Unspeakable depravity? Nope, it’s a young Philippe DeLacy getting a rub-down from Nana in the 1924 “PETER PAN”. The scene was calculated to convey domestic bliss, obviously. But it would not be shot this way today. There is too much sex in children’s bottoms.
White slave trafficking in Outer Mongolia?  Nope, it’s a scene from the German silent “KRIEMHILD’S REVENGE”, contrasting pastoral “innocence” with the scourge (literally) of war.  

Source: indeterminate

Nothing better illustrates the reactionary view of childhood which has swept the western world under the guise of “child protection” than this whole fraught question of child nudity. Just forty years ago, full frontal adult nudity was strictly forbidden on the screen, but child nudity was taken to be implicitly asexual, in heartwarming domestic scenes of bathnight and bedtime. Today, adult nudity on screen is almost passé. It is child nudity which is radioactively sexual and strictly forbidden. It is now a federal offence in the US for a film-maker even to solicit a scene – however innocuous – involving child nudity, and an offence for any parent or guardian to consent to it, being guilty under law, in effect, of prostituting their own children. The child’s feelings on the subject, needless to say, are irrelevant.

When a major London art gallery exhibiting a respected American photographer’s nude studies of her own children can be raided by the Obscene Publications Squad, and commercial developing laboratories across the country are required to notify the police of any family snapshots featuring naked kids at the beach etc, then we are clearly in the throes of a new and virulent brand of McCarthyism. The naked child is presumed to be pornographic unless it can be proven otherwise. People are being sent to prison now for the crime of possessing photographs that were freely on sale just twenty years ago, although at no time was there any corresponding sanction for possession even of extreme adult pornography. A child nude, the experts tell us, is a record of some undiscovered depravity, the image of a rape victim. To possess it is to condone rape. This is arrant nonsense of course, but it is also law in most developed countries, and heavy pressure is brought to bear on those countries – Holland, Denmark – which presume to affect a more tolerant view. McCarthyists will brook no dissenters.

All objective distinctions between simple nudity, mild erotica and bald-faced pornography have been shouted down in this general crescendo of intolerance. It was the reactionary “Hays code” of the 1920s which first stipulated “the genitalia of minors” as one of a broad tranche of images and themes – extramarital affairs, lascivious embraces, drunkenness, disrespect of the flag – which it was verboten to show on the screen. Like the Valsted Act, the Hays Code fell quickly into disrepair, and by the 1960s a general relaxation of most tabus surrounding nudity had taken effect. In the 1970s, cinema began to deal candidly (if not always intelligently) with themes such as homosexuality, teenage prostitution and pederasty. Children became the focal point of blockbuster horror films, a whole sub-genre developed on the sexual “initiation” of young adolescent boys by adult women. A backlash was anticipated, and it came by stealth – not from the religious right, but primarily from the women’s lobby, a left-of-centre neo-conservative strand who coalesced into the sex abuse industry, exploiting children as a weapon to undermine and discredit male sexuality.
Canada, Ireland, Australia and the UK, followed by much of mainland Europe, have vied to outdo one another in their eagerness to contract this American disease. It is fervently to be hoped that sanity will return in due course, and McCarthyist scaremongering will pass once again, for a brief while, out of fashion.

The effects of this new Puritan outlook - the child as Untouchable - may be seen clearly in the trends of children’s fashion from the 1970s to the present. Boys’ clothes have grown ever baggier and dowdier, becoming outsize sacks to obscure the physical shape beneath, and reinforcing body guilt in the wearer. Boys’ hair fashions have grown more and more like the hair fashions of Alcatraz. Young girls’ fashions, conversely, have grown steadily more sexually explicit, and parents seem to see no contradiction in throwing their sons into ugly coalsacks while draping their 8 and 9 year old daughters in midriff-revealing tops, figure-hugging slacks, etc. The Spice Girls were actually held up to female children around the world as an ideal to imitate, as though it were not painfully obvious the one thing the Spice Girls ever had going for them was certainly not musical talent. So anorexia and bulimia in pre-pubescent girls, baggy clothes, body shame and resurgent homophobia in prepubescent boys - these are some of the measurable side effects of society’s new mantra: the child is no longer asexual, it is avowedly heterosexual, all the more reason why we must remove from it any and all access to sexually explicit information. And so the teen pregnancy rates mushroom, the sexually-transmitted disease clinics thrive.

Because the proscription on nudity and children runs both ways - not only may children not be seen in the nude (and recognised as sexual creatures), they may also not see nude adults (lest they begin to explore their own sexual interests). Paranoia about the draconian new legal posture has swept the internet, creating an opportunity for self-styled “adult verification” services, whom one must pay in advance before being granted access to what is now universally called “adult material” (ie: pornography), “child locks” are an essential item for every family computer and satellite decoder, and self-censoring websites are the order of the day. Probably as much as 60% of material currently on the worldwide web serves one sexual appetite or another. Clearly there is a healthy demand for it, among females as well as males. But global commerce has its own designs on the web - it is to become a shopping mall in cyberspace, and hence must be rendered “family friendly”. Which translates as driving that 60% of family unfriendly (sex-based) material into a locked closet. It is hard to see how this could be positive for the sexual well-adjustment of the next generation, but it proceeds from the subjective thesis that pornography - of any sort - is a Bad Thing.

In such a paranoid climate, occasional glimpses of naked children in films are becoming increasingly problematic, particularly for TV broadcasting companies, but while those heartwarming bedtime and bathnight scenes are being handled today with the absolute caution of radioactive waste, there's not much evidence that these brief shots are being judiciously snipped out of older material when it is broadcast. Some more eager collaborators - the Disney corporation for one - have been “trimming” their own back catalogue of untoward skinny-dipping scenes and the like, or “fogging out” nude bathing scenes which could not be cut.

What is so heartily depressing in all of this is the resounding silence - the silence of cultural observers who may well recognise the harm that is being done, but dare not condemn it, or dispute its core assumptions, for fear of being branded an “advocate of paedophilia”. That grotesquely distorted Greek word has become the all-purpose Aunt Sally, a pretext under which any draconian legislation may be excused, any infringement of civil liberties countenanced, any abrogation of free speech tolerated. The nude child must be eradicated because it acts as an incitement to these “paedophiles”, it inflames their hideous appetites and sends them sex-crazed onto the streets in search of a victim. The truth of the matter is rather different. The nude child must be eradicated because it very often reveals children are not the sexual innocents some of their elders prefer to believe. It undermines the myth of childhood purity which these New Victorians cling to with a ferocity bordering on psychosis. The evidence must be destroyed. But haven’t we come across this book-burning tendency before? Is it alright now, as long as we call the Jews by another name?
Acla's Descent Into Floristella
L'Albero degli Zoccoli
Angyali Udvozlet
The Baby of Macon
Barnens Ö
The Blue Lagoon
Bogus

Bottoms Up!

No protestations of “innocence” here – a child hermaphrodite is produced to give his/her benediction on a youth tormented by impotence in Fellini’s baroque carnival of decadence in ancient Rome “FELLINI-SATYRICON”.

As a side note, Fellini added his name to the title not out of vanity, but to distinguish his film from a quickie, more sexually explicit “SATYRICON” released just weeks ahead of his own, and which quickly became embroiled in legal problems when a boy of 14 (playing the much-desired slave boy Giton) was assumed to have witnessed the orgy scenes being shot (he hadn’t, in fact).

Source: The International Encyclopedia of Film


UK 1960: Jimmy Edwards boarding school farce, spinoff from a TV corporal punishment sitcom for kids. One scene has Edwards benignly escorting a new boy from his empty dormitory to the older boys’ dorm. Of course, the boy’s pyjama trousers drop to his ankles as he scuttles after the Head. The film’s title makes abundantly plain where most of the humour lies.

Sweden TV serial 1977: “The Brothers Lionheart” – Astrid Lindgren story in which a crippled young boy (Lars Söderdahl) dies and rejoins his elder brother in a mediaeval fantasy realm of dragons and wizards. When they meet again they go swimming naked in a river, something they could never do together in their former life. A warm and touching story.
The Browning Version
US 1994: Albert Finney remake of the Terrence Rattigan play about a retiring public schoolmaster, pointlessly updated to the present, contains a brief school shower sequence, where a senior boy humiliates Finney’s private Latin pupil.

The Champ
Remake of the Wallace Beery/Jackie Cooper weepie about a washed-up prizefighter. In one scene, Jon Voigt takes son Ricky Schroder swimming at the beach. The boy undresses so hurriedly his swimshorts come off with his trousers. Voigt ad-libs “Keep your pants on, we don’t want to get arrested!” and Schroder stares at him astonished, expecting the director to cry “cut!”, but the slip looks so natural the scene was left in.

The Double McGuffin
Greg Hodges moons his pals during a brief swimming sequence.

El Topo
Poland: Obscure surrealist Western in which the director/star’s son, Brontis Jodorowsky, 7, escorts the Clint Eastwood style protagonist during the first half hour of the film (for no accountable reason) stark naked but for a cowboy hat. It’s surreal I guess.

Fatty Finn
Australia 1980: Based on a popular cartoon strip character. Ben Oxenbould as the title character (who isn’t inordinately fat) is upturned in the street by the school bully and his gang, getting some icky substance poured onto his naked rear, later fleeing through the town in his socks only.

Fellini-Satyricon

Fellini

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The Genesis Children
Gotcha
Australia children’s short: Smug practical joker Daniel D’Amico is hoist on his own petard when his elder sister plays a prank back on him - turning off the outdoor water main while he’s alone in the house taking a shower. He wraps a towel round him and steps out to turn the water back on, but shuts himself out of the house. After various scrapes he finds himself dangling naked from his own bedroom window before a jeering crowd of all the people he’s played tricks on before. D’Amico is wearing flesh-coloured briefs for most of the action.

The Fool Killer
Edward Albert (14) in the bath, and in a brief nude swimming sequence generally cut from TV prints.

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about

UK TV documentary 2001: survey of children’s prisons worldwide finds it necessary to show us a couple of shower scenes along the way, including a Texas “boot camp” where one 15-year old inductee is being harangued by an army drill sergeant step by step through his shower.

Kam Dostaci Ranni Ptace

Kids Behind Bars
UK TV documentary 2001: survey of children’s prisons worldwide finds it necessary to show us a couple of shower scenes along the way, including a Texas “boot camp” where one 15-year old inductee is being harangued by an army drill sergeant step by step through his shower.

Lessons at the End of Spring
UK 1969: Twins Sam’n’Eric, and some of the smaller boys, dispense with clothing altogether on their adult-free island, and one boy is seen being switched on the bare bottom at Jack’s hunter’s camp. There was much nude swimming off-camera too during the weeks spent shooting the film. These shots appeared years later in a photo book: “The Boy – a Photographic Essay”, which was on general sale, but would now be deemed pornography.
UK 1971: Shortly before they’re murdered at Macbeth’s behest, Macduff’s son (Mark Dightam, 12) is being bathed by his mother while they discuss the nature of treachery.

Robert Joanie, 12, playing the central Inuit Indian as a boy, is bathed by a nurse on his arrival at a mission hospital.

After falling into an Indian river, runaway game-hunter’s son (Jay North) and his Indian friend make a fire to dry off. Naked, Jay North tries to fashion a loincloth for himself, but forgets to cover the rear, much to the amusement of the other boy.

Ted Eccles

US 1984: A “body double” stand-in was used for the momentary shot where Jennifer Connelly, as Deborah, rehearsing her ballet steps, taunts the boy Noodles with a sight of her naked bottom as she undresses - slowly. No “body double” was required, it seems, when Noodles himself drops his trousers a few scenes later for a read in “the can”, and is interrupted by the neighbourhood child-whore Peggy.

Oodles of naked and semi-naked young Malay boys dog the heels of lust-driven exile Trevor Howard.

Philippe DeLacy is bathed by Nana, the family dog.

Boy forced at knifepoint to strip and dance on a table by his possessed uncle.

“My Favourite Concubine” - Pupils bathing and beaten at Peking Opera School.

1969: Several boys are seen skinny-dipping over the narrated opening titles, but later, when the central character (Mitch Vogel) does likewise with Rupert Crosse after hauling their car through a mudhole, he is resolutely shown above the waterline only, and in long shot.

Mark Lester (14), examines his genitals before a mirror (while the camera examines his buttocks).

Pu, 8, goes nude bathing with his pastor father.

Kimber Shoop III

Lolo Garcia as boy with wings.

Czechoslovakia 1970: “I Can Jump Over Puddles Again” - Following a sound beating from his mother, Vladimir Dlouhy (11) is bathed in the parlour by mother and sisters, where she discovers the many bruises from his frantic attempts to vault a paddock fence (his father has promised to teach him to ride a horse once he can
vault it). Miraculously, there’s not even a gentle glow on his bottom from the furious switching that went before.

: John Philip Hogdon and an African boy go off on safari together to prove their manhood, stopping for the obligatory nude swimming scene midway.

Village of Dreams Japan
Visit to a Chief’s Son

Vor
Walkabout
War of the Bottoms
With Six You Get Eggroll
Zamri - Oumi - Voskresni!

US 1968: Jimmy Bracken & Richard Steele
USSR 1989: “Freeze – Die – Stand Up” - Runaway Valerka, ±13 (Pavel Nazarov) is stripped and smeared with grease before being shoved through a window to aid in a jewellery robbery by adult thieves he's fallen in with (and who plan to kill him later).

France 19: Boys in a boarding school dormitory are rudely roused from their slumbers by a schoolmaster, several of the boys curled up in too-brief nightshirts. Repeated in the famous slow motion pillow fight sequence. Also, during playground break, some boys tease the occupants of the outdoor toilet by flinging open the doors, and are chased off by one occupant with his shorts round his ankles.
What the eye doesn’t see – the producers needn’t fret about...

*British spy Mahbub-Ali gives his sidekick a good scrubbing for the “Sahib-school” in “KIM”*

Source: indeterminate website

*In “NIGHT HAIR CHILD”, Mark Lester tries to seduce stepmother Britt Ekland by fondling her breasts while he’s in the bath and she’s on the phone – he must have guessed they don’t make good electrical conductors.*

Source: Movieboys website
Rather more demure bath scenes occurred in the following films, the camera taking great care not to reveal that the child actor/actress is wearing briefs below the waterline. No “body doubles” required here then:

- **Au Revoir Les Enfants**
  - : Piers Bishop
- **Ballad in Blue**
  - TV 95: *Kenny Vadas* as Harvey (14), given a good rub down and talking to by his valet after staging a “man overboard” hoax aboard his father’s luxury ocean liner.
- **Captains Courageous**
  - : *Mason Gamble* sleeps over at the Wilsons’ home while his folks are away – bathnight encapsulating for good ol’ Mrs Wilson all the lost joys of parenthood.
- **Dennis the Menace**
  - UK 1971: Runaway adolescent lovers *Sean Bury* and *Anicie Alvina* sharing a tub (tch tch)
  - : *Mason Gamble* as Harvey (14), given a good rub down and talking to by his valet after staging a “man overboard” hoax aboard his father’s luxury ocean liner.
- **Friends**
  - : *Mason Gamble* sleeps over at the Wilsons’ home while his folks are away – bathnight encapsulating for good ol’ Mrs Wilson all the lost joys of parenthood.
- **Huckleberry Finn**
  - : *Sammy Snyders* (14) in a tub, being scrubbed down by his hero/mentor Mahbub Ali (Errol Flynn).
- **Huckleberry Finn and his Friends**
  - : *Dean Stockwell* (14) in a tub, being scrubbed down by his hero/mentor Mahbub Ali (Errol Flynn).
- **Kim**
  - 1950: *Dean Stockwell* (14) in a tub, being scrubbed down by his hero/mentor Mahbub Ali (Errol Flynn).
- **A King in New York**
  - : *Michael Chaplin*
- **The Lost Boys**
  - : *Corey Haim*, singing along with the radio to 'I Ain't Got A Man' while his pet dog guards the tub from his proto-vampire elder brother.
- **Night Hair Child**
  - : Bad seed *Mark Lester* (with strategically placed rubber duck) fondles the breasts of new step-mum Britt Ekland while she’s on the phone to his father. His natural pubertal sexual interests are presented by the film as symptomatic of a nascent psychopath.
- **Night of the Hunter**
  - : *Billy Chapin*
- **Oliver!**
  - UK 1968: *Mark Lester* again, in a standing tub, being scrubbed by several friendly tarts in Fagin's den to the ringing tune of "I'd - Do - Anyfink - For - You - Dear - Anyfink".
- **The Reivers**
  - See above
- **Tom Brown’s Schooldays**
  - UK 1950: *John Charlesworth* as East pops out of the tub as Brown returns from a grim visit to the Headmaster. “Did you get a flogging?” he inquires brightly, towel preserving his modesty. No modesty needed for bum-shots however, as in an earlier scene he and Brown dash naked to leap into a river.
- **The Whipping Boy**
  - US TV 1994: 12-year old rat-catcher *Truan Munro* gets scrubbed down in the castle kitchens when he’s pressganged into being the prince’s new whipping boy.

~ 128 titles ~

ADDENDA:

- Aldri Mer 13!
- Amazonie – les Indiens Wayanas
- Apt Pupil
- At
- Blinker
- Cache Cash
- Le Cercle Parfait
- Child Bride
- The Children of Theatre Street
- CrissCross
- Death in the Seine
- Deux Imbeciles Heureux
- Dobrodruzstvi s Nahym Klukem
- Le Fils du Requin
- Der Gruene Heinrich
- Iki Haole
- Das Indianerspiel
- Island on Bird Street
- Turkey/WG 1982: *Haran Yesilyurt* (±15) and his father in a Turkish bath
Der Laden
Lena: My 100 Children
Little Cheung
Le Petit Garçon
Public Bath
Qi Qiao Fu
The Reivers
La Revolte des Enfants
Sciùscià
Ti Kniver i Hjertet
Torzok