



BOISE PUBLIC LIBRARY

MAYOR: Lauren McLean | DIRECTOR: Jessica Dorr

MEMO

TO: Rebecca Lemmons, Board President
FROM: Jessica Dorr, Library Director
CC: Boise Public Library Board of Trustees
DATE: 11/7/2024
RE: Request for Reconsideration – *The Children's Illustrated Bible: Stories Retold*

Overview

On October 24, 2024, Library Staff received a Request for Reconsideration form regarding *The Children's Illustrated Bible: Stories Retold* by Selina Hastings. This memo provides an overview of the title and its circulation history, an analysis of the title through the lens of the "Children's School and Library Protection Act," and a recommendation to the Board for consideration in the November meeting.

Background

The Children's Illustrated Bible: Stories Retold by Selina Hastings was first published in 1994 and remains in print today. *The Children's Illustrated Bible: Stories Retold* was well-received when published and has had multiple reprints due to continued interest including a new edition in 2004. After receiving the Request for Reconsideration, staff searched the collection and found that the Boise Public Library owns five copies of the title with a copy at each of our five locations. All copies are in the youth non-fiction collection.

The title was added to the collection in accordance with the Library's [Collection Development and Maintenance](#) Policy. While staff were unable to find professional reviews, articles, or awards regarding *The Children's Illustrated Bible: Stories Retold*, they were able to find public reviews as well as analyze title placement within the youth non-fiction collection. (Screenshots and links to pertinent sites are included at the end of this memo beginning on page five.)

Due to ongoing community interest in children's bibles and stories, staff purchased copies of *The Children's Illustrated Bible: Stories Retold* for all locations in November 2019 to meet ongoing community interest. Since that time, the copies have been checked out 76 times from the Boise Public Library. In 2023, youth non-fiction titles checked out an average of four times. So far this year, copies of *The Children's Illustrated Bible: Stories Retold* have met that average.

MAIN LIBRARY
 715 S. Capitol Blvd., Boise, Idaho 83702
 P: 208-972-8200 | TTY: 800-377-3529

LIBRARY! AT
 BOWN CROSSING
 P: 208-972-8360

LIBRARY! AT
 COLE & USTICK
 P: 208-972-8300

LIBRARY! AT
 COLLISTER
 P: 208-972-8320

LIBRARY! AT
 HILLCREST
 P: 208-972-8340

BOISE CITY COUNCIL: Colin Nash (President), Meredith Stead (President Pro Tem), Kathy Corless, Jimmy Hallyburton, Jordan Morales, Luci Willits

Applicability to the “Children’s School and Library Protection Act”

This Request for Reconsideration does not meet the legal requirements for being considered under the “Children’s School and Library Protection Act” due to the following reasons:

- The request was not filed by or on behalf of an impacted minor.

Request to remove *The Children’s Illustrated Bible: Stories Retold* from the Boise Public Library collection

Staff reviewed *The Children’s Illustrated Bible: Stories Retold* based on the concerns raised in the Request for Reconsideration form:

- “Presentation of a myth as reality. The sexual content is secondary”
- “Religious indoctrination”
- “Not offer to minors” “21+”
- “In addition to sexual content, there is substantial writing about murder, genocide, slavery and religiously inspired violence.”
- The Request for Reconsidered cited nine pages with specific concerns for each page

Staff researched the Dewey Decimal assigned area within the collection, looked at age recommendation by publisher and book vendor, and considered public feedback from review sites. Based on Boise Public Library’s [The Nature and Quality of Materials Regulation](#), *The Children’s Illustrated Bible: Stories Retold* meets the criteria to remain in the collection:

- suitability of subject and style for intended audience
- present and potential relevance to community needs
- insight into human and social condition
- skill, competence, and purpose of author
- attention of critics, reviewers, and public
- scope and authority of subject matter
- representation of challenging, though, extreme or minority, point of view
- scope and authority of subject matter

Regarding the concerns that *The Children’s Illustrated Bible: Stories Retold* presents myth as a reality and is not appropriate for minors, staff considered the Dewey Decimal placement of the title, recommended ages for the title as well as the public feedback available on review sites.

- The Dewey Decimal system of classification has a range for religion 220-290.
- More specifically, 220.9505 is for “Bible stories retold”, which is where *The Children’s Illustrated Bible: Stories Retold* is located.
- The publisher markets the title for 8- to 12-year-olds.
- One of our primary book vendors, Ingram, has included the title on their September 2024 Expertly Curated Lists of Top Juv {juvenile} 100s & 200s.



- Public reviews on two sites referenced use of the title with children and grandchildren, and one site referenced use with a 5th/6th grade Catholic religious education program.

Regarding the concerns that *The Children's Illustrated Bible: Stories Retold* is pornographic, staff considered its content under the three prongs of the Miller/Ginsberg Test:

- Based on the opinion of BPL staff and the public ratings on Amazon and Good Reads, as well as the number of times the title has been checked out by users of the Boise Public Library, *The Children's Illustrated Bible: Stories Retold*, does not violate contemporary community standards.
 - It does not appeal to the prurient interest of minors as judged by the average person.
- While the book does reference sexual content, murder, violence, etc., that in and of itself does not constitute prurient interest and is not patently offensive.
- The Library's version of *The Children's Illustrated Bible: Stories Retold* has 320 pages and with nine called out as concerning. Taken as a whole, BPL staff believe the title has serious literary, artistic, political, and/or scientific value. This is supported by the public reviews linked below.

Then staff considered the concern that *The Children's Illustrated Bible: Stories Retold* is harmful to minors.

- While some reviewers indicate that *The Children's Illustrated Bible: Stories Retold* is also useful for adults, they did not indicate it was not appropriate for minors. Most reviewers referenced use with older children including several specifically calling out upper elementary ages, which indicates that the publisher age range recommendation of 8-12 years old is appropriate for the content.
- Staff also considered that the title has been reprinted at least three times and has been available since 1994. The fact that it is still showing up on a "Top Juv" list from Ingram, a vendor many libraries use and trust, indicates the strong continuing interest in the topic and the specific title.

Recommendation

Staff acknowledge that *The Children's Illustrated Bible: Stories Retold* is not a title that is of interest to everyone in the Boise community. As stated in the Library's Collection Development and Maintenance Policy, the Board recognizes that the residents of Boise possess widely diverse and separate interests, backgrounds, cultural heritages, social values, and needs. Specifically, *The Children's Illustrated Bible: Stories Retold* provides material for social/religious customs at a younger reading and interest level, which encourages informal self-education.

As noted, *The Children's Illustrated Bible: Stories Retold* is in the youth non-fiction collection. The youth non-fiction collection includes a wide range of topics including religious stories and mythology from various cultures, unexplained phenomenon such as aliens, UFOs and bigfoot, historical accounts of times before humans, narrative non-



fiction, and a range of other topics that some people believe in and some people do not. Staff use the Dewey Decimal Classification system to catalog and shelve materials in a way that will allow people to find topics of interest without the need for them to engage with topics they don't agree with or find of interest.

Based on these findings, staff recommend keeping *The Children's Illustrated Bible: Stories Retold* in the collection and in its current classification number in the youth non-fiction collection.



Documentation:

Dewey Decimal Placement:

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL dewey.org/webdewey/index_11.html?recordId=ddc%3a220.1-.9. The page features a navigation bar with buttons for SEARCH, ADVANCED SEARCH, BROWSE, COMMENTS, UPDATES (136), and MARC. Below the navigation bar is a search input field with a GO button and a Build input field. The main content area is titled "220.1-220.9 Generalities" and lists the following categories:

- [200](#) Religion
- [220-290](#) Bible and specific religions
- [220](#) The Bible
- [220](#) Bible

220.1-220.9 Generalities

- [220.1](#) Origins and authenticity
- [220.3](#) Encyclopedias and topical dictionaries
- [220.4-220.5](#) Texts, versions, translations
- [220.6](#) Interpretation and criticism (Exegesis)
- [220.7](#) Commentaries
- [220.8](#) Nonreligious subjects treated in Bible
- [220.9](#) Geography, history, chronology, persons of Bible lands in Bible times

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL dewey.org/webdewey/index_11.html?recordId=ddc%3a220.95. The page features a navigation bar with buttons for SEARCH, ADVANCED SEARCH, BROWSE, COMMENTS, and UPDATES (136). Below the navigation bar is a search input field with a GO button. The main content area is titled "220.95 History" and lists the following categories:

- [200](#) Religion
- [220-290](#) Bible and specific religions
- [220](#) The Bible
- [220](#) Bible
- [220.1-220.9](#) Generalities
- [220.9](#) Geography, history, chronology, persons of Bible lands in Bible times

220.95 History

- [220.95/001-220.95/009](#) Standard subdivisions
- [220.95/05](#) Bible stories retold



Other review sites:

Good Reads: <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/237432>

Amazon:

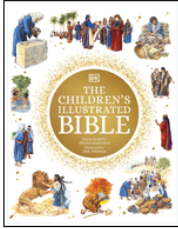
<https://www.amazon.com/Childrens-Illustrated-Bible-Selina-Hastings/dp/1405303255>

Alibris: <https://www.alibris.com/reviews/book/1058634/The-children%27s-illustrated-Bible>

[return to list](#)

The Children's Illustrated Bible (Reissue) (DK Bibles and Bible Guides)

Contributor(s): [DK](#) (Author)



ISBN: 0744039622 **EAN:** 9780744039627

Publisher: [DK Publishing \(Dorling Kindersley\)](#) ([View Publisher's Titles](#))


US SRP: \$25.99 US

Binding: Hardcover

Pub Date: September 07, 2021

Annotation:
Presents more than one hundred stories from the Old and New Testaments, accompanied by photographs, maps, and illustrations.


This item is **Returnable**



Additional Information

BISAC Categories:
- [Juvenile Nonfiction](#) | [Religion](#) | [Biblical Reference](#)

LC Subjects:
- [Bible stories, English](#) - [Bible stories](#)

 **Expertly Curated Lists**
• [Top Juv 100s & 200s](#)

Dewey: [220.9505](#)

LC Call Number: [B5551.2](#)

Series:
[DK Bibles and Bible Guides](#)

Features: Index , Maps , Illustrated , Ikids , Price on Product , [Table of Contents](#)

Target Age Group: 08 to 12

Physical Info: 0.94" H x 10.16" L x 8.03" W (2.7 lbs) 320 pages

Carton Quantity: 10

Number of Units in Package: 1