

# BEACH BUZZ

Fall 2003

Volume 3, Number 6

a publication of B.E.A.C.H.E.S. Foundation and its Chapters  
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"Keeping Our Beaches Bare"

## Ban Teen Nude Summer Camps

*Editor's note: The following article was originally posted on the Intellectual Conservative website at [www.intellectualconservative.com](http://www.intellectualconservative.com) on July 4, 2003. Ms. Hartstein's unique premise, essentially diametrically opposed to the usual arguments against social nudity, is discussed and refuted by Marv Frandsen in his article on page 9.*

By Esther Hartstein

Teen nude camps are child abuse of a pernicious sort, and ought to be banned.

Recently, Florida congressman Mark Foley (R-FL), a leading advocate for children, decided to broaden his humanitarian efforts to where they must rightfully be directed: teen nude camps. Legal under Florida State standards of "nude but not lewd," nude camps for teens have been operating full force there for at least ten years.

Should consensual teen recreation in the nude be considered illegal?

Yes, and with good reason. Sending a teen to a nude camp is child abuse. In those formative years where romance and sexual feelings begin to develop, a constant and conditioning exposure to casual nudity in ordinary settings can forever damage one's ability to perceive eroticism.

Some claim that nudism involving minors is not sexual abuse, and most nudists claim that this behavior is not sexual in nature. "We have always been about a wholesome, family oriented environment suitable for people of all ages," said Erich Schuttauf, executive director for the American Association for Nude Recreation this past week in a statement made to The Ledger, a Florida newspaper. True to form, nude resorts and enterprises tend to claim a non-sexual,

platonic environment where suggestive behavior is discouraged. However, this is precisely the problem. After enough time in a nude camp, a male may not associate the term "women's breasts" with Pamela Andersen, dark excitement, or any aroused emotion whatsoever. Instead, the term may conjure up a sagging camp director, a counselor singing "kumbaya" or the annoying tennis instructor.

If nudism is "not sexual," then nudists must be arguing that the human body suddenly becomes enticing when two nudists are alone together. This would require the persons involved to abandon every memory of the naked bodies in the pool, at the campfire, in the bunkhouse, playing volleyball, etc., and come to the revelation that the human body is somehow an interesting novelty. Research would show that this is hardly possible. The Nobel prize winning Physiologist Ivan Pavlov proved that if you ring a bell before feeding a dog enough times, with time the dog will salivate at the sound of the bell alone. Similarly, if a young person sees nudity enough times and does not feel arousal, with time the concepts of arousal and nudity will be somewhat divorced from each other in his or her imagination.

Hence, with the human body stripped of any significance as far as intrigue, excitement and sexuality are concerned, romantic relations take on a European cast, with physical intimacy merely a thoughtless biological urge to be "taken care of" in private, much like using the restroom. During the 1950's, the image of Marilyn Monroe with her skirt billowing around her was enough to sell millions of posters. Today, with nudity a feature of nearly every movie and TV series, appearing in ads and popups on the Internet, Playboy is reporting a decline in sales as more hard-core labels such as

Hustler attract customers looking for something to excite them. In Denmark, one of the most liberated countries in the world, the mode fantasy among women is cheating on their partners – one of the few things which they may experience

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disapproval for doing. The message of these findings is clear: when something is made cheap and commonplace, it ceases to be of interest, and sexuality is no exception. It seems the nudists have done what Catholics and Puritans have unsuccessfully attempted: making eroticism obsolete.

Teen nude camps are child abuse of a pernicious sort, and ought to be banned. Inability to feel desire when looking at nude people, as teenagers at nude camps are being conditioned, is an emotional deformity. Those who promote it, however well-intended and rational, can be objectively categorized as assailants. Just like the physical and sexual assailants and medical malpractitioners who fill our prisons, these people are harming the development of the vulnerable. They should be treated no differently under the law.

A multi-award winning poet, Esther Hartstein has written a book, "Eros Wins The Battle," about a U.S. immigrant fighting for regime change in her native country. The book, filled with Greek myths and poetry, is available at [www.bn.com](http://www.bn.com) (Barnes and Noble) and [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com). ☆