

# BEACH BUZZ

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*“Keeping Our Beaches Bare”*

*Hillsborough County to ban public nudity in an effort to curb sex and violence*

## Is there a direct link between nudity and crime?

By Joe Redner

April 25, 2003

Don't you hate it when you go outside in the morning to get your newspaper and see three or four nude people walk by? Doesn't it drive you crazy when you're driving to work and everywhere you look there are nude people: driving their cars, crossing the street, walking their dogs... it's time somebody took a stand against all the rampant public nudity that plagues our community.

Where I live this is not a joke. There are people in Hillsborough County that see nudity everywhere, and have a huge problem with it. But as hard as I look, I don't see any public nudity anywhere. These people with the nudity problem also claim there is a direct link between crime and people being naked. What a joke. In my mind, putting nudity and criminal behavior even in the same sentence is an insult to reasonable people everywhere.

That's why I was so happy to find out that on May 7th some of the least reasonable people in Hillsborough County, the County Commission, will consider imposing a public nudity ban on their residents. Who better to tackle this tough issue than the Hillsborough County Commission? That's right, the same brilliant minds that tried to kill public access television because they didn't like the content and repealed their human rights ordinance because it made the County look too sympathetic to its gay residents will now take on the burning issue of public nudity. Your tax dollars hard at work again.

If you are thinking that the County Commissioners are far too dim to make up such a choice boondoggle all by themselves, your instincts are correct. The inspiration for this ridiculous idea comes to us from our favorite local sexually repressed, guilt ridden, bible thumping, Ashcroftian menace, president of the Florida family association (not capitalized for lack of respect) David Caton. If you've been anywhere near the bay area in the last 10 years, you've probably heard of Caton. He's been spreading his message of hate, sexual repression and fear of nudity to every stupid power hungry conservative politician in the State of Florida.

And this time, he may have hit the mother lode. Commissioner Ronda storms, the queen bee of Plant City politics, possibly the most conservative person to ever don purple polyester pantsuit, the woman who single-handedly cost the taxpayers a fortune in Federal Court because she was afraid to turn off her television set, has taken to Caton's message like a duck to water.

And what is our obsessive-compulsive friend Caton's message? That "the mere appearance of persons in the nude in public places generally increases incidents of prostitution, sexual assaults and batteries, attracts other criminal activity to the community and encourages degradation of women and other activities which break down family structures." Wow. You can do all that just by showing people your breasts. And how does he "prove" that people in their natural state cause all these problems? He's authored a report that says Hillsborough County has adult businesses, and it has crime. But

what the two things have to do with each other, Caton's bogus evidence doesn't show. So instead he relies on divine providence to say that if we reduce nudity in public places, we can solve all our crime problems. Hallelujah!

The fact is that NO legitimate study has ever found a link between sex and violence, much less nudity and criminal behavior. Even the Meese Commission, which was formed by Ronald Reagan to find a connection, couldn't make a credible case. What the studies have shown is that countries that are tolerant of sexual expression have much less sex crime than countries like ours, where draconian laws are imposed to limit natural sexual behavior.

If you think about it, this makes sense. What you are doing when you put in place repressive laws like this "public nudity ban" is taking people's identity away. You're telling them that somehow natural, sexual desire is unhealthy. And what happens when you close off positive avenues for consensual sexual activity? More sex crime, not less. Over the years I have come to the conclusion that people like David Caton and Ronda storms, who advocate these kind of policies, are sexually repressed. They're so scared of their own sexuality that they see a dark and evil side to sex that most of us with healthy sexual identities don't see. They want to impose their problems on us. They want to feel normal by making the rest of us feel abnormal.

On May 7th, the Hillsborough County staff will bring a recommendation to the Commissioners concerning the public nudity ban. As preposterous as all of this sounds, the county government is taking



this very seriously. We need to do the same. It is imperative for all of the club owners and industry people get together and insure that there is NO WAY the county government can reasonably believe that a ban on public nudity would benefit the health, safety, and welfare of it's citizens. They need to know that continued unconstitutional intrusion into our private lives will not be tolerated, and the only way to get that message across is

for all of us to work together.

Every community has a Ronda Storms and a David Caton, but these creatures would never have an impact on your life if it wasn't for other local politicians, who are always willing to jump at a public nudity ordinance like this one. They do it for one simple reason: it's a smokescreen. These political hacks have already been bought and sold by the special interests, and are totally impotent to deal with the

real problems that face your community. They can't really improve your water, transportation, healthcare, environment or public safety, so they've become very good at latching onto the latest morality crusade. If they are really concerned with morals, they should take a look in the mirror. Lying, cheating, and stealing are signs of moral corruption, interest in sex is just a sign that you're a human being.

*<http://www.voiceoffreedom.com/> ☆*