not in the least inconsistent with the teachings of Christ. The world-weary businessman in his urban office and three-piece suit should know how relaxing and therapeutic a weekend at a nudist park can be. The mother on the beach with sand in her swimming suit should know that there are places in the world where she may enjoy the feeling of sun and water on her body without attracting unwanted attention.

It is my hope that this document may help you to share this good news, and to speak articulately about the native goodness of the human body in its natural state.

Nudity is often more comfortable and practical than clothing.

1. There are times when clothing is physically uncomfortable. Nudity, on the other hand, is often much *more* comfortable.
2. For many activities, nudity is often far more *practical* than clothing.

Bernard Rudofsky writes: "The custom of wearing a bathing suit, a desperate attempt to recapture some of our lost innocence, represents a graphic expression of white man's hypocrisy. For, obviously, the bathing suit is irrelevant to any activity in and under water. It neither keeps us dry or warm, nor is it an aid to swimming. If the purpose of bathing is to get wet, the bathing suit does not make us wetter. At best, it is a social dress, like the dinner jacket." Yet Americans spend \$900,000,000 each year on bathing costumes.

3. Clothing also restricts movement, and encumbers the athlete. Studies done by the West German Olympic swim team showed that even swimsuits slow down a swimmer.

Naturism promotes mental health.

4. A nudist is not a body *lacking* something (that is, clothing). Rather, a clothed person is a whole and complete naked body, *plus* clothes.

5. Many psychologists say that clothing is an extension of ourselves. The clothes we wear are an expression of who we are. The Naturist's comfort with casual nudity, therefore, represents an attitude which is comfortable with the self as it is in its most basic state, without modification or deceit.

6. Clothes-compulsiveness creates insecurity about one's body. Studies show that nudism, on the other hand, promotes a positive body self-concept.

These effects are especially significant for women. Studies by Daniel DeGoede in 1984 confirmed research done 16 years earlier, which established that "of all the groups measured (nudist males, non-nudist males, nudist females, and non-nudist females), the nudist females scored highest on body concept, and the non-nudist females scored lowest."

7. Nudism promotes wholeness of body, rather than setting aside parts of the body as unwholesome and shameful.

8. Clothes-compulsiveness locks us into a constant battle between individuality and conformity of dress. Nudity frees us from this anxiety, by fostering a climate of comfortable individuality without pretense.

9. The practice of nudism is, for nudists, an immensely freeing experience. In freeing oneself to be nude in the presence of others, including members of the other sex, the nudist also gives up all the social baggage that goes along with the nudity taboo.

The North American Guide to Nude Recreation notes that "one reason why a nude lifestyle is so refreshing is that it delivers us temporarily from the game of clothes. It's hard to imagine how much clothing contributes to the grip of daily tensions until we see what it's like to socialize without them. Clothing locks us into a collective unreality that prescribes complex responses to social status, roles and expected behaviors. In shedding our daily 'uniforms,' we also shed a weighty burden of anxieties. For a while, at least, we don't have to play the endless charade of projected images we call 'daily life.' . . . For once in your life you are part of a situation where age, occupation and social status don't really count for much. You'll find yourself relating more on the basis of who you really are instead of who your clothes say you are." This analysis is borne out by experience.

10. The sense of "freedom" that comes from the nudist experience is consistently rated by nudists as one of the main reasons they stay in it.

11. Nudism, by freeing the body, helps free the mind and spirit. An irrational clothes-compulsiveness may inhibit psychological growth and health.

Dr. Robert Henley Woody writes, "fear of revealing one's body is a defense. To keep clothing on at all times when it is unnecessary for social protocol or physical comfort is to armour oneself in a manner that will block new behaviors that could introduce more healthful and rewarding alternatives; and promote psychological growth."

12. The nudist, literally, has nothing to hide. He or she therefore has less stress, a fact supported by research.

In the words of Paul Ableman: "Removing your clothes symbolizes 'taking off' civilization and its cares. The nudist is stripped not only of garments but of the need to 'dress a part,' of form and display, of ceremony and all the constraints of a complex etiquette. . . . Further than this, the nudist symbolically takes off a great burden of responsibility. By taking off his clothes, he takes off the pressing issues of his day. For the time being, he is no longer committed to causes, opposed to this or that trend, in short a citizen. He becomes . . . a free being once more."

13. Clothing hides the natural diversity of human body shapes and sizes. When people are never exposed to nudity, they grow up with misunderstandings and unrealistic expectations about the body based on biased or misinformed sources--for instance, from advertising or mass media.

As a result, breast augmentation has long been the leading form of cosmetic surgery in the U.S. In the 1980s, American women had more than 100,000 operations per year to alter their breasts. Helen Gurley Brown, past editor of *Cosmopolitan*, says, "I don't think 80 percent of the women in this country have any idea what other women's bosoms look like. They have this idealized idea of how other people's bosoms are. . . . My God, isn't it ridiculous to be an emancipated woman and not really know what a woman's body looks like except your own?" Paul Fussell notes, by contrast, that "a little time spent on Naturist beaches will persuade most women that their breasts and hips are not, as they may think when alone, appalled by their mirrors, 'abnormal,' but quite natural, 'abnormal' ones belonging entirely to the nonexistent creatures depicted in ideal painting and sculpture. The same with men: if you think nature has been unfair to you in the sexual anatomy sweepstakes, spend some time among the Naturists. You will learn that every man looks roughly the same--quite small, that is, and that heroic fixtures are not just extremely rare, they are deformities."

14. Clothing hides and therefore creates mystery and ignorance about natural body processes, such as pregnancy, adolescence, and aging. Children (and even adults) who grow up in a nudist environment have far less anxiety about these natural processes than those who are never exposed to them.

Margaret Mead writes, "clothes separate us from our own bodies as well as from the bodies of others. The more society . . . muffles the human body in clothes . . . camouflages pregnancy . . . and hides breastfeeding, the more individual and bizarre will be the child's attempts to understand, to piece together a very imperfect knowledge of the life-cycle of the two sexes and an understanding of the particular state of maturity of his or her body."

Some observations on the nature of modesty.

15. Children are not born with any shame about nudity. They *learn* to be ashamed of their own nudity.

16. Shame, with respect to nudity, is relative to individual situations and customs, not absolute.

For example, an Arab woman, encountered in a state of undress, will cover her face, not her body; she bares her breasts without embarrassment, but believes the sight of the back of her

head to be still more indecent than exposure of her face. (James Laver notes that "an Arab peasant woman caught in the fields without her veil will throw her skirt over her head, thereby exposing what, to the Western mind, is a much more embarrassing part of her anatomy.") In early Palestine, women were obliged to keep their heads covered; for a woman, to be surprised outside the house without a head-covering was a sufficient reason for divorce. In pre-revolutionary China it was shameful for a woman to show her foot, and in Japan, the back of her neck. In 18th-century France, while deep décolletage was common, it was improper to expose the point of the shoulder. Herr Surén, writing in 1924, noted that Turkish women veiled their faces, Chinese women hid their feet, Arab women covered the backs of their heads, and Filipino women considered only the navel indecent.

The relative nature of shame is acknowledged by Pope John Paul II. "There is a certain relativism in the definition of what is shameless," he writes. "This relativism may be due to differences in the makeup of particular persons . . . or to different 'world views.' It may equally be due to differences in external conditions--in climate for instance . . . and also in prevailing customs, social habits, etc. . . . In this matter there is no exact similarity in the behavior of particular people, even if they live in the same age and the same society. . . . Dress is always a social question."

17. The dominant idea that clothing is necessary for reasons of modesty is a cultural assumption. It is an assumption that is not shared by all cultures, nor by all members of our own culture.

18. There is evidence that modesty is not related to nakedness at all, but is rather a response to appearing different from the rest of the social group--for instance, outside the accepted habits of clothing or adornment.

For example, indigenous tribes naked except for ear and lip plugs feel immodest when the plugs are removed, not when their bodies are exposed. Likewise, a woman feels immodest if seen in her slip, even though it's far less revealing than her bikini. This also explains why clothed visitors to nudist parks feel uncomfortable in their state of dress. Psychologist Emery S. Bogardus writes: "Nakedness is never shameful when it is unconscious, that is, when there is no consciousness of a difference between fact and the rule set by the mores." In other words, for first-time visitors to a nudist park, there is no hint of embarrassment after an initial reticence, because it is not contrary to the moral norms.

19. Shame comes from being outside mores, not from specific actions or conditions. Because nudity is unremarkable in a nudist setting, nudists may even forget that they are nude--and often do.

20. Psychological studies have shown that modesty need not be related to one's state of dress at all. For the nudist, modesty is not shed with one's clothes; it merely takes a different form.

Psychological studies by Martin Weinberg concluded that the basic difference between nudists and non-nudists lies in their differently-constructed definitions of the situation. It isn't that nudists are immodest, for, like non-nudists, they have norms to regulate and control immorality, sexuality, and embarrassment. Nudists merely accept the human body as natural, rather than as a source of embarrassment.

21. Many indigenous tribes go completely naked without shame, even today. It is only through extended contact with the "modern" world that they learn to be "modest."

Paul Ableman writes: "The missionaries were usually disconcerted to find that the biblically recommended act of 'clothing the naked', far from producing an improvement in native morals, almost always resulted in a deterioration. What the missionaries were inadvertently doing was recreating the Garden of Eden situation. Naked, the primitive cultures had shown no prurient concern with the body. . . . the morality was normally geared to the naked state of the culture. The missionaries, with their cotton shorts and dresses, disrupted this. Naked people actually feel shame when they are first dressed. They develop an exaggerated awareness of the body. It is as if Adam and Eve's 'aprons' generated the 'knowledge of good and evil' rather than being its consequence."

Many Amazon rainforest people still live clothing-optional by choice, even given an alternative. The same is true of the aborigines of central Australia.

22. Even in North America, nudity was commonplace among many indigenous tribes prior to the arrival of Europeans.

Lewis and Clark reported nearly-naked natives along the northern Pacific coast, for example, as did visitors to California. Father Louis Hennepin in 1698 reported of Milwaukee-area Illinois Indians, "They go stark naked in Summer-time, wearing only a kind of Shoes made of the Skins of [buffalo] Bulls." He described several other North American tribes as also generally living without clothes. The natives of Florida wore only breechclouts and sashes of Spanish moss, which they removed while hunting or gardening. Columbus wrote of the Indians he encountered in the Caribbean in 1492, "They all go around as naked as their mothers bore them; and also the women." The Polynesian natives of Hawaii wore little clothing, and none at all at the shore or in the water, until the arrival of Christian missionaries with Captain Cook in 1776.

23. For some indigenous tribes, nudity or near-nudity is an *essential* part of their culture.

Paul Ableman explains, "very few primitives are totally naked. They almost always have ornamentation or body-modification of some kind, which plays a central role in their culture. . . . Into this simple but successful culture comes the missionary, and obliterates the key signs beneath his cheap Western clothing. Among many primitives, tattooing, scarification and ornamentation convey highly elaborate information which may, in fact, be the central regulatory force in the society. The missionary thus, at one blow, annihilates a culture. It was probably no less traumatic for a primitive society to be suddenly clothed than it would be for ours to be suddenly stripped naked."

24. Yet missionaries have consistently sought to impose their own concepts of "decency" on other cultures, ignoring the elaborate cultural traditions regarding dress already in place.

Bernard Rudofsky writes: "People [in other cultures] who traditionally do not have much use for clothes are not amused by the missionary zeal that prompts us to press our notions of decency upon them while being insensitive or opposed to theirs." Julian Robinson adds: "Eighteenth and nineteenth century missionaries and colonial administrators were blissfully blind to their own religious, cultural and sexual prejudices, and to the symbolism of their own tribal adornments--their tight-laced corsets, powdered wigs, constricting shoes and styles of outer garments totally unsuited to colonial life. These missionaries and administrators nevertheless took it upon themselves to expunge all those 'pagan, barbaric and savage forms of body packaging' which did not conform to their body covering

standards. . . . Thus the social and symbolic significance of these traditional forms of body decoration which had evolved over countless generations were, in many cases, destroyed forever."

Russell Nansen records that "Henry Morton Stanley, the rescuer of David Livingstone in the Belgian Congo. . . . from 1847 to 1877 . . . wandered across Africa suffering every hardship but when he went back to England he made a notable speech to the Manchester Chamber of Commerce. He explained to the audience how many natives there were in the Congo, and the fact that they lived naked. He told the audience that their duty as Christians was to convert these misguided naked savages to Christianity and to the wearing of clothes. And when this missionary work had progressed sufficiently to convince the natives of the need for wearing clothes on Sunday, that would mean three hundred and twenty million yards of Manchester cotton cloth yearly. Instantly the audience rose to its feet and cheered him."

25. Most anthropologists consider modesty an unlikely reason for the development of clothes.

J.C. Flügel writes: "The great majority of scholars . . . have unhesitatingly regarded decoration as the motive that led, in the first place, to the adoption of clothing, and consider that the warmth- and modesty-preserving functions of dress, however important they might later on become, were only discovered once the wearing of clothes had become habitual for other reasons. . . . The anthropological evidence consists chiefly in the fact that among the most primitive races there exist unclothed but not undecorated peoples." Anthropologists agree nearly unanimously on this point.

26. Many psychologists and anthropologists believe that modesty about exposure of the body may well be a *result* of wearing clothes, rather than its cause.

27. It is interesting to note that it is only possible to be *immodest* once an accepted form of *modesty* has been established.

28. Modesty with respect to nudity is a social phenomenon, not biologically instinctive. This is evidenced by the fact that nudity is venerated in art.

Naturism promotes sexual health.

29. Nudity is not, by itself, erotic, and nudity in mixed groups is not inherently sexual. These are myths propagated by a clothes-obsessed society. Sexuality is a matter of intent rather than state of dress.

In our culture, a person who exposes their sexual parts for any reason is considered to be an exhibitionist. It is assumed that they stripped to attract attention and cause a sexual reaction in others. This is seen as a perversion. Hypocritically, if someone *dresses* specifically to arouse sexual interest, they are considered to have pride in their appearance. Even if they get great sexual gratification out of the attention others give, there is no suggestion of perversion or sexual fixation.

30. Nudists, as a group, are healthier sexually than the general population.

Nudists are, as a rule, far more comfortable with their bodies than the general public, and this contributes to a more relaxed and comfortable attitude toward sexuality in general.

31. Sexual satisfaction in married couples shows a correlation to their degree of comfort with nudity.

32. Studies show significantly less incidence of casual premarital and extramarital sex, group sex, incest, and rape among nudists than among non-nudists.

33. Studies have demonstrated that countries with fewer hangups about nudity have lower teen pregnancy and abortion rates.

34. Clothes enhance sexual mystery and the potential for unhealthy sexual fantasies.

Photographer Jock Sturges says, "our arbitrary demarcations [between clothing and nudity, sexual and asexual] serve more to confound our collective sexual identity than to further our social progress. America sells everything with sex and then recoils when presented with the realities of natural process." C. Willet Cunnington writes: "We have to thank the Early Fathers for having, albeit unwillingly, established a mode of thinking from which men and women have developed an art which has supplied . . . so many novel means of exciting the sexual appetite. Prudery, it seems, provides mankind with endless aphrodisiacs, hence, no doubt, the reluctance to abandon it."

35. Clothing focuses attention on sexuality, not away from it; and in fact often enhances immature forms of sexuality, rather than promoting healthy body acceptance.

36. Complete nudity is antithetic to the elaborate semi-pornography of the fashion industry.

Julian Robinson observes, "modesty is so intertwined with sexual desire and the need for sexual display--fighting but at the same time re-kindling this desire--that a self-perpetuating process is inevitably set in motion. In fact modesty can never really attain its ultimate end except through its disappearance. Hiding under the cloak of modesty there are to be found many essential components of the sexual urge itself."

37. Clothing often focuses attention on the genitals and sexual arousal, rather than away from them.

At various times in Western history different parts of female anatomy have been eroticized: bellies and thighs in the Renaissance; buttocks, breasts, and thighs by the late 1800s (and relatively diminutive waists and bellies). Underwear design has historically emphasized these erogenous body parts: corsets in the 1800s de-emphasized the midriff and emphasized the breasts--using materials including whalebone and steel; the crinoline in the mid 1800s emphasized the waist; and the bustle, appearing in 1868, emphasized the buttocks. Bathing suit design today focuses attention on the breasts and pubic region.

E.B. Hurlock writes: "When primitive peoples are unaccustomed to wearing clothing, putting it on for the first time does not decrease their immorality, as the ladies of missionary societies think it will. It has just the opposite effect. It draws attention to the body, especially for those parts of it which are covered for the first time." Rob Boyte notes wryly that "textile people, when they do strip in front of others, usually do it for passion, and find the bikini pattern tan-lines attractive. This is reminiscent of the scarification practiced by primitive societies, and shows how clothing patterns become a fetish of the body." Havelock Ellis writes: "If the conquest of sexual desire were the first and last consideration of life it would be more reasonable to prohibit clothing than to prohibit nakedness."

38. The fashion industry depends on the sex appeal of clothing.

Peter Fryer writes: "The changes in women's fashions are basically determined by the need to maintain men's sexual interest, and therefore to transfer the primary zone of erotic display once a given part of the body has been saturated with attractive power to the point of satiation. . . . Each new fashion seeks to arouse interest in a new erogenous zone to replace the zone which, for the time being, is played out."

39. Differences of clothing between the sexes focus attention on sex differences.

Psychologist J.C. Flügel writes: "There seems to be (especially in modern life) no essential factor in the nature, habits, or functions of the two sexes that would necessitate a striking difference of costume--other than the desire to accentuate sex differences themselves; an accentuation that chiefly serves the end of more easily and frequently arousing sexual passion."

40. Many psychologists believe that clothing may originally have developed, in part, as a means of focusing sexual attention.**41. Partial clothing is more sexually stimulating (in often unhealthy ways) than full nudity.**

Anne Hollander writes: "The more significant clothing is, the more meaning attaches to its absence and the more awareness is generated about any relation between the two states." Elizabeth B. Hurlock notes that "it is unquestionably a well-known fact that familiar things arouse no curiosity, while concealment lends enchantment and stimulates curiosity . . . a draped figure with just enough covering to suggest the outline, is far more alluring than a totally naked body." And Lee Baxandall observes, "the 'almost'-nude beaches, where bikinis and thongs are paraded, are more sexually titillating than a clothes-optional resort or beach. What is natural is more fulfilling, though it may not fit the tantalize-and-deliver titillation of our consumer culture."

42. Modesty--especially *enforced* modesty--only *adds* to sexual interest and desire.

Reena Glazer writes: "Women's breasts are sexually stimulating to (heterosexual) men, at least in part because they are publicly inaccessible; society further eroticizes the female breast by tagging it shameful to expose. . . . This element of the forbidden merely perpetuates the intense male reaction female exposure allegedly inspires."

43. Topfree inequality (requiring women, but not men, to wear tops) produces an unhealthy obsession with breasts as sexual objects.**44. The identification of breasts as sexual objects in our culture has led to the discouragement of breast-feeding, the encouragement of unnecessary cosmetic surgery for breast augmentation, and avoidance of necessary breast examinations by women.**

Sydney Ross Singer and Soma Grismaijer write: "When a woman learns to treat her breasts as objects that enhance appearance, they belong not to the woman, but to her viewers. Thus, a woman becomes alienated from her own body."

45. Naturism is the antithesis of pornography.

Nudity is often confused with pornography in our society because the pornography industry has so successfully exploited it. In other words, nudity is often damned as exploitative precisely because its repression causes many to exploit it.

46. Pornography has been defined as an attempt to exert power over nature. In most cases in our culture, it manifests itself as an expression of sexual power by men over women. Naturism, by contrast, seeks to coexist with nature and with each other, and to accept each other and the natural world in our most natural states.

47. Non-acceptance and repression of nudity fuels pornography by teaching that any form and degree of nudity is inherently sexual and pornographic.

In the words of activist Melissa Farley, "pornography is the antithesis of freedom for women. . . . to treat the human body as anything less than normal and beautiful is to promote puritanism and pornography. If the human body is accepted by society as normal, the pornographers won't be able to market it."

48. Naturism is innocent, casual, non-exploitative, and non-commercial (and yet is often suppressed); as opposed to pornography, which is commercialized and sensationalized (and generally tolerated).

In some American communities it is illegal for a woman to publicly bare her breasts in order to feed an infant, but it is legal to display Penthouse on drug-store magazine racks.

49. Many psychologists believe that repression of a healthy sexuality leads to a greater capacity for, and tendency toward, violence.

Paul Ableman writes: "We have divorced ourselves from our instincts so conclusively that we are now menaced by their perverted expression. The blocked erotic instinct turns into destructiveness and, in our age, many thinkers have perceived that some of the most ghastly manifestations of human culture are fueled by recycled eroticism. Channelled into pure cerebration, the sexual instinct may generate nightmares impossible in the animal world. Animals are casually cruel and are usually, not always, indifferent to the pain of other animals. Animals kill for food or, rarely, for sport but they do not torture, gloat over pain or exterminate. We do. What's more, we can tolerate our own ferocity. What we cannot tolerate is our own sexuality."

Thus extreme violence is tolerated even on television, while the merest glimpse of sexual anatomy, however innocent, is enough to cause movie ratings to jump.

Naturism promotes physical health.

50. Clothing limits or defeats many of the natural purposes of skin: for example, repelling moisture, drying quickly, breathing, protecting without impeding performance, and especially sensing one's environment.

C. W. Saleeby writes: "This admirable organ, the natural clothing of the body, which grows continually throughout life, which has at least four absolutely distinct sets of sensory nerves distributed to it, which is essential in the regulation of the temperature, which is waterproof from without inwards, but allows the excretory sweat to escape freely, which, when

unbroken, is microbe-proof, and which can readily absorb sunlight--this most beautiful, versatile, and wonderful organ is, for the most part, smothered, blanched, and blinded in clothes and can only gradually be restored to the air and light which are its natural surroundings. Then, and only then, we learn what it is capable of."

51. Exposure to the sun, without going overboard, promotes general health.

Research suggests that solar exposure triggers the body's synthesis of Vitamin D, vital for (among other things) calcium absorption and a strong immune system. Exposure to the sun is especially essential for the growth of strong bones in young children.

52. Recent research has suggested an inverse relationship between solar exposure and osteoporosis, colon cancer, breast cancer, and even the most deadly form of skin cancer, malignant melanoma.

53. An obsessive sense of modesty about the body often correlates with a reluctance to share healthy forms of touch with others.

Research has increasingly linked touch-deprivation, especially during childhood and adolescence, to depression, violence, sexual inhibition, and other antisocial behaviors. Research has also shown that people who are physically cold toward adolescents produce hostile, aggressive, and often violent offspring. On the other hand, children brought up in families where the members touch each other are healthier, better able to withstand pain and infection, more sociable, and generally happier than families that don't share touch.

54. Tight clothing may cause health problems by restricting the natural flow of blood and lymphatic fluid.

Recent research by Sydney Ross Singer and Soma Grismaijer demonstrated that women who wear bras more than twelve hours per day, but not to bed, are 21 times more likely to get breast cancer than those who wear bras less than twelve hours per day. Those who wear bras even to bed are 125 times more likely to get breast cancer than those who don't wear bras at all. Testicular cancer, similarly, has been linked to tight briefs. The theory is that tight clothing impedes the lymph system, which removes cancer-causing toxins from the body.

55. Clothing can harbor disease-causing bacteria and yeast (especially underclothing and athletic clothing).

56. Medical research has linked clothing to an increased susceptibility to bites and stings by animals such as ticks and sea lice, which hide in or get trapped in clothing.

57. Clothing fashions throughout history, especially for women, have often been damaging to physical and psychological health.

For instance, the wearing of corsets led to numerous physical ailments in women in the late 19th century. Men and women both suffered through many ages of history under hot, burdensome layers of clothing in the name of fashion. Footwear has been especially notorious for resisting reason and comfort in the name of fashion.

58. The idea that clothing is necessary for support of the genitals or breasts is often

unwarranted.

For example, research shows that the choice of wearing a bra or not has no bearing on the tendency of a woman's breasts to "droop" as she ages. Deborah Franklin writes: "Still, the myth that daily, lifelong bra wearing is crucial to preserving curves persists, along with other misguided notions about that fetching bit of binding left over from the days when a wasp waist defined the contours of a woman's power." Christine Haycock, of the New Jersey Medical School, says that while exercising without a bra may be uncomfortable for large-breasted women, "it's not doing any lasting damage to chest muscles or breast tissue." In fact, given the tendency of sports bras to squash breasts against the rib cage, her research concluded that "those who wore an A cup were frequently most comfortable with no bra at all." Complete nudity presents no difficulties for conditioned male athletes, either; and thus the athletes of ancient Athens had no trouble performing entirely in the nude.

59. Clothing hides the natural beauty of the human body, as created by God.

In the words of Michelangelo: "What spirit is so empty and blind, that it cannot grasp the fact that the human foot is more noble than the shoe and human skin more beautiful than the garment with which it is clothed?"

60. Clothing makes people look older, and emphasizes rather than hides unflattering body characteristics.

Paul Fussell writes: "Nude, older people look younger, especially when very tan, and younger people look even younger. . . . In addition fat people look far less offensive naked than clothed. Clothes, you realize, have the effect of sausage casings, severely defining and advertising the shape of what they contain, pulling it all into an unnatural form which couldn't fool anyone. . . . The beginning Naturist doesn't take long to master the paradox that it is stockings that make varicose veins noticeable, belts that call attention to forty-eight-inch waists, brassieres that emphasize sagging breasts."

61. Clothing harbors and encourages the growth of odor-causing bacteria.

Naturism is socially constructive.

62. Naturism is a socially constructive philosophy.

As defined by the International Naturist Federation, "Naturism is a way of life in harmony with nature characterized by the practice of communal nudity, with the intention of encouraging self-respect, respect for others and for the environment."

63. Naturism, by philosophy, is tolerant of others and their differences. It expects only the same in return.

Naturism rejects obstreperous, provocative nudity--but because it is anti-social effrontery and disorderly conduct, not because it is nudity.

64. Nudity promotes social equality, feelings of unity with others, and more relaxed social interaction in general. As mentioned earlier, clothing locks us into a collective unreality that prescribes complex responses to social status, roles and expected behaviors. As the artificial barrier of clothing is done away with, social class and status disappear. People begin to relate

to each other as they are, and not as they seem to be.

This is a phenomenon that is intimately familiar to the Finnish people. L.M. Edelsward writes: "People can relax in the sauna in a way that is difficult to do in other contexts and with others than one's family, for here the tensions associated with maintaining one's social mask disappear. . . . Without their social masks, sauna bathers are able to meet others not in terms of their social personas, but in terms of their inner personalities. . . . Sweating together in the sauna, removed from the impinging demands of ordinary life, Finns can be the people they 'really' are, and can recreate their relationships with others as they ideally should be--open, equal, and trusting. . . . Sweating together in the sauna, stripped of all symbols of rank, wealth or prestige, all are equal; distance and respect become openness and sincerity."

65. Naturists tend to be especially accepting of other people, just as they are. This is an attitude that is undoubtedly related to the fact that Naturists are generally more accepting of their own bodies, just as they are, than the general public.

66. Socially and demographically, nudists are almost exactly like the rest of the population, except that they are tolerant of nudity. There are few other trends, social or psychological, positive or negative, that correlate to a statistically significant degree with nudists as a demographic group.

67. Naturism rejects blind conformity to cultural mores and assumptions about the body, which see clothing as a constant necessity, in favor of a more reasoned, rational approach which recognizes the need for clothing to be dependent on context.

68. For Americans, non-acceptance and sexualization of their own nudity encourages a biased or racist attitude contrasting "clothed civilization" against the "naked savage."

Rob Boyte asks, "Why is it permissible [in *National Geographic*] to show the penis and scrotum of an African Surma (Feb. 91) or a Brazilian Urueu-Wau Wau (Dec. 88) but not a Yugoslav Naturist in his natural setting? Why are photographs of breasts on Nuba (Feb. 51, Nov. 66), Zulu (Aug. 53), Dyak (May 56), Masai (Feb. 65), Yap Island (May 67, Oct. 86), Turkana (Feb. 69), Adama Islands (July 75), New Guinea (Aug. 82), Woodabe (Oct. 83), Ndebele (Feb. 69), and Surma (Feb. 91) women shown, yet not one white Canadian can be found to face the camera at Wreck Beach? Why are the breasts shown of Josephine Baker (July 89), a black native of East St. Louis, but the breasts of white native women of Miami Beach are not shown? The unanswered question implies but one conclusion: that the *National Geographic* has in fact a Eurocentric bias (racist) in portraying nudity."

Jeremy Seabrook writes: "The absence of self-consciousness is not some natural 'primitive' impulse to acknowledge the universal truth that sex is the centre of their world. . . . The nakedness of tradition speaks of a social order in which sex, although not denied, has its place in the totality of living and growing things; it speaks of another ordering of the world, one that is a reproach to, and denial of, those nude westerners [vacationing on nude beaches far from home], although at the same time, is dismissed, marginalised, not taken seriously by them."

Naturism is healthy for the family.

69. True nudists emphasize a decent, *family* atmosphere and morality.

70. Research shows that children who grow up in a nudist setting tend to be more self-confident, more self-accepting, and more sexually well-adjusted. They feel better about their bodies, and more comfortable with their sexuality.

Research conducted at the University of Northern Iowa found that nudist children had body self-concepts that were significantly more positive than those of non-nudist children--and that the "nudity classification" of a family was one of the most significant factors associated with positive body self-concept. Furthermore, nudist children showed a significantly higher acceptance of their bodies as a whole, rather than feeling ashamed of certain parts. A study by psychologists Robin Lewis and Louis Janda at Old Damien University reported that "increased exposure to nudity in the family fosters an atmosphere of acceptance of sexuality and one's body." They concluded that children who had seen their parents nude were more comfortable with physical contact and affection, had higher self-esteem, and showed increased acceptance of and comfort with their bodies and their sexuality. Research by Marie-Louise Booth at the California School of Professional Psychology found that "individuals with less childhood exposure to parental nudity experienced significantly higher levels of adult sexual anxiety than did the group with more childhood exposure to parental nudity." Separate research by Diane Lee Wilson at The Wright Institute reached the same conclusion. Research by Lou Lieberman of the State University of New York at Albany, in the late 1960s, found that "those young people who had casually seen both of their parents nude in the home were far more likely to feel comfortable with their bodies and to also feel more satisfied with the size and shape of their genitalia and breasts."

71. In general, "experts" such as Joyce Brothers and Dr. Spock speak out against family nudity without empirical evidence to back them up. When research is actually done, it contradicts their dire warnings.

In several years of research at major national research libraries, I have yet to come across a scientific study which contradicts the premise that openness about nudity is healthy for children.

72. Most commentators say that it's the context in which family nudity takes place, not the nudity itself, that determines whether it's problematic. Children respond far more to parents' *attitudes* toward nudity than to the nudity itself, and nudity is only a problem when it is treated as one.

73. Many psychologists argue that the implicit message conveyed by a lack of nudity in the home is that the body is basically unacceptable or shameful--an attitude which may carry over into discomfort about nudity in the context of adult sexual relationships.

74. Children of "primitive" tribes, surrounded by nudity of all forms, suffer no ill effects. Neither do children who grow up in other societies which are more open about nudity than our own. Presumptions that exposure to nudity will lead to problems for children grow out of the preconceptions of our culture.

Paul Ableman writes: "It is interesting to speculate as to what kind of model of the human mind Sigmund Freud would have constructed if he had based it not on clothed Europeans but on, say, a study of the naked Nuer of the Sudan. Almost all the processes which he discerns as formative for the adult mind would have been lacking. Freud assumes that children will not normally see each other naked and that, if they do happen to, the result will be traumatic. This is not true of naked cultures. . . . Thus great provinces of Freud's

mind-empire would simply be missing. There would be no Oedipus complex (or not much, anyway), no penis envy or castration complex, probably no clear-cut phases of sexual development. We are emerging rapidly from the era of Freudian gospel . . . and can now perceive the extent to which he himself was the victim of prevailing ideas and prejudices."

75. Children who grow up in a nudist environment witness the natural body changes brought on by adolescence, pregnancy, and aging. They have far less anxiety about these natural processes than children who are never exposed to them except through layers of clothing.

76. Research has demonstrated that countries with fewer reservations about nudity (and sexuality in general) also have lower teen pregnancy and abortion rates.

A 1985 study by the Guttmacher Institute found rates of pregnancy and abortion among teenage girls in America to be more than twice those of Canada, France, Sweden, England, and The Netherlands. The disparity couldn't be explained by differences in sexual activity, race, welfare policies, or the availability of abortion, but only in cultural attitudes toward nudity and sexuality. The study found American youth to be particularly ignorant of biology and sexuality, partly due to a climate of moral disapproval for seeking such knowledge. It found that lower levels of unwanted pregnancy correlated with factors such as the amount of female nudity presented by public media and the extent of nudity on public beaches.

77. Clothes-compulsion intimidates millions of mothers from breast-feeding their children, even though breast-feeding is healthier and often more convenient for both the child and the mother.

In the U.S., barely half of all mothers breast-feed; only 20% do so for a full 6 months, and only 6% for the Surgeon General's recommended 12 months. Breast-feeding is also declining in developing countries.

Gabrielle Palmer writes: "In Victorian England, famous for its prudery, a respectable woman could feed openly in church, yet in contemporary industrialized society where women's bodies and particularly breasts are used to sell newspapers, cars and peanuts, public breast-feeding provokes cries of protest from both men and women." Lisa Demauro notes that "our society is far more at home with the idea of sexy breasts than functional ones." "Millions of boys and girls have grown up never having seen a mother breast-feeding her baby," adds Marsha Pearlman, the Florida Health Department coordinator for breast-feeding. "This is a sad commentary on our culture."

Naturism is especially consistent with feminism and the struggle for women's freedom.

78. The repression of healthy nudity, especially for females, has been one of the chief means of mind and destiny control by the patriarchy. Breaking this pattern shatters the invisible bonds of an inherited sex role.

79. Limitations on women's nudity, an acceptance of pornography, and demanding fashion requirements may, individually, seem like minor issues. Taken as a whole, however, they form a pattern of repressive male-oriented expectations.

Marilyn Frye explains: "Consider a birdcage. If you look very closely at just one wire in the cage, you cannot see the other wires. If your conception of what is before you is determined

by this myopic focus, you could look at that one wire, up and down the length of it, and be unable to see why a bird would not just fly around the wire any time it wanted to go somewhere. . . . There is no physical property of any one wire, nothing that the closest scrutiny could rediscover, that will reveal how a bird could be inhibited or harmed by it except in the most accidental way. It is only when you step back, stop looking at the wires one by one, microscopically, and take a macroscopic view of the whole cage, that you can see why the bird does not go anywhere; and then you will see it in a moment. It will require no great subtlety of mental powers. It is perfectly obvious that the bird is surrounded by a network of systematically related barriers, no one of which would be the least hindrance to its flight, but which, by their relations to each other, are as confining as the solid walls of a dungeon."

80. Topfree inequality (requiring women, but not men, to wear tops) is demeaning and discriminatory toward women, and reinforces patterns of male domination over women.

In our culture, breasts may be exposed to sell drinks to men in bars, but women may not be topfree on a beach for their own comfort and pleasure. Reena Glazer writes: "The criminalization of women baring their breasts, therefore, indicates that society views women's bodies as immoral and something to hide. There is something potentially criminal about every woman just by virtue of being female."

Herald Price Fahringer writes, "men have the right to cover or expose their chests as they see fit--women do not. Men have the right to enjoy the sun, water, and wind without a top; women do not. Few men would be willing to give up this right. Then why shouldn't women enjoy the same advantage? . . . Requiring women to cover their breasts in public is a highly visible expression of inequality between men and women that promotes an attitude that demeans women and damages their sense of equality. . . . For centuries, men have held the power to generate these misconceptions. The male view on the exposure of a woman's breasts is crucially influenced by the need of men to define women. . . . This reaction stems from a masculine ideology that has . . . doomed generations of women to a secondary status."

Raymond Grueneich writes: "So what is really at stake is whether women will be free to bare their own breasts in appropriate public places for their own personal purposes on these occasions in which they feel free to do so, or whether they will only be allowed to bare their breasts in public on an occasion that can be exploited commercially and that reinforces the idea that the sole function of the female breast is for the satisfaction of male fantasy. It is as though it is a crime for a woman to be undressed in public, unless she was undressed in the service of a corporation or a commercial entrepreneur."

81. Laws banning exposure of female breasts do so in part because of the reaction such exposure would supposedly cause in men. Such laws are written entirely from the male point of view, and ignore the point of view of women, who may want to go topfree for their own comfort.

82. By refusing to accept the need to "protect" themselves from men by covering their bodies, women gain power, and shift the burden of responsible behavior to men, where it rightfully belongs.

Reena Glazer notes that "male power is perpetuated by regarding women as objects that men act and react to rather than as actors themselves. . . . their entire worth is derived from the reaction they can induce from men. In order to maintain the patriarchal system, men

must determine when and where this arousal is allowed to take place. In this way, the (heterosexual) male myth of a woman's breasts has been codified into law. Because women are the sexual objects and property of men, it follows that what might arouse men can only be displayed when men want to be aroused." This emphasis on women as temptresses "shifts the burden of responsibility from men to women; because women provoke uncontrollable urges in males, society excuses male behavior and blames the victim for whatever happens. . . . To sanction the concept that men have uncontrollable urges implies that violence against women is inevitable."

83. Patriarchal laws strip women of the right to control their own bodies, but there have always been "exceptions" to obscenity laws which permit the use of women's bodies in consumer seduction. Thus female nudity is considered inappropriate on the beach, but is ubiquitous in advertising and pornography.

84. By enforcing arbitrary clothing requirements for women (requiring them to cover their tops), the government acts *in loco parentis*, in the role of a parent. This is demeaning to women. Like children, they aren't conceded the ability or right to decide how to dress, much as they formerly weren't allowed to vote, own property, or exercise other rights.

85. The repression of healthy female nudity fuels pornography.

Herbert Muschamp observes: "To object to the nude figure in a general interest magazine while allowing it to remain in men's skin magazines is one way of keeping women in their place."

86. Pornography, in turn, limits women's ability to participate in healthy nude recreation, and to be casually nude in other ways. Naturism breaks the power of pornography over women.

As mentioned earlier, in many places it is legal to display Penthouse on drug-store magazine racks, yet it is illegal for a woman to publicly bare her breasts to feed an infant.

Pornography seeks "freedom," particularly "freedom of expression." But an acceptance of pornography restricts women's capacity to go topfree or nude for their own enjoyment. It limits the freedom to control their own bodies, and silences their own freedom of self-expression. Our pornographic culture has contributed to attitudes which often discourage women from even trying clothing-optional recreation, even though Naturism is in many ways the antithesis of pornography.

87. The fight for freedom should mean civil rights for women--not license for pornographers.

88. Clothing fashions and legal requirements have historically contributed to the repression of women.

For example, in the mid-nineteenth century, a tiny waist was considered a sign of beauty, and, in order to achieve this standard, women bound themselves into corsets designed to constrict the stomach (and other internal organs) inward and upward, creating the appearance of a tiny middle. In addition, women wore up to fifteen layers of petticoats and crinolines under their floor-length skirts. In the latter half of the century the wire hoop and spring-like bustle were also added for the appearance of fullness. The weight of this assemblage came close to 20 pounds. We now know that many of the physical characteristics

associated with the "frail sex" resulted from such restrictive clothing, including "bird-like" appetites, a tendency to fainting spells, and reduced physical activity. Thorstein Veblen has observed that "the corset is in economic theory substantially [an instrument of] mutilation for the purpose of lowering the subject's vitality and rendering her personally and obviously unfit for work." A variety of respiratory and reproductive ailments (including frequent miscarriages) from which women once suffered have been directly linked to the unhealthy dictates of the "hourglass" fashion. Many of the associations of female frailty which have their roots in the nineteenth century remain with us today, though they are now unsubstantiated.

Corsets and, in modern times, cosmetic breast surgery also damage the internal physiology of the breasts, often eliminating the capacity to breast-feed.

89. Naturism defies relationships based on a balance of power, and is thus consistent with contemporary feminism, which seeks to break down power hierarchies.

Naturism is more natural than clothes-compulsiveness.

90. Naturism, as a celebration of the natural human body free of the artificiality of fashion, is highly compatible with the ideals of a natural, simple, and environmentally friendly lifestyle.

91. As we work for the good of nature, we must also work for the good and the freedom of our bodies, especially as they may be integrated with the rest of nature.

As the Quebec Naturist Federation has observed, "Nature is not just the trees; it is also our bodies."

92. The goals of Naturism and environmentalism are often parallel. Like environmentalism, Naturism usually seeks to preserve the natural character of landscapes, and opposes development and commercial exploitation. The greatest risk to most beaches is not nudity, but development--the takeover of pristine public areas by private resorts or hotels.

93. One feels much more a part of a natural setting in the nude than clothed.

94. The nudist is far more sensually aware, because nudity enhances responsiveness and sensory experience.

95. Clothing cuts us off from the natural world, by inhibiting the skin's ability to sense the environment. It in fact distracts from our ability to sense the natural environment, by artificially irritating the skin.

Paul Ableman writes, "if primitives lost their culture [through being clothed by missionaries], they also lost their environment. They lost the sun, the rain, the grass underfoot, the foliage which brushed their skin as they moved through forest or jungle, the water of lake, river or sea slipping past their bodies, above all the ceaseless communion with the wind. Anyone who has ever spent any time naked outdoors knows that the play of the elements over the body produces an ever-changing response that may reach almost erotic intensity. The skin becomes alive and responsive and a whole new spectrum of sensation is generated. Clothe the body and this rich communion is replaced by mere fortuitous, and often irritating, contact with inert fabric. It is a huge impoverishment and its measure can perhaps best be judged by the reluctance of the Indians of Tierra del Fuego, who live in a

climate so harsh that Darwin observed snow melting on the naked breasts of women, to adopt protective clothing. They preferred dermal contact with the environment, hostile though it was, to the loss of sensation implied by wearing clothes."

96. Clothes-compulsiveness is incompatible with the natural patterns of nature, as expressed by every other member of the animal kingdom. Humans are the *only* species to clothe themselves.

97. Some psychologists theorize that humans developed clothing, in part, to set themselves *apart* from animals.

Fred Ilfeld and Roger Lauer write: "Man's major goal is superiority . . . and one way that he strives for it is through clothing. Not only do clothes protect and decorate, but they also give status to the wearer, not just with respect to peers but, more importantly, in relation to man's place in nature. Clothes make a human being appear less like an animal and more like a god by concealing his sexual organs." Lawrence Langner adds: "Modern man is a puritan and not a pagan, and by his clothing has been able to overcome his feeling of shame in relation to his sex organs in public, in mixed company. He has done this by transforming his basic inferiority into a feeling of superiority, by relating himself to God in whose sexless image he claims to be made. But take all his clothes off, and it is plain to see that he is half-god, half-animal. He is playing two opposing roles which contradict one another, and the result is confusion."

98. The physical barrier of clothing reinforces psychological barriers separating us from the natural world.

In our clothing-obsessed society, we have distanced ourselves so much from nature that the sight of our own natural state is often startling. Allen Ginsberg writes: "Truth may always surprise a little, because we are creatures of habit, especially in our hypermechanized, hyperindustrialized, hypermilitarized society. Any presentation of nature tends to appear shocking."

99. Lifestyles which are incompatible with the natural patterns of nature (including clothes-obsessiveness) may be psychological damaging.

Robert Bahr writes: "Nakedness is the natural state of humankind; clothing imposes a barrier between us and God, nature, the universe, which serves to dehumanize us all." "Paradoxically," muses Jeremy Seabrook, "the very presence of the westerners [on nude beaches] in the south is an expression of some absence in their everyday lives. After all, whole industries are now devoted to enabling people 'to get away from it all.' What is it, precisely, they want to get away from, when the iconography of their culture is promoted globally as the provider of everything? Many will admit they are looking for something not available at home (apart from sunshine), something to do with authenticity, a state of being 'unspoilt'. . . . They have been stripped of their cultural heritage; and this is why they have to buy back what ought to be the birthright of all human beings: secure anchorage in celebrations and rituals that attend the significant moments of our human lives."

100. A Naturist lifestyle is more environmentally responsible. For example, the option of going nude during hot, humid weather greatly reduces the need for air conditioning. Most air conditioners use tremendous amounts of energy, and many use coolants which are damaging to the stratospheric ozone layer.

101. Clothing is produced by environmentally irresponsible processes from environmentally irresponsible sources.

For instance, synthetics are developed from oil; and cotton is grown with intensive pesticide-loaded agricultural techniques. Cotton constitutes half of the world's textile consumption, and is one of the most pesticide-sprayed crops in the world. Clothing manufacture may also include chlorine bleaching, chemical dyeing, sealing with metallic compounds, finishing with resins and formaldehyde, and electroplating to rust-proof zippers, creating toxic residues in waste water.

Accepted clothing requirements are arbitrary and inconsistent.

102. Clothing standards are inconsistent.

For instance, a bikini covering is accepted and even lauded on the beach, but is restricted elsewhere--in a department store, for example. Even on the beach, an expensive bikini is considered acceptable, whereas underwear--though it covers the same amount--is not.

103. Clothing requirements are arbitrarily and irrationally based on gender.

Until the 1920s, for example, female ankles and shins were considered erotic in Western cultures, though men wore knickers. The Japanese considered the back of a woman's neck erotic, and contemporary Middle Eastern cultures hide the woman's face. During the 1991 Gulf War, female U.S. army personnel were forbidden from wearing t-shirts that bared their arms, since it would offend the Saudi Arabian allies. Women (but not men) were forced to wear full army dress in stifling heat.

104. Today in America, women's breasts are seen as erotic and unexposable, even though they are anatomically identical to those of men except for lactation capacity, and no more or less a sexual organ.

Medical experts note that men's breasts have the same erotic capacities as women's. In addition, studies suggest that women are as sexually attracted by men's unclothed chests as men are by women's.

105. The arbitrary nature of clothing requirements is reflected by different standards in different cultures.

For example, a review of 190 world societies in 1951 found that, contrary to the standards of our own culture, relatively few considered exposure of a women's breasts to be immodest. Julian Robinson observes, "few cultural groups agree as to which parts of our bodies should be covered and which parts should be openly displayed. . . . Indeed, many people find it difficult to comprehend the logic behind any other mode of clothing and adornment than what they are currently wearing, finding them all unnatural or even uncivilized. The thought of exposing or viewing those parts of the body which they generally keep covered so frightens or disgusts them that they call upon their lawmakers to protect them from such a possibility."

106. The arbitrary nature of clothing requirements is reflected by history. Even in the same culture, taboos about what parts of the body could or could not be revealed have changed

radically over time.

For example, until statutes were amended in the 1930s, men were arrested in the United States for swimming without a shirt. Many of the paintings and sculptures today considered "classic"--for example, Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*--were considered obscene in their day. The body taboo reached its height in mid 19th-century England and America, when it was considered improper to mention almost any detail of the human body in mixed company. Howard Warren writes: "A woman was allowed to have head and feet, but between the neck and ankles only the heart and stomach were permitted mention in polite society. To expose the ankle (even though properly stockinged) was considered immodest." On the other hand, in the early part of the 19th century, women's clothing fashions in France were so scant that an entire costume, including shoes, may not have weighed more than eight ounces. Lois M. Gurel writes: "One must remember that clothing itself is neither moral nor immoral. It is the breaking of traditions which makes it so."

The degree to which women's breasts may be exposed has varied especially in Western cultures. At various times in history, women's necklines have plunged so deeply that the breasts have been more exposed than covered. Historian Aileen Ribeiro notes that in the early 15th century, "women's gowns became increasingly tight-fitted over the bust, some gowns with front openings even revealing the nipples." Breasts came back on display throughout the early 17th century, and again in the 18th century, especially in the Court of King Charles II of England. Ironically, in this latter period, a respectable woman would never be found in public with the point of her shoulders revealed.

Naturism is growing in acceptance.

107. Most world societies are much more open about nudity than the United States. For example, many cultures, especially in Europe, are more open to nudity on beaches and in other recreational settings.

A 1995 poll conducted by a French fashion magazine found that only 7% of the population was shocked by the sight of naked breasts on the beach, and that 40% of women had tried going topfree. A 1983 poll found that 27% of French women went topfree on the beach on a regular basis, while another 6% went nude. A 1982 Harris poll found that 86% of French citizens favor nudity on public beaches. In Munich and Zurich, topfree and nude sunbathing are permitted in many parks. A Zurich municipal ordinance in 1989 officially accepted nudity in municipal pools after a public opinion poll found only 18% opposition. Two separate polls conducted in the mid-1980s found that 68% of Germans did not object to nude bathing. A 1983 public opinion survey in Greece found that 65% of the population favored legislative establishment of four official nudist facilities. A 1984 poll found that 82% of a cross section of Lisbon residents approved of nude beaches reserved for that purpose. In Denmark, judicious nudity is legal on the seashore except on a few specifically clothed beaches! Sweden's coastline is nearly as tolerant as Denmark's. Beach nudity has also become the norm in inflation-stricken Romania, where the average monthly wage is about \$65 and a swimsuit costs from \$4 to \$20. Saunas are ubiquitous in Finland, with a sauna for every 3.5 inhabitants, and are always used nude, commonly in mixed company.

108. Participation in nudist organizations is high in other parts of the world.

In Holland, 1 in 422 members of the population is a dues-paying nudist. In Switzerland, the number is 1 in 519; in France, 1 in 630; in Belgium, 1 in 890; in New Zealand, 1 in 1250; in

the U.K., 1 in 2784; in English-speaking Canada, 1 in 5200; and in the U.S., 1 in 6856. According to a French survey, one in ten members of the nation's population have tried nudism at least once, and an equal number are ready to give it a try.

109. Naturist vacations are a significant part of the tourist trade in many countries.

As of 1983, about 2 million people vacationed at French Naturist clubs and resorts each year. Before its devastating fragmentation and civil war, more than one hundred thousand tourists visited Yugoslavian nudist camps and resorts every summer. According to the president of the Naturism and Camping Department of Yugoslav Tourism, Naturist vacations in 1984 accounted for 25% of the foreign tourism income. And while American travel brochures make almost no mention at all of nude or topfree beaches in other countries--essentially lying to vacationers--foreign travel agencies offer opulent, uncensored brochures, and openly advertise and promote Naturist resorts.

110. Nudity is much more common in foreign media.

For example, one of Brazil's most popular T.V. shows, "Pantanal," has featured frequent nudity; a survey conducted by the local newspaper found that 83% of viewers were "comfortable" with the nude scenes. A University of Sao Paulo survey in June 1990 counted 1,145 displays of nudity in one week of television.

111. Public nudity, including clothing-optional recreation, enjoys growing acceptance in North America.

A 1983 Gallup poll revealed that 72% of Americans don't think designated clothing-optional beaches should be against the law, and 39% agreed that such areas should be set aside by the government. One third said they might try going to one. Fourteen percent said they'd already tried coed nude recreation. A 1985 Roper Poll agreed, reporting that 18% of all Americans--including 27% of those age 18-28, and 24% of college-educated Americans--had already gone swimming in the nude with a group that included members of the other sex; other studies suggest these numbers are on the increase. A *Psychology Today* study found that 28% of couples under the age of 35 swim in the nude together, 24% of couples age 35-49, and 9% of couples 50 or older, and that such activities tended to correspond to a higher level of satisfaction in the marriage. A 1990 Martini and Rossi poll reported that 35% of Americans would "bare it all" on a nude beach. A 1986 poll conducted by *People Weekly* asked people how guilty they would feel if they engaged in any of 51 activities, rating their probable guilt on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 represented the greatest feeling of guilt. Nude sunbathing came in *second to last* with a rating of 2.76, behind not voting (3.07), swearing (3.34), smoking (3.38), and overeating (4.43).

In 1991, visitation at Wreck Beach, British Columbia on a nice day was estimated at 15,000, and 90,000 beach users were recorded in one month on a single access trail. A survey conducted by West Area Park Staff revealed that half of those visitors go nude. When that option was threatened in 1991, more than 10,000 people sent letters or signed petitions to protect the beach's clothing-optional status.

Given the opportunity and license to do so, women do take advantage of the option of going topfree. During the 1984 Olympics in L.A., Police decided not to arrest European women who went topfree on local beaches. American women, noting the double standard, took their tops off too, and feigned inability to understand English when told to cover up. Police called

it "taking advantage of the relaxed rule," though it should more accurately be considered "taking advantage of a more civilized custom."

112. Membership in nudist organizations is growing rapidly.

Membership in the American Association for Nude Recreation, for example, topped 40,000 in 1992, up 15,000 in just five years! By 1995, the number had climbed past 46,000. According to a study commissioned by the Trade Association for Nude Recreation, participation in nudism is currently growing by about 20% per year.

113. The tourism industry is discovering that it is in their economic best interests to accept clothing-optional recreation.

When it became a favorite vacation spot for Europeans in the mid-1980s, Miami Beach began permitting G-string swimsuits on its beaches, and ceased enforcing its ordinance against topfree swimming and sunning. Dade County is the only county in Florida that experienced an increase of tourism in 1991, a year of deep recession. All other counties, and Disney World, had significant losses in tourism. Nikki Grossman, director of the Ft. Lauderdale Convention and Visitors' Bureau, acknowledges that "requests for nude or top-free beaches rank among the top five priorities of international conventioners," and Fodor's Travel Guide has observed that "nudism" is "tourism's fastest growing sector." Nudism, in the United States, brings in about \$120 million per year in direct revenues alone.

Constitutional support for Naturism.

114. In a free society such as the United States, one's lifestyle should not be dictated by anyone else (majority or otherwise), especially if that lifestyle does not infringe on anyone else's rights.

In the words of Justice Sandra Day O'Connor: "Our Constitution is designed to maximize individual freedom within a framework of ordered liberty."

115. The Constitution was, in fact, written to protect the rights of minority points of view. This principle alone should justify the right to recreate peacefully in the nude without government interference.

Justice William O. Douglas, for a unanimous court in 1972, wrote: "These amenities have dignified the right of dissent and have honored the right to be nonconformists and the right to defy submissiveness. They have encouraged lives of high spirits rather than hushed, suffocating silence."

116. The Constitution has been interpreted to protect individual freedoms except where they are overridden by a "compelling state interest." It is never the responsibility of individuals to justify their freedoms. It is rather the responsibility of government to justify any restriction of freedom.

Justice Douglas enumerated three levels of rights: "First is the autonomous control over the development and expression of one's intellect, interests, tastes, and personality. Second is freedom of choice in the basic decisions of one's life respecting marriage, divorce, procreation, contraception, and the education and upbringing of children. Third is the freedom to care for one's health and person, freedom from bodily restraint or compulsion,

freedom to walk, stroll, or loaf." Douglas would permit no state restriction of the first level of freedom; only narrow restrictions on the second; and in the third, "regulation on a showing of 'compelling state interest.'"

117. Naturism has always claimed that nudity offers "freedom from bodily restraints." Such freedoms may only be restricted in the case of "compelling state interest;" if none can be shown, the restriction is invalid.

Unfortunately, though the courts have "recognized as a protectible, if minor interest . . . an individual right concerning one's own appearance and lifestyle," especially where supported by tradition and custom, in the case of public nudity such protection is not "fundamental" or directly "constitutional" and thus can be overruled or limited by other considerations, such as environmental concerns or "community standards." Often the reference is to moral principles. These can usually be shown to be "overbroad" by constitutional standards, because they prohibit innocent behavior (such as skinnydipping) along with behavior of legitimate government concern (such as lewd conduct).

118. The Constitution has repeatedly been interpreted to protect the right of individuals to associate with others of similar philosophy, and also to raise their children in the context of a particular philosophy. This principle protects the right of nudist families to associate and recreate in the nude.

119. The First Amendment guarantees the right to freedom of expression. This protects every other form of clothing, and should protect the right *not* to wear clothing as well.

120. Recent court decisions in Florida, New York, and elsewhere have upheld nudity as *part of* the expression of free speech.

Unfortunately, the courts have consistently concluded that mere nudity *per se* (for example, nude sunbathing on a public beach), *without being combined with some other protected form of expression*, is not protected as free speech under the first amendment. The courts have distinguished between protected First Amendment beliefs and actual *conduct* based on those beliefs, arguing that going nude on a beach is "conduct" rather than merely the natural state of a human being.

121. The "body language" of the nude human form has extraordinary symbolic and communicative power which should be protected by the First Amendment.

Examples may be seen in painting, photography, sculpture, drama, cinema, and other visual forms of communication throughout history.

122. The Supreme Court has ruled that people can't be forced to communicate ideas they oppose (for example, saying the Pledge of Allegiance). It has also ruled that clothes can be a protected form of free speech (for instance, students and public employees had the right to wear black armbands to protest the Vietnam War). It is unconstitutional to force Naturists to express conformity to ideas of modesty and body shame that they disagree with, by forcing them to wear swimsuits at the beach.

As attorney Eleanor Fink says, "If people are allowed to wear the clothes of [Nazis], should they not also be allowed to wear the clothing of the Creator?"

123. The courts have thus far permitted the publishers of pornography to express attitudes which are exploitative of women, on the grounds that this is protected free speech; but it has been unsuitably reluctant to grant the same protection to the natural expression of body freedom through casual, non-exploitative nudity on the beach.

124. Clothing is both publicly expressive and privately symbolic, connoting identity in a particular cultural group. Restricting the state of dress of nudists is no less restrictive than prohibiting any other cultural group from wearing the clothing particular to their group. Preventing nudists from going nude is equivalent to preventing a person of Scottish descent from wearing the family colors, or preventing a priest from wearing his robes.

125. With the emergence of national organizations promoting nudism as a doctrine, nude recreation may eventually come to be seen as a protected medium of speech expressing that doctrine, and as an example of protected free association.

126. The Ninth Amendment makes it clear that no freedoms shall be denied that are not specifically prohibited. Thus, mere nudity is not illegal except where there are specific laws that prohibit it.

Most laws prohibit only lewd conduct, not nudity per se; and there is in fact no universal legal prohibition against nudity on public land.

127. Many prohibitions against nudity stem, historically, from the political climate of the early Christian church. Even today, much of the objection to nudism is based on religious principles. The constitutional separation of church and state should make this an invalid argument.

128. Extensive legal precedent suggests that laws requiring women, but not men, to conceal their breasts are sexist, discriminatory, and unconstitutional.

For example, in 1992, the New York Court of Appeals, the state's highest court, unanimously overturned the conviction of two women found guilty of exposing their breasts in public. The ruling held that the state's anti-nudity law was intended to apply only to lewd and lascivious behavior, not to "non-commercial, perhaps accidental, and certainly not lewd, exposure." Herald Price Fahringer, the women's lawyer, said that the ruling meant that women in New York State could sunbathe topfree or even walk down the street without a top, as long as this was not done in a lewd manner, or for such purposes as prostitution. Judge Vito Titone pointed out that women sunbathe topfree in many European countries, adding: "To the extent that many in our society may regard the uncovered female breast with a prurient interest that is not similarly aroused by the male equivalent, that perception cannot serve as a justification for different treatment because it is itself a suspect cultural artifact rooted in centuries of prejudice and bias toward women." This ruling, however, is just one of many statutes and legal precedents nationwide that uphold the position that breast exposure is not inherently indecent behavior.

Additional legal support for Naturism.

129. Case history demonstrates that laws requiring women to cover their breasts are not justified by cultural prejudices and preconceptions.

130. Laws requiring women, but not men, to cover their breasts are written entirely from a

male perspective, assuming that men's bodies are natural and normal, and that women's bodies must be covered because they are different.

Reena Glazer observes that "under sameness theory, women can get equal treatment only to the extent that they are the same as men." Physical differences among the races do not justify discrimination, and neither should physical differences between the sexes.

131. Laws requiring women to cover their breasts are not justified by claims that women's bodies are significantly different from men's; nor by inaccurate claims that breasts are sex organs; nor by the fact that breasts may play a role in sex or sex play; nor by the fact that breasts are prominent secondary sex characteristics.

It can't be argued that women have breasts and men don't, because both do; nor can it be argued that women have larger, often *protruding* breasts, because many women are flat-chested while many men have large breasts. Breasts are not sex organs, for they are not essential to reproduction, and in fact have nothing to do with it. A woman with no breasts can have a baby. Breasts serve the physiological function of nourishing a baby--but this is a maternal function, not a sexual one. Breasts may play a role in sex play, but other body parts do too, and are not censured--particularly the hands, and the mouth (which, incidentally, *is* veiled by Shi'ite Moslems, partly for that very reason, though only on women). And while breasts are secondary sex characteristics, so are beards, which are not restricted on men.

132. Mere nudity is not in itself lewd or "indecent exposure," a distinction upheld by extensive legal precedent nationwide.

133. Mere nudity cannot be offensive or immoral "conduct"--for it is not conduct at all, but merely the natural state of a human being.

It should be no less legitimate to be in this natural human state than to be clothed. One's ethnicity is also a natural state of being, and discrimination on this basis is illegal. It should be equally illegal to discriminate on the basis of appearing in the natural state common to all humanity.

134. Given the challenge of defining modesty standards, which are by nature ambiguous, legislators have often found it to be more complicated to prohibit nudity than to sanction it.

For example, in the local anti-nudity legislation of St. John's County, Florida, we find this painstakingly elaborate definition of "buttocks:" "The area at the rear of the human body (sometimes referred to as the gluteus maximus) which lies between two imaginary straight lines running parallel to the ground when a person is standing, the first or top such line being a half-inch below the top of the vertical cleavage of the nates (i.e., the prominence formed by the muscles running from the back of the hip to the back of the leg) and the second or bottom such line being a half-inch above the lowest point of the curvature of the fleshy protuberance (sometimes referred to as the gluteal fold), and between two imaginary straight lines, one on each side of the body (the 'outside lines'), which outside lines are perpendicular to the ground and to the horizontal lines described above, and which perpendicular outside lines pass through the outermost point(s) at which each nate meets the outer side of each leg. Notwithstanding the above, buttocks shall not include the leg, the hamstring muscle below the gluteal fold, the tensor fasciae latae muscles, or any of the above described portion of the human body that is between either (i) the left inside perpendicular line and the left outside perpendicular line or (ii) the right inside perpendicular line and the

right outside perpendicular line. For the purpose of the previous sentence, the left inside perpendicular line shall be an imaginary straight line on the left side of the anus (i) that is perpendicular to the ground and to the horizontal lines described above and (ii) that is one third of the distance from the anus to the left outside line. (The above description can *generally* be described as covering one third of the buttocks centered over the cleavage for the length of the cleavage.)"

135. A large portion of state and local government anti-nudity regulations have been legislated by individual high officials or small groups, without public review. This is undemocratic and contrary to the principle of due process.

Florida, for example, closed most of its nude beaches in 1983 without public review.

136. By extensive legal precedent, it is unquestionably legal to be nude in private, on private property.

137. Many state or local governments have also explicitly legislated the right to be nude in designated public areas, such as legally-sanctioned nude beaches.

Legal nude beaches are rare but not non-existent in North America. British Columbia, for example, currently has one legally sanctioned nude beach, and Oregon has two.

138. There is no universal federal prohibition against nudity on public land. In general, public land agencies view nude recreation--conducted with discretion and sensitivity to the varying values of others--as "legitimate activity."

Many state and local governments (notably Oregon, Vermont, and the California Department of Recreation and Parks) have followed the federal policy as well, without conflict.

William Penn Mott, a former Director of the National Park Service, wrote: "NPS must consciously seek to respect and accommodate wide ranging differences among visitors and professional colleagues in lifestyles and values with sympathy, dignity, and tolerance. I believe that parks are a place where the human spirit is more free, more capable of permitting people to be themselves, closer to a oneness with universal truths about humankind and about our relationship to nature and the sacred truths by which we live. . . . I believe it is too easy for government employees--all of us--to think there is only one way to enjoy and use the parks and that when the visitor enters 'our parks' they must 'do it our way.'"

139. The nude use of most federal lands is, in fact, *constitutional* because there is no universal federal law prohibiting it. The Ninth Amendment specifically says that no freedoms shall be denied which are not specifically prohibited.

140. The mandate of public land agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service provide for diversity of recreation. Historically, provisions have been made even for extreme minority forms of recreation. Recreational diversity ought to also include provisions for nude recreation.

A 1983 Gallup poll found that 14% of Americans occasionally enjoyed nude recreation. How many activities does 14% of the American public participate in, of *any* kind? Surely not

hunting, snowmobiling, mountain biking, or the use of off-road vehicles, all of which have designated areas set aside for their use!

141. Clothing-optional recreation is less offensive to most people than many other forms of recreation which are openly tolerated and even promoted on public land.

A study by Dr. Steven D. Moore of the University of Arizona demonstrated that encountering nude bathers on public land is five times more acceptable to the public than encountering hunters.

142. Naturists certainly deserve at least as much consideration by land management agencies as resource-damaging activities such as off-road vehicle use.

As Pat O'Brien points out, "avoiding nude people in places where they're expected to be is easy. That isn't true when it comes to other sanctioned uses of our public lands and waterways. The roar and stink of a snowmobile or other off-road vehicles can't be ignored, and you'd best not overlook a jetskier in the water near you. Why then is it so objectionable for us to ask to use a small amount of space on a non-exclusive basis, in ways that do not pollute and do not drive others away?"

143. The Wilderness Act of 1963 defined wilderness areas as "lands designated for preservation and protection in their natural condition." They are to be managed in a manner that maintains them in as natural a state as possible. It follows that human should be able to enjoy wilderness areas in their own most natural state, free from the artificial constraints of clothing.

144. Public wilderness areas ought to be places where human freedoms, including nude recreation, are observed more freely than anywhere else. Wilderness should be our measure of carefully controlled anarchy, our refuge free of any but the most necessary intrusions by government rules and regulations. Do we not go to wilderness for these very reasons, and would it not be compromised by undue outside interference, such as unnecessary clothing regulations?

145. Recreation managers unfortunately often "solve" the issue of nude recreation, not by managing it, but by ignoring it.

Thus managers "permit" nudity on remote beaches without facilities or lifeguards, then point to litter, drug use, and other problems as a consequence of the nudity rather than the lack of active management.

146. If public nude recreation can be widely accepted in societies considered repressive by Americans (for example, formerly-socialist Yugoslavia, once-communist East Germany, Orthodox Greece, or Catholic France), it ought to be tolerated in democratic Europe and in America, "the land of the free."

Lee Baxandall has reported that "almost every town [on East Germany's coast] has an FKK [nude] beach, some 90 sites serving 200,000 campers/lodgers annually; more FKK than textile beaches. A GDR poll found 57% of the population approving of nude recreation, 30% had no opinion, and only 13% opposed." Unfortunately, with the reunification of Germany, the West has exported to the East both pornography and beach restrictions: now that East Germany is "free," many of its beaches aren't. A June 1992 UPI dispatch from Ahlbeck

noted that "the controversy stems from the introduction of western German-style regulations on traditionally nude eastern German beaches." Ironically, authority for the new prohibitions of nudity stems from a Nazi-era regulation carrying the signature of Heinrich Himmler.

147. Anti-nudity laws are demeaning because they replace individual responsibility with state control.

148. It is inappropriate to use police resources to crack down on peaceful bathers at a beach simply because they are nude, while taking valuable resources away from other more urgent needs.

149. It is a cruel reversal of justice when the law frowns on innocent skinnydippers, while gawkers on the fringe of the nude beach, who pervert and fetishize the body, are accepted as "normal."

Historical support for Naturism.

150. Social nudity is part of a long historical tradition. Recent Western civilization stands almost alone, in the entire known history of humanity, in its repressive code against nudity.

151. Nudity was commonplace in the ancient Greek civilization, especially for men.

By the Classical Period of ancient Greece, nude exercise and athletic competition had become part of the way of life for Greek men, and a practice which separated "modern" Greeks both from other, "barbarian" cultures and from their own past. The original Olympic games were conducted in the nude. Plato described nudity in exercise as a practical, useful, and rational innovation; Thucydides promoted it as simpler, freer, and more democratic, a cultural distinction between the Greek soldier who must be in shape, lean and muscular, not portly and prosperous, and the "barbarians" who announced their status and wealth by wearing expensive garments that gave a false impression of elegance and authority.

152. Old Testament ceremonial washings, including baptism, were performed in the nude. Christ, too, was probably baptized naked--as depicted in numerous early works of art.

153. Roman citizens, including early Christians, bathed communally in the nude at the public baths throughout most of the second through the fourth centuries. Nudity was also common during this period in other parts of ancient Roman society.

154. The writings of early Christians such as Irenaeus and Tertullian make it clear that they had no ethical reservations about communal nudity.

Christian historian Roy Bowen Ward notes that "Christian Morality did not originally preclude nudity. . . . There is a tendency to read history backward and assume that early Christians thought the same way mainstream Christians do today. We attribute the present to the past."

155. For the first several centuries of Christianity, it was the custom to baptize men, women, and children together nude. This ritual played a very significant role in the early church. The accounts are numerous and detailed.

Margaret Miles notes that "naked baptism was observed as one of the two essential elements in Christian initiation, along with the invocation of the Trinity. . . . In the fourth century instructions for baptism throughout the Roman Empire stipulated naked baptism without any suggestion of innovation or change from earlier practices." A typical historical account comes from Cyril of Jerusalem, bishop of Jerusalem from A.D. 387 to 417: "Immediately, then, upon entering, you remove your tunics. . . . You are now stripped and naked, in this also imitating Christ despoiled of His garments on His Cross, He Who by His nakedness despoiled the principalities and powers, and fearlessly triumphed over them on the Cross." After baptism, and clothed in white albs, St. Cyril would say: "How wonderful! You were naked before the eyes of all and were not ashamed! Truly you bore the image of the first-formed Adam, who was naked in the garden and was not ashamed." J.C. Cunningham notes that "there is nothing in the present rubrics of the Roman rite against doing this today. In fact, in the Eastern rites the rubrics even state the option of nude adult baptism."

156. Nudity was common and accepted in pre-medieval (circa 6th century) society, especially in places like Great Britain, which had been "barbarian" lands only a few hundred years before.

E.T. Renbourn notes that nudity was widespread throughout Ancient Britain and northern Europe, in spite of the climate. Even as late as the 17th century, travellers such as Coryat and Fynes Moryson found the Irish people living nude or semi-nude indoors. He writes that Moryson, in his Itinerary (circa early 17th century), found Irish gentlewomen "prepared to receive visitors and even strangers indoors when completely unencumbered by clothing."

157. Nudity was fairly common in medieval and renaissance society, especially in the public baths and within the family setting.

Havelock Ellis records that "in daily life . . . a considerable degree of nakedness was tolerated during medieval times. This was notably so in the public baths, frequented by men and women together." Lawrence Wright observes that nudity was common in the home, too: "The communal tub had . . . one good reason; the good reason was the physical difficulty of providing hot water. No modern householder who . . . has bailed out and carried away some 30 gallons of water, weighing 300 lb., will underrate the labour involved. The whole family and their guests would bathe together while the water was hot. . . . Ideas of propriety were different from ours, the whole household and the guests shared the one and only sleeping apartment, and wore no night-clothes until the sixteenth century. It was not necessarily rude to be nude."

The high-ranking nobles of Edward IV's court were permitted by law to display their naked genitals below a short tunic, and contemporary reports indicate that they did so. Chaucer commented on the use of this fashion in *The Parson's Tale*, written about 1400. Many men's garments, he wrote, were so short they "covere nat the shameful membres of man." Between the 14th and mid-17th centuries, and especially during the reign of Louis XIV, women would often leave their bodices loose and open or even entirely undone, exposing the nipple or even the whole of the breasts, a practice confirmed by numerous historical accounts. The Venetian ambassador, writing in 1617, described Queen Anne of Denmark as wearing a dress which displayed her bosom "bare down to the pit of the stomach." Aileen Ribeiro writes that in the early 15th century, "women's gowns became increasingly tight-fitting over the bust, some gowns with front openings even revealing the nipples. . . . In 1445 Guillaume Jouvenal des Ursins became Chancellor of France and his brother, an

ecclesiastic, wrote to him urging him to tell the king that he should not allow the ladies of his household to wear gowns with front openings that revealed their breasts and nipples."

158. Even in the Victorian era, before the invention of bathing suits, swimming nude in the ocean was commonplace; and music halls often featured nude models as living "sculpture."

159. Few people realize that swimsuits, as we know them today, are a relatively recent concept. The idea of wearing special clothing to swim in is barely a century old.

160. Skinnydipping, in the local river or farm pond, is well-documented as an important historical part of our national heritage.

Skinnydipping and outdoor nudity appear in the writings of Walt Whitman, Mark Twain, William Allen White, Lincoln Steffens, William Styron, Anne Morrow Lindbergh, Herman Melville, James Michener, and Henry Miller, among many others, and in the depictions of Norman Rockwell, Rockwell Kent, Andrew Wyeth, Thomas Eakins, John Sloane, and Grant Wood.

161. Many YMCA, college, and high school male-only pools or swimming classes were historically "swimsuit-optional" or *nude-only* until federally-mandated "equal access" athletic programs (for the sake of women) were instituted in the mid 1970s.

162. Today, there are still public locations where nudity is, by local tradition or custom, the accepted practice.

Nudity is the norm, for instance, in natural primitive hot springs and on nude beaches; and, almost universally, for models in art classes.

163. The few officially sanctioned nude beaches in the U.S. (for example, Rooster Rock State Park, Oregon) and Canada (Wreck Beach, British Columbia)--and most of the *unofficial* beaches as well--have existed for decades without significant problems.

164. Many highly respected people, historical and contemporary, have espoused and/or participated in Naturism to some degree.

Benjamin Franklin took daily naked "air baths." So did Henry David Thoreau, who was also a frequent skinnydipper. Alexander Graham Bell was a skinnydipper and nude sunbather. George Bernard Shaw, Walt Whitman, Eugene O'Neill, and painter Thomas Eakins argued in favor of social nudity.

President John Quincy Adams was a regular skinnydipper. According to reports, "each morning he got up before dawn, walked across the White House lawn to the Potomac River, took off his clothes and swam in the nude. Then he returned to the White House to have breakfast, read the Bible and run the country." President Theodore Roosevelt frequently swam nude in Rock Creek Park in Washington, once skinny-dipping with the French diplomat, Jules Jusserand. President Lyndon Johnson occasionally swam nude with guests in the white house pool, including evangelist Billy Graham. Senator Edward Kennedy has been photographed skinnydipping at public beaches in Florida. At the White House of his brother, John F. Kennedy, nudity had been common around the White House pool. Many U.S. congressmen enjoy nude recreation, albeit segregated: U.S. Senate members may use the Russell Senate Office Building Pool in the nude (the few female Senators make

appointments to assure there won't be males on hand), and Representatives may use a clothing-optional steam room, where President Bush was said by *Newsweek* to hang out sans towel with his buddies. Congressmen also sunbathed nude on the Speaker's Porch until one day in 1973 when Rep. Patricia Schroeder wandered into the gathering inadvertently.

Billionaire insurance man John D. MacArthur frequently went skinnydipping, and left a beach to the state of Florida, intending that a portion be designated clothing-optional (a wish that has been spurned); word has it that MacArthur went skinnydipping with Walt Disney at this beach in the late 1960s. World Bank president and former U.S. Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, and American Civil Liberties Union founder Roger Baldwin, both have been regular skinnydippers. Charles F. Richter, the co-inventor of the earthquake measuring system, was a life-long nudist and Naturist. Actress Lynn Redgrave and her family practice social nudism. Actresses Bridget Fonda and Brigitte Bardot enjoy social nudity. The late actor Gary Merrill advocated nudism. Christy Brinkley openly admits to frequenting nude beaches, and Christian singer Amy Grant goes topfree on foreign beaches while on tour overseas. Even the late Dr. Seuss published approval of a nudist philosophy, in one of his first books.

165. Historically, a great many writers and artists have regarded Naturism, or something close to it, to be part of the utopian ideal.

R. Martin writes: "Anthropologically, nakedness would seem to be the best and worst of conditions. Involuntary stripping to nakedness is defeat or poverty, but willed nakedness may be a perfect form." Nudity is also consistent with the Christian utopian concept of heaven, in which, according to biblical accounts, clothing is not necessary.

166. Nudity has often been used, historically, as a symbol of protest or rebellion against oppression.

For example, the early Quakers, in mid-17th century England, often used nudity as an element of protest. Historian Elbert Russell notes that "A number of men and women were arrested and punished for public indecency because they appeared in public naked 'as a sign.' George Fox and other leaders defended the practice, when the doer felt it a religious duty to do so. . . . The suggestion of such a sign came apparently from Isaiah's walking 'naked and barefoot three years' (Isaiah 20:2,3)." The Doukhobors, a radical Christian sect, used nudity as a social protest in Canada in the early 1900s. Paul Ableman records that "In May, 1979, Emperor Bokassa . . . a minor Central African tyrant, arrested a large number of children on charges of sedition and massacred some of them. According to *The Guardian* (London) of 18 May, 'Hundreds of women demonstrated naked outside the prison until the survivors were released.'"

In the 1920s, as part of a widening rebellion against genteel society, the size of bathing suits began to diminish. Nude beaches, reaching their height of popularity in the 1970s, are the ultimate result of this process of social emancipation. The free body movement in general in the 1970s fit this social and historical pattern. Examples include casual nudity at Woodstock; "nude-in" demonstrations; and a record-setting demonstration by Athens, Georgia university students on March 7, 1974, when more than 1500 went naked on their college campus. It took tear gas to make the students dress.

Historical origins of the repression of nudity.

167. Repressive morality was developed by the state and the Church as a tool to maintain control over otherwise free individuals.

Paul Ableman writes: "A complex civilization has an enormous investment in differentiated apparel. It is no accident that one of the first matters that a revolutionary regime turns its attention to is clothing. The French Revolution decreed classical grace and simplicity. The Chinese homogenized clothing. The Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran returned women to the black chador and so on. . . . Sexual energy is needed by the authorities of the world to maintain order. . . . It immediately becomes obvious why the true obscenity of killing and violence has always been of less concern to those in power than the pseudo-obscenity of erotic acts. Death provides no scope for a network of regulations by which society can be manipulated. . . . But sex is a permanent fountain of dynamic energy, which can be tapped for social purposes by regulations concerning marriage, divorce, adultery, fornication, incest, homosexuality, bestiality, chastity, promiscuity, decency and so on. All those who wield power intuitively perceive that in the last resort their authority derives from the repression, and regulation, of sexuality, and that free-flowing sexuality is the biological equivalent of anarchy. All transferrals of power, all revolutions, are invariably accompanied by transformations of the regulations governing sexuality." Seymour Fisher writes: "The implications of nudity as a way of declaring one's complete freedom have often elicited strong countermeasures from those in authority. Nudity is punishable by death in some cultures. The Roman Catholic church has taught in convent schools that it is sinful to expose your body even to your own eyes. The wearing of clothes represents a form of submission to prevailing mores. It is like putting on a 'citizen's uniform' and agreeing to play the game."

168. Repressive morality has often sought to control not only nudity, but sexuality in general.

Margaret Miles observes that "the regulation of sexuality was a major power issue in the fourth-century Christian churches. Regulation of sexual practices was a way to inject the authority of church laws and leaders into the intimate and daily relationships of Christians. Analyzing the canons of the Council of Gangra in AD 309, [Samuel] Laeuchli found that 46 percent of the eighty-one canons were concerned with sexual relationships and practices." Philip Yancey notes that "between the third and tenth centuries, church authorities issued edicts forbidding sex on Saturdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, and also during the 40-day fast periods before Easter, Christmas, and Whitsuntide--all for religious reasons. They kept adding feast days and days of the apostles to the proscription, as well as the days of female impurity, until it reached the point that, as Yale historian John Boswell has estimated, only 44 days a year remained available for marital sex. Human nature being what it is, the church's proscriptions were enthusiastically ignored." Don Mackenzie notes that Christ and the very earliest church, in contrast, emphasized a message of freedom--"from demonic powers, from tyrannical governments, from fate. . . . [and] a prevailing commitment to the separation of secular and ecclesiastical power. . . . [The Church] adopted asceticism, not in obedience to its founder's teachings but as a bid for support in the face of competition, offering spiritual solace to people whose material world (the Roman Empire) was collapsing. Once the Church was officially recognized, it promptly discarded Christ's dedication to poverty, but it clung tightly to sexual asceticism as a disciplinary tool in a disintegrating society."

169. Repression of nudity is still used today as a means to further a repressive political agenda.

Regarding nude beaches, Patrick Buchanan, on PBS's "McLaughlin Report," said, "I think

we ought to let the liberals do it, if they want to do it. Then take photographs and use them in attack ads." The right-wing Christian Coalition uses blanket attacks on mere nudity and other matters of "morality" to rally support for their cause. Their method, as described by ACLU Executive Director Ira Glasser, is "to prey upon the fears of millions of people who are all too willing to believe that sacrificing personal liberty will help solve our nation's problems." A Missouri legislator, in 1993, introduced a bill that would have made virtually all public nudity--and even some nudity in the home--a felony punishable by up to ten years in prison! This bill was fortunately defeated, though by a narrow margin. Similar bills have been proposed all over the country in recent years.

170. Much of the origin of repressive attitudes toward nudity may be traced to the political setting of the early church and church-state, though *not* the teachings of Christ Himself.

The earliest writings of the Christian church show no evidence of the negative attitude toward sexuality and nudity which so characterize later years. This negative attitude grew slowly among some segments of the faith, but was by no means universal. For some, asceticism represented a means of remaining pure for the impending return of Christ. For others, it was a reaction against the hedonism and homosexuality common in Greek culture, or against the sexual excesses of the dying Roman Empire. For some, it grew out of a mixture of Christianity with the legalism of traditional Judaism; and for many, it grew out of preexisting personal and cultural prejudices. Clement of Alexandria, in the late 2nd century, and Thascius Caecilius Cyprianus, in the mid 3rd century, both condemned the nudity common in Roman public baths primarily because it offended their personal ideas of female modesty. (In the same era, Tertullian was condemning women as the "gateway of the Devil.") Jerome, in the late 4th and early 5th centuries, also condemned nude bathing, especially for women. He considered pregnant women revolting, and felt that virgins should blush at the very idea of seeing themselves naked. On the other hand, in the same period, Jovinianus, a Christian monk, campaigned actively in favor of the public baths. In the end, the decisive actor in the controversy was Augustine. He was a firm believer in the doctrine, introduced long after Christ, that the body and sexuality are inherently sinful. (He applied this doctrine to women's bodies and sexuality especially aggressively.) Augustine was a shrewd politician. By aligning himself closely with the imperial court at the beginning of the 5th century, he effectively ensured that his version of Christianity became the dominant one. By the Dark Ages, with the collapse of the Roman Empire, the Church became the last remnant of Western civilization, with a monopoly on education, and tremendous control over ideas. Thus Augustine's heritage of anti-sexuality became the predominant force in Christianity, even though such ideas are impossible to find in the teachings of Christ Himself.

171. The aversion of early Christian church leaders to casual nudity was due in part to an association of nudity with paganism and homosexuality in the surrounding cultures.

In many pre-Christian pagan religions, such as those practiced in western Europe and Great Britain, nudity--especially female nudity--was a powerful force, and played an important role in pagan worship and rituals.

172. The Church's aversion to nudity derived, in part, from its roots in the cultures of the ancient Near East, where nakedness had signified poverty, shame, slavery, humiliation, and defeat. Naked, bound prisoners were paraded in the king's victory celebration, and slain enemies were stripped of clothing and armor.

173. Before Western civilization, nakedness was a normal element of life and considered acceptable in many circumstances. However, as Freud describes in *Civilization and Its Discontents*, psychological repression of the awareness of our natural being was a necessary step in building civilization, by disciplining the masses into taking part in vast and self-abdicating social projects.

Lee Baxandall notes that, by contrast, "the post-industrial, newly greening era offers fresh options, a chance to integrate the natural human being with post-industrial values, technology, and knowledge."

174. Nudity has often been censored primarily to avoid the more difficult task of managing it.

175. Recreation managers often "permit" nudity on remote beaches without facilities or lifeguards, then use nudity as a scapegoat for problems including litter and drug use that inevitably appear in high-use recreation areas without active management.

176. One of the greatest challenges faced by clothing-optional beaches is that their popularity, combined with their scarcity, leads to intensive use, which in turn conflicts with environmental and management concerns.

This has been a source of problems at several beaches across the country, including Sandy Hook in New Jersey, and Cape Cod National Seashore, which closed its traditionally nude beach ostensibly for environmental reasons in the mid 1970s.

177. The "secondary effects" of an actively managed nude beach have in actual experience proven to be less crime, less inappropriate behavior, no drug dealers, an increase in parking revenues, and an increase in business in the adjoining commercial area.

178. Nudity has often been repressed for economic reasons, not because it was considered immoral.

Bernard Rudofsky writes: "In the 1920s, in some parts of Europe people used to bathe in public without feeling the need for a special dress. At the height of summer the beaches on the Black Sea swarmed with bathers who had never seen a bathing suit except in newspapers and picture magazines; their holiday was one of untroubled simplicity. . . . The idyll came to an end a few years later when tourism reared its ugly head, and the protests of foreign visitors led to making bathing suits compulsory." The same thing has recently happened in the former East Germany, where traditionally nude beaches are now being restricted to appease more conservative European tourists.

179. We must never forget that for any freedom that is lost, we bear partial responsibility for letting it be lost.

In the words of Frederick Douglass: "Find out just what people will submit to and you have found out the exact amount of justice and wrong which will be imposed upon them. . . . The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those who they oppress."

Christianity supports Naturism.

180. Genesis 1:27--The (naked) human body, created by God, in God's own image, is

basically decent, not inherently impure or sinful. The human body was created by God, and God can create no evil. It is made in God's image, and the image of God is entirely pure and good.

181. Genesis 1:31--God saw that everything, including naked Adam and Eve, was good.

182. Genesis 3:7--Many scholars interpret the wearing of fig leaves as a continuation and expansion of the original sin, not a positive moral reaction to it.

Hugh Kilmer explains: "Man wanted to put his life within his own control rather than God's, so first he took the power of self-determination (knowledge of good and evil). Next, finding his body was *not* within his control, he controlled it artificially by hiding it. After he was expelled from paradise, he began to hunt and eat animals; then to gain complete control over other people, by killing them (the story of Cain and Abel)."

183. Genesis 3:10--Many scholars believe that Adam and Eve's sense of shame came not from their nakedness, which God had created and called good, but from their knowledge of having disobeyed God.

184. An innate, God-given sense of shame related to nakedness is contradicted by the existence of numerous indigenous societies in which nudity is the rule and a sense of shame is totally absent, and by the lack of shame felt by naked children.

185. Genesis 3:11--It was disobedience that came between Adam and Eve and God, not nakedness. The scriptures themselves treat Adam and Eve's nudity as an incidental issue.

Robert Bahr observes that "when Adam and Eve disobeyed God, they grew ashamed of what they had done and attempted to hide themselves from God, who was not the least bit concerned with their nakedness but was mightily unhappy with their disobedience." Herb Seal notes that God provided a covering by slaying an innocent animal: the first prototype of the innocent one slain to act as a "covering" for sinners.

186. Genesis 3:21--God made garments of skins for Adam, but the Bible does not say the state of nakedness is being condemned. Because of the Fall, Adam and Eve were no longer in Eden and were thus subject to the varieties of weather and climate, and God knew they would need clothes. God loved and cared for them even after they had sinned.

187. To assume that because God made garments He was condemning nudity makes as much sense as concluding that because God made clouds which blot out the sun He was condemning sunshine.

188. Genesis 9:22-24--Noah was both drunk and naked, but Ham was the one who was cursed--when he dishonored his father, by calling attention to Noah's state, and making light of it.

The shame of Noah's "nakedness" was much more than just being undressed. It was his dehumanized, drunken stupor which was shameful. Ham's offense was not merely seeing his father in this shameful state, but gossiping about it, effectively destroying Noah's reputation, cultural status, and authority as a father figure. In the story, Shem and Japheth were blessed for coming to the defense of their father's honor. Rather than joining Ham in his boasting, they reverently covered their father's shame.

189. Exodus 20:26--The Priest's nakedness was not to be exposed because it would create dissonance between his social role, in which he was to be seen as sexually neutral, and his biological status as a sexual being. The Priest's costume represented his social role; to be exposed in that context would be inappropriate and distracting.

Rita Poretsky writes: "Personhood, original sexual energy, and physical nakedness may be either in synchrony with social institutions or in disharmony. . . . Nakedness is a nakedness of self in a social context, not just a nakedness of body." On the other hand, it was quite appropriate for David to dance essentially naked in public to celebrate the return of the Ark of the Covenant (II Samuel 6:14-23).

190. Leviticus 18:6-19--Here and throughout the Old Testament and Torah, the expression "uncover the nakedness of" (as it is literally translated in the King James Version) is a euphemism for "have sexual relations with." The prohibitions do not refer to nudity *per se*.

191. I Samuel 19:23-24--Jewish prophets were commonly naked--so commonly that when Saul stripped off his clothes and prophesied, no one considered his nakedness remarkable, but everyone immediately assumed that he must be a prophet also.

192. II Samuel 6:14-23--King David danced nearly naked in the City of David to celebrate the return of the ark, in full view of all the citizens of the city. Michal criticized his public nudity and was rebuffed.

King David was not strictly naked--he wore a "linen ephod," a sort of short apron or close-fitting, armless, outer vest, extending at the most down to the hips. Ephods were part of the vestments worn by Jewish priests. They hid nothing.

193. Isaiah 20:2-3--God directly commanded Isaiah to loose the sackcloth from his hips, and he went naked and barefoot for *three years*. The prophet Micah may have done the same thing (see Micah 1:8).

194. Song of Solomon repeatedly expresses appreciation for the naked body.

195. Every Biblical association of nakedness with shame is in reference to a sin *already committed*. One cannot hide from God behind literal or figurative clothing. All stand naked before God.

196. Nakedness cannot automatically be equated with sexual sin.

Linking nudity with sexual sin, to the exclusion of all else, makes as much sense as insisting that fire can only be connected to the destruction of property and life, and is therefore immoral. Sin comes not from nakedness, but from how the state of nakedness is used. Ian Barbour writes: "No aspect of man is evil in itself, but only in its misuse. The inherent goodness of the material order, in which man's being fully participates, is, as we shall see, a corollary of the doctrine of creation."

Pope John Paul II agrees that nudity, in and of itself, is not sinful. "The human body in itself always has its own inalienable human dignity," he says. It is only obscene when it is reduced to "an object of 'enjoyment,' meant for the gratification of concupiscence itself."

197. Nakedness cannot automatically be associated with lust.

It is not reasonable to cover the apples in the marketplace just because someone might be tempted by gluttony, nor is it necessary to ban money because someone might be overcome by greed. Nor is it reasonable to ban nudity, simply because an individual might be tempted to lust. Furthermore, appreciation for the beauty of a member of the other sex, nude or otherwise, cannot be equated automatically with lust. Only if desire is added does appreciation become lust, and therefore sin. Even then, it is the one who lusts, not the object of lust, who has sinned. Bathsheba was never rebuked for bathing, but David for lusting (II Samuel 11:2-12:12). Pope John Paul II writes: "There are circumstances in which nakedness is not immodest. If someone takes advantage of such an occasion to treat the person as an object of enjoyment (even if his action is purely internal) it is only he who is guilty of shamelessness . . . not the other." Margaret Miles observes that "Nakedness and sexuality or lust were seldom associated in patristic writings."

198. Many historical church leaders have disassociated nudity with sexual immodesty. St. Thomas Aquinas, for example, defined an immodest act as one done with a lustful intention. Therefore, someone who disrobes for the sole purpose of bathing or recreating cannot be accused of immodesty.

Pope John Paul II writes: "Sexual modesty cannot then in any simple way be identified with the use of clothing, nor shamelessness with the absence of clothing and total or partial nakedness. . . . Immodesty is present only when nakedness plays a negative role with regard to the value of the person, when its aim is to arouse concupiscence, as a result of which the person is put in the position of an object for enjoyment. . . . There are certain objective situations in which even total nudity of the body is not immodest."

199. Through Christ, the Christian is returned spiritually to the same sinless, shameless state Adam and Eve enjoyed in Eden (Genesis 2:25). There is no question that their nakedness was not sinful. When God creates, nakedness is good. It follows that when God re-creates, nakedness is also good.

200. The Bible says plainly that sexual immorality is sin. Healthy Naturism, however, is entirely consistent for the Christian, who has "crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires." (Galatians 5:24)

201. The Bible calls for purity of heart. Anyone who thinks it is impossible to be pure of heart while nude is ignorant of the realities of nudism, and anyone who believes that it is wrong *even for the pure of heart* to be nude has fallen into legalism, a vice which St. Paul repeatedly denounces.

St. Paul writes: "See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ. . . . Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of the world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules: 'Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!?' These are all destined to perish with use, because they are based on human commands and teachings. Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence. . . . Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience." (Colossians 2:8, 20-23; 3:2)

202. Clothes-compulsiveness creates an unwholesome schism between one's spirit and body. A Christian morality should deal with the person as a whole, healing both spirit and body.

203. Nudity has often been used in the Christian tradition as symbolic of renouncing the world to follow Christ.

Margaret Miles writes: "In the thirteenth century, Saint Bernard of Clairvoux popularized the idea of nudity as symbolic imitation of Christ; it took Saint Francis to act out this metaphor. Francis announced his betrothal to Lady Poverty [i.e. his renunciation of material possessions] by publicly stripping off his clothing and flinging it at the feet of his protesting father" and the local bishop. Several Christian sects have practiced nudity as part of their faith, including the German Brethren of the Free Spirit, in the thirteenth century; the Picards, in fifteenth century France; and, most famously, the Adamites, in the early fifteenth century Netherlands.

204. Many other faiths also support nudity, both historically and in current practice.

For example, the "Digambar" or "sky-clad" monks of Digambar Jainism have gone completely naked as part of their ascetic tradition for 2500 years, though nudity is rare in the dominant Hindu religion. Many other (males-only) Hindu religious orders also practice ritualistic nudity or near-nudity, as they have for hundreds or thousands of years. Tribal Hindus held an annual nude worship service attracting 100,000 in Chandragutti, India until 1987, when it was stopped by the police, in reaction to violence which had erupted the previous year when social workers tried to force clothing on the participants.

Personal experience supports Naturism.

205. One of the most important arguments in support of nudism is personal experience. Personal testimonies in favor of nudism are too numerous to mention. Based on my own experience, I find nudists to be more friendly, open-minded, considerate, respectful, and sharing than non-nudists in general. Their children are more active, and healthier, both physically and mentally. None of these testimonies, of course, compares to personal experience. A single visit to a nudist park or a nude beach will not cause permanent harm to anyone. On the other hand, it may change your life. Experience the freedom for yourself!

Endnotes

Special Thanks

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