

# CRÈCHES BANNED BUT NOT PUBLIC NUDITY?

For most of American history, manger scenes adorned public property at Christmastime without controversy. It was also normal to ban public nudity. But times have changed: the authorities in Santa Monica and San Francisco recently ruled on these issues.

In 2011 an atheist in Santa Monica succeeded in getting his anti-Christmas message shown alongside a nativity scene in Palisades Park, and in 2012 the city ruled against all of these displays. Not surprisingly, an anti-Christian group from Madison, Wisconsin, Freedom From Religion Foundation, heralded the bigot. A federal judge sided with the Santa Monica officials offering an opinion that deserves an entry in the *Guinness Book of World Records*: she ruled that displays of any kind would destroy the turf and obstruct ocean views in the park. Apparently this had never happened in the 60 years that the nativity scene occupied the area.

Homosexuals have been walking around naked in San Francisco with increasing regularity, and lawmakers recently ruled to adopt an ordinance that would make public nudity illegal. However, there was a caveat: because gay pride is inseparable from genital liberation, the law still allows these men to go naked at the annual gay pride parade, and at the Folsom Street Fair; the latter event is marked by naked homosexuals who whip each other in the street. Jolly for them, they will still be allowed to torture themselves naked in public even if the law is passed.

Such is the state of American culture in 2012, California-style.