

# Undressed Press

July 24, 2017

## OMG I'M DATING A NON-NUDIST

ALIX SCHUTTAUF

I will call him Dean.

Dean and I had been together about two months before I even thought about telling him. Maybe I was nervous because I am not a fan of rejection, but I knew I had to tell him I was a nudist.



When I broached the subject to him, he looked a little shocked and I asked him what he thought. He said "I didn't think that was a thing. But it really doesn't matter because of how much I care about you."

During our conversation, I mentioned that I go to nudist resorts with my family. He said, "Oh you told them?" My answer was "Who do you think got me involved?" He said, "I'm definitely surprised about this entire conversation. But I still care about you too much."

Yeah, I'm keeping him. Dean didn't know what to say to his parents. I said I could talk to them. He said, "No, let's wait on that. I want them to get to know you first."

After knowing Dean's reaction, I needed to tell my parents I was dating a non-nudist. As I walked in the living room where my parents were, I thought about what I wanted to say to them. My stomach was churning, and I blurted out "I'm dating a non-nudist!" Surprisingly, they didn't hear what I said, so I had to repeat it. They both turned and looked at me, and asked, "What do you want for dinner?" After my



sigh of relief, I told them how I felt about Dean and the fact that he didn't care that I was a nudist. They were happy for me because I had found someone to make me happy and someone I liked so much. Dean and I have been going strong for about a year and a half now, still learning the ins and outs of what a long-term relationship is, and the requirements that go along with that. Also, I have invited Dean to go with me to a nudist resort.

His response was a bit uncertain. "I don't know how I would handle it myself, just because I don't want to stare at anyone by accident," he said. "No worries," I said, "I will get you a pair of dark sunglasses and in a very short time, you'll no longer need them."

It's common to feel this way, especially for someone trying nudism for the first time. His last sentence made me hopeful for the future. He stated, "I definitely want to give it a try at some point."

I grew up in a nudist family, and I have been going to resorts affiliated with AANR all my life. I encourage anyone to experience that feeling of freedom that comes from spending time with friends and family in a wholesome, friendly nudist environment. And who knows, if you're single, you may meet someone who shares your enthusiasm for nudism, or better yet, find someone (like I did) who cares enough about you to entertain the notion of nudism.



**August 8 is the Annual Nudacus II and Full Moon Party. August 26 is the Second "Streak for the Peach" 5K fun run on the nature trail.**

# AANR-NORTHWEST BEACH CELEBRATIONS

SHIRLEY GAUTHIER

AANR-Northwest Government Affairs Team celebrates a 15 year partnership with the Oregon State Parks Department. Adoptions include Rooster Rock State Park through the Oregon Adopt-A-Park program. Sauvie Island-Collins Beach and Rooster Rock State Park adoptions are also contracted through the SOLV adoption program. Our partnerships with officials have been successful because of dues paying AANR members and dedicated volunteers who complete the required four beach cleanups every summer. AANR-Northwest volunteers have completed over 50 beach cleanups. Now that is something to celebrate!



The Willamettans Family Nudist Resort ([www.willamettans.com](http://www.willamettans.com)) is gifting all registered beach volunteers with a two-day pass to their resort in Marcola, Oregon. You must register the day of the event to receive this generous gift. AANR membership is not required to participate. All volunteers welcome and appreciated. Just show up with water in a refillable container, shoes, gloves, hat, lots of sunscreen, and a big smile! Parking fees are waived for volunteers at Rooster Rock. We are working to get parking passes for volunteers at Collins Beach. Do not leave any valuables in your car. AANR-Northwest will be supplying the ever popular AANR dogs (hot dogs) at beach cleanups again this year.



August 26-Rooster Rock State Park hosted by AANR-Northwest Government Affairs Chair (GAT) Shirley Gauthier. We will meet at the East end of the parking area by the nude beach entrance. There will be a group photo at 9 a.m. to be submitted to The Bulletin so don't show up late! Photo participants must sign an AANR photo release. AANR Dog barbecue at noon. Contact [sherbog@msn.com](mailto:sherbog@msn.com) for more details or information.

August 26-Mountaindale Sun Resort ([www.mountaindalesun.com](http://www.mountaindalesun.com)) beach volunteer appreciation dinner is starting at 6 p.m. Mountaindale is providing a free dinner and free day pass for all volunteers. Those that choose to spend the night will be charged a small overnight site fee. Huge thanks to Mountaindale Sun Resort!

August 27-Sauvie Island-Collins Beach starting at 9 a.m. Our efforts will concentrate on the gravel road parking area. Clothes are required in the parking area. An AANR Dog barbecue on the beach will follow after the cleanup. There will be a group photo once we hit the beach! Contact [sherbog@msn.com](mailto:sherbog@msn.com) for further information or details. Raffle prizes are starting to come in from resorts and members who can't participate. If you can't participate and want to contribute it's easy! Simply contact Shirley Gauthier at [sherbog@msn.com](mailto:sherbog@msn.com).



# NUDITY IS THE FIRST STEP TO HEALING IN BODY-IMAGE WORKSHOP

ALEXANDRA E. PETRI

It's a Friday night in Toronto, and Caitlin K. Roberts is getting ready for the evening as if she were getting together with friends. There are bottles of wine — one red, one white — enough for people to have a glass without getting hammered. She slices apples and puts them on plates that she places on the floor alongside spreads of chips and salsa and hummus and pita bread. Twelve pillows form a circle around the snacks; on each pillow is a clean, white hand towel and a clipboard of consent forms arranged on top.

"I don't get chocolate and cheese, because they make people gassy — you don't want that when people are getting naked," Roberts says, adding that she covers her bases by going with vegan bites. "But people don't come here for the food."

As 7 p.m. approaches, Roberts lights candles that she placed throughout the room. Her tailored Spotify playlist isn't co-operating. She skips through others she thinks are too weird, until she settles on Drake. She has a quick but necessary conversation with her trainee, Jassie: "If anyone gets overwhelmed and needs a few minutes, can you step aside with them to make sure they're OK?" Jassie agrees.

Roberts isn't hosting an orgy or a swingers night; she's prepping for Body Pride, a four-hour workshop where strangers come together for a facilitated conversation about body image, sexuality and relationships — clothes off and completely exposed, all of which culminates in a naked dance party and (optional) photo shoot.

Roberts, a 27-year-old cisgender woman and sex educator-in-training, founded Body Pride five years ago. She was inspired by a documentary about Betty Dodson's women's-only group masturbation classes called Bodysex Workshops. Dodson, who is now 87 and recently relaunched her classes two years ago, is one of the founders of the 1970s pro-sex feminist movement.

Watching a documentary about Dodson and her workshops was a transformative moment for Roberts, who at the time was in her early 20s. "Normalized nudity was huge for me," she says.

Roberts had been interested in sex since her teens, but the film and the idea of desexualizing the human body empowered her to take a bold step.

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One night back in December 2011, Roberts sat in her apartment and used her MacBook to take naked photos of herself making silly faces and striking funny poses. She then posted the photos to her blog. "Girls reading this: I want to have a page of full on non-sexual pictures of you naked," she wrote. "Let's be proud of our bodies just as they are."

The responses — most of them positive — flooded in. But one stood out: Will girls send in their own pics or is there going to be a happy naked girl party with lots of cameras? Roberts had an aha! moment. She envisioned creating a safe environment that normalized nudity for people by disconnecting it from sexiness.

A month later, Body Pride was born. The concept might seem odd or frivolous, but some experts argue that socialized nudity helps people become comfortable with their bodies. "People say, 'My (breasts) aren't equal,' or 'I have a scar over here,' " Dodson tells me. "But if you look at all these (naked) bodies . . . you see they are a wonderful thing. How do we ever get to see (that) if we are all shrouded in clothing?"

Research shows that we often equate nudity with sex, even though nudity is not a sexual thing but a natural state of being, says Rosalyn Dischiavo, founder and director of the Institute for Sexuality Education and Enlightenment. "To take nudity out of our lives and to make it something unusual and odd and something that only happens when you're sexual is an enormous mistake," Dischiavo said.

To understand Body Pride, I had to try it. So one Friday night back in February, I awkwardly stood in a cosy attic space above Toronto's Good For Her sex shop, where Roberts holds her classes. The atmosphere was charged with that first-day-of-school nervous energy. After we signed some paperwork, Roberts made an announcement. "We have ground rules to cover, but before we do that, let's get naked," she said nonchalantly, before undressing in front of us.

When she first started Body Pride workshops, Roberts held classes for women only. Soon after, men were asking her if they could also join; she has since made them gender-inclusive. In our group that night, there were four men, seven women and one intersex, gender non-binary person. Most of us were in our 20s, two in their 40s, of varying backgrounds and sexual orientations.

One woman, Liz, tells me that she felt a tightness in her chest as she got undressed. "You're becoming vulnerable enough as it is when you're talking about your insecurities," she says.

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We mostly sat cross-legged, or with our knees tucked into our chest. It's surprising at how little below the hips is revealed when a person sits cross-legged, which is how I sat, hunching my shoulders forward while trying to hide my chest. I caught myself thinking that if only my A-cup breasts were a little bigger, maybe they wouldn't sit so awkwardly in the air and I wouldn't feel so exposed. Other women, too, covered themselves at first, folding their arms across their chests.

Getting naked was just the first step; then came the revealing conversations. (Part of the ground rules of my participating in and writing about Body Pride was that people's identities would remain confidential.) One woman said she was a cancer survivor struggling with the weight she's gained from chemo; another came back for her fourth class; one man said he wanted to understand what makes people insecure; another man said he realized he's still dealing with insecurities he thought were behind him. "This was the first time I ever spoke about my issues with my sensitive complexion, and how my absentee father wasn't around to teach me to shave without damaging (it)," he told me.

I also shared more than I had intended. Random stories tumbled out: About how the first time a boy asked to feel me up, I told him to "go feel a wall"; how I was teased about my frizzy hair as a kid; about my mother's absence the past 10 years; about never feeling good enough.

As we opened up more, our body language did, too. People started to stretch out onto their sides while some pulled one knee into their chest instead of two. I eventually laid on my stomach with my butt in the air.

Roberts says that Body Pride is a step for people, not a solution, to confronting their insecurities. "It's a step in thinking: 'This is the body I have, and it's not going to change. . . . So I may as well put the work into being OK with it, and hopefully one day I will be,' " she says.

That rings true for Liz. At Body Pride, she fought through tears as she talked about how her ex-boyfriend gave her a complex about her differently sized breasts. She told me later that, at one point "it got so bad" she scheduled a consultation with a plastic surgeon.

But being at Body Pride and sitting in a circle with naked strangers, Liz appreciated the beauty of how different we all were. Then, the thought occurred to her: I'm not judging their bodies, so why would they judge mine?

Since attending the workshop that night, she's seen marked improvement in her confidence. "I used to not like being topless in a well-lit room around my current partner for too long," Liz says, adding she'd always put on a shirt, even if she didn't have pants on. "Now, I am just me: I can be naked and not worry about it so much."

To read the full article, click [here!](#)



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## FRANK ANSWERS ABOUT SWIMMING NAKED

**FRANK SENN**

"I recently attended a reunion of the class of 1961 of Bennett High School in Buffalo, NY. As part of the weekend events we were given a tour of our high school to see what had changed and what remained the same. When we went to the pool our tour guide said, "you men will probably remember the barbaric practice of having to swim naked." I protested, "it wasn't barbaric, it was a good tradition." A couple of the guys in our group, with whom I probably had swimming classes, nodded in agreement. The guide asserted, "Well, I think it was barbaric. I don't know what the rationale was for such a practice."

I didn't press the issue, although I thought as a retired teacher he probably should have found out what the rationale was. But here's the answer...or at least an answer: Tradition. It was traditional for boys to swim naked and no one saw any reason to break with the tradition until cultural mores changed radically after the 1960s.

People who didn't experience this find it hard to believe. Many men over 50 testify that they swam naked in high school and college. Many people under 50 don't believe them. But it was the practice and there are some pictures to prove it. The following photo of a swimming class with naked teen age boys was even featured in Life magazine in 1951. It reminds me of what I experienced at Bennett High School in Buffalo during my freshman year (1957-58).

Among other changes, our tour guide pointed out that the diving boards had been removed from the pool because of a fatal diving accident. It was undoubtedly traumatic that such a thing happened. But thousands of boys had learned to dive off those boards, including me. I was never a good diver because I was nearsighted and was always worried about where I would land. But I at least had the experience of trying it under supervision.

When we got to the gym our guide pointed out that the climbing poles and ropes had been removed and climbing was no longer a part of the school gym curriculum. Apparently there had been some accidents. I was sad to hear that the ropes and poles were gone because

I had actually done well in climbing in the 7th and 8th grades and did it in the boys gymnastic show in P.S. 61.

We were often shirtless in elementary school gym class, which was a situation in which adolescent boys were often insecure because our bodies were developing at wildly different rates. Ironically, I felt less self-conscious being





naked in 9th grade swimming class than being shirtless in 8th grade gymnastics. Maybe it was because in swimming we shed those school-issued shorts that accentuated skinny legs.

### Reasons for this Blog Article

Why would I even be interested in responding to the issue of naked swimming in the schools in the old days with a blog article? For two reasons. First, here was a practice most men experienced as recently as fifty years ago, and is a living memory for many of us, and people don't know about it. Some even deny it happened because it doesn't fit our current cultural mores. So this article is an exercise in social history to discuss what was standard practice in America until around 1970. Boys swam naked in American high schools and sometimes teachers or coaches were naked too (although my swimming teacher always wore a swim suit). I set this in the broader context of naked swimming in America.

Second, it fits in with my ongoing "return to the body" project that is evident in many Frank Answer articles and in my book, *Embodied Liturgy* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016). (I actually first broached this topic of swimming naked at the YMCA in my "Frank Answer About Being Naked Before God.") Philosophically, I don't think that the body is just something that we have, as if the real me is something other than the body (like the mind or the soul). Rather, I was created as a body; I am a body with a mind and a soul. So it is a serious thing if the body becomes a source of shame because then we're talking about my shame. There may be issues of which I am ashamed, but not my body as such.

Yet there is body shame. Our society today tends to have crazy attitudes toward the body. The body is glamorized in the media (using impossible models for the rest of us) and this in turn leads to issues of body shame (sometimes producing eating disorders). Let's not think that body shame is only a women's issue. Men also feel that they are physically inadequate when they compare their bodies to media-glamorized images of the male body. Even when I was a youth there were muscle magazines encouraging boys to bulk up so they wouldn't be the skinny kid having sand kicked in his face on the beach—in front of his girl friend, who then walks off with the muscle guy! Today youth use steroids and consume protein shakes to bulk up in order to compare more favorably with ideal models. But many remain dissatisfied with their bodies because the results are never quite as perfect as they desired.

Religions have also played a role in inculcating negative attitudes toward the body, for example, by their emphases on modesty in dress. Whether intended or not, people picked up from this the idea that there's something not quite good about the human body. But God said that what he created was "very good." That includes our bodies. It was Adam and Eve who concluded that they had cause to be ashamed and wanted to cover themselves. God asked them, "Who told you you were naked?" Being ashamed of our bodies is not what God intended. It's caused by situations of our own making. But Christianity affirms that the body is God's good creation and as such it needs to be honored and respected. (For my

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theological affirmation of the body see “Frank Answers About the Body—God's and Ours.”)

## **Reasons for Swimming Naked**

In any event, what our alumni tour guide apparently didn't know is that there was actually a common sense answer for swimming naked in pools. Lint and threads from the cotton and woolen bathing suits worn at the turn of the 20th century clogged up the filters of the early modern indoor swimming pools. It's been claimed that chlorine also degraded the swim wear and sometimes burned skin. More importantly, there was concern that bacteria could cling to woolen bathing suits and spread disease. The American Public Health Association recommended in 1926 that the best prevention of the transmission of disease in the pools was to shower with soap and swim naked. School boards, the YMCA, the Boys' Club and other health clubs with pools followed these recommendations and mandated that men and boys swim naked, which they were used to doing. Women and girls were allowed to wear swimming suits in deference to the view that female modesty should be respected but specified that the suits should not be dyed. Everyone, boys and girls, had to shower naked with soap before entering the pool in the interests of hygiene and public health.

The above photo appeared in an October 1941 issue of Life magazine—a family magazine—in an article dealing with physical education in the public schools. The photographer for Life apparently saw no problem with walking into a boys shower and taking a picture of naked boys for an article that would appear in a popular national magazine.

When I was in elementary school there were “shower periods” in which children were called out of classes to take showers in the separate boys and girls locker rooms in the interest of promoting public health, if their parents signed a permission form. A slogan we heard repeatedly in the 1950s was “Cleanliness is next to godliness.” Today taking showers is no longer required by schools out of concern for child molesting and most students don't.

As showers began to be installed in private homes the practice of school showers abated. But with the installation of home showers, and more than one bathroom in the home, boys and girls became more used to privacy when bathing. Mothers especially began to question the practice of boys swimming naked in schools. It was pointed out that swim suits were being made of synthetic material. Chlorination in the water in the pools was better regulated. Filters were improved. The following story from the Appleton Post in 1961 reports on the emerging controversy and the decision of the school district to maintain the tradition of boys swimming naked.

The American Public Health Association removed its recommendation of nude swimming in 1962. But the weight of tradition kept the practice going in many places for a decade or more longer, as many men testify.

## **The History of Naked Male Swimming**

Where did this tradition come from? Quite simply, it had been the custom for men and boys to swim naked outdoors. Benjamin Franklin was interested in the science of swimming and swam naked in the Thames while in London in the 1750s. Two U.S. presidents—John Quincy Adams and Theodore Roosevelt—were known to swim naked in the Potomac River. Adams, president 1825-1829, stripped down to his birthday suit for laps in the Potomac at 5:00 am every morning.

(A female reporter once sat on his clothes until he answered some questions.) Teddy Roosevelt, president 1901-1909, wrote in his Autobiography that he sometimes went swimming with his “tennis cabinet,” and noted “If we swam the Potomac, we usually took off our clothes.”



Men and boys swam naked into the early 20th century, but not on public beaches. By the late 19th century public bathing beaches had developed and if men swam at the same beaches as women they were required to cover up. “Bathing costumes” at first covered the body from the neck to the knees. This photo from Atlantic City in the early 1900s shows some

fashionable beach attire for men and women.

By the early 20th century men’s fashions reduced the top part to tank tops and the shorts became shorter. But not until the 1930s could men swim shirtless on public beaches. Nevertheless, men did continue to bathe naked in less public places, as this photo indicates.

A common experience shared by many men who were drafted during World War II was being naked together in the military for medical exams, showers, and even swimming. The experience most men had of swimming naked in school and the YMCA eased the transition to naked interaction in the military as millions were drafted or volunteered for service during the war. The following photo shows U.S. Marines on Guadalcanal in 1943 bathing and having fun with a makeshift water slide.

Even as adult males were required to put on swim wear at public beaches back home, boys swimming naked was still so taken for granted that the opening scene in Walt Disney’s 1960 film, Pollyanna, has boys swimming naked off a railroad bridge to give a sense of youth activities in the small town where the story took place.

To read the full article, click [here!](#)



# AANR AND AANR-REGIONAL CONVENTIONS, MEETINGS, AND EVENTS

## JULY 2017

July 27-30, 2017

### [AANR-West Convention](#)

[DeAnza Springs Resort](#)

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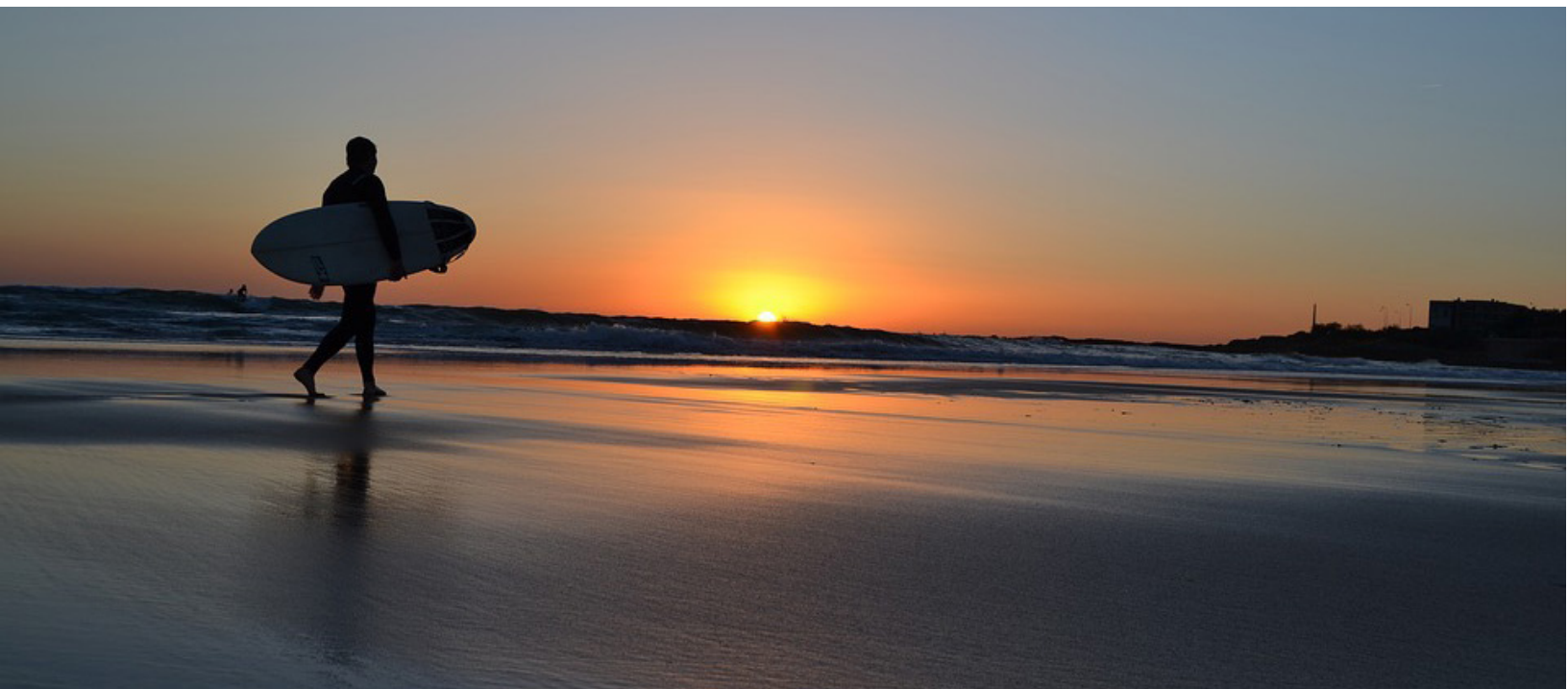
## AUGUST 2017

August 7-13, 2017

### [AANR Convention](#)

[Oaklake Trails](#)

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## OCTOBER 2017

October 6-8, 2017

### [AANR-West Fall Festival](#)

[Shangri La Ranch](#)

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## NOVEMBER 2017

November 4, 2017

### [AANR-West Fall Board Meeting](#)

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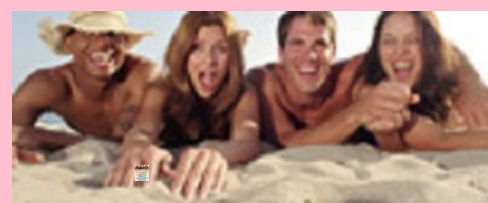
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