

October 17, 2008

Folsom Street Fair

[Folsom Street Fair](#) is the ULTIMATE San Francisco experience. The event takes place on the last Sunday in September as the finale to Leather Pride Week. What began as a small street fair in 1984 is today California's third largest spectator event and the world's largest leather event, attracting 400,000 people. Folsom Street Fair is also a showcase for sadomasochism and a grand spectacle of adult-themed exhibitionism.

If you're the type of person who was offended by the one-second flash of Janet Jackson's breast during the Super Bowl half-time show, then stop here. On second thought, continue on. You need to open your mind. Open your miiiiiiind...

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xO1kKemcwYk>

Keep in mind that all proceeds from Folsom Street Fair, including gate donations and beverage sales, are given to qualified local charities. These include AIDS organizations and the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, who provide money to a number of different worthy causes. The event generates over \$250,000 annually for charity. Give and you shall receive (a spanking, that is).



Shock the Monkey

I first attended Folsom Street Fair about 10 years ago when I started visiting San Francisco on a regular basis. I found the costumes to be amusing and the exhibitionism titillating. The sadomasochism was slightly disturbing but mostly entertaining. No matter how open-minded I like to think I am, however, there is always at least one thing every year that shocks me.

No, I wasn't shocked by the guy getting paddled, no matter how swollen and red his ass became.

All the guys playing naked twister didn't phase me one bit.

How about the woman sitting topless on her window sill, two stories up? Yawn.

I wasn't even shocked when I ran into my dentist dressed up in a skimpy Clockwork-Orangesque outfit. Heck, I saw him at a bar just a couple weeks earlier dressed (and by that I mean BARELY dressed) like a fairy.

Was I startled by the woman wearing a leather corset and strap-on dildo? Hardly... although I WOULD be shocked if she were using her strap-on appendage to have sex with another woman or, even more shocking, a guy!



Among my favorites every year include the people dressed as horses - complete with bridles, reins, blinders, and horse tails - pulling their masters in carriages.

My least favorite are the pierced penises proudly on display by guys in crotchless chaps. Two guys with padlocks hanging from their pierced dicks was the shocker a few years back. Blechhh!

I was most intrigued this year by the man walking around completely nude holding his huge, white snake... and by that I mean his large, albino python! A large crowd of people surrounded him wherever he went, and he even received mention in the *San Francisco Chronicle* the next day. I think snakes are cool, especially albinos.







The runner up for Shocker of Folsom Street 2008 would have to be the guy who walked up to the side of a building, whipped out his penis, and started urinating. Oddly, the ground beneath his feet was dry. It turns out he was peeing in a drinking cup. He then went searching for someone who was into water sports like himself. Perhaps he found that man I saw lurking by the port-o-potties holding a "human urinal" sign. Gross!

And The Winner Is...

The winner for Shocker of Folsom Street (literally this year) was the woman I saw taking a beating in the charity spanking booth. She seemed to be enjoying her whipping until her torturer took out a small taser gun. He shocked her in the back and buttocks and legs. It seemed to be quite painful from the look on her face, but she didn't tell him to stop. The whole thing made me quite queasy, and I had to move on.



In my opinion, one hasn't experienced San Francisco until one has been to Folsom Street Fair. I think, however, I shall remain an inside observer of this yearly spectacle and not an active participant.

Or maybe I just need to open my mind a little bit more.