



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: 12/3/2024
RE: Request for Reconsideration – *The Renaissance Nude*

Overview

On November 13, 2024, Library Staff received a Request for Reconsideration form regarding *The Renaissance Nude* edited by Thomas Kren with Jill Burke and Stephen J. Campbell. 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 December meeting.

Background

The Renaissance Nude was published in 2018 and added to the Boise Public Library collection in December of 2018. Boise Public Library currently owns one copy of the title at the Downtown Library. *The Renaissance Nude* is in the adult non-fiction collection located on the second floor.

The title was added to the collection in accordance with the Library’s [Collection Development and Maintenance](#) Policy. Links to reviews are included at the end of this memo starting on page three.

Boise Public Library’s copy of *The Renaissance Nude* has been checked out 16 times since December 2018 and once to date in 2024. While it does not check out as often as the average adult non-fiction title, it provides insights into a subject area that is covered in a limited way in the collection, so staff have retained it.

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.

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

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 HILLCREST
 P: 208-972-8340

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

Request to remove *The Renaissance Nude* from the Boise Public Library collection

Staff reviewed *The Renaissance Nude* based on the concerns raised in the Request for Reconsideration form:

- “had child porn in it”

Staff researched reviews and the art contained in the book. Based on Boise Public Library's [The Nature and Quality of Materials](#) Regulation, *The Renaissance Nude* meets the criteria to remain in the collection:

- suitability of subject and style for intended audience
- appropriateness of medium to content
- insight into human and social condition
- relation to existing collection and other material on subject
- scope and authority of subject matter
- comprehensiveness and depth of treatment
- artistic presentation
- authenticity of historical or social setting

Regarding the concerns that *The Renaissance Nude* presents child pornography, staff researched the definition for applicability. (A link to the “Citizen’s Guide to U.S. Federal Law on Child Pornography” follows the review section at the end of this memo on page three.) Most pertinent to this Request for Reconsideration is the definition of “child pornography” contained in criminal law. Pursuant to Section 2256, Title 18, United States Code, “child pornography” means any visual depiction of sexually explicit conduct involving a minor (someone under 18 years of age). Idaho law contains a similar definition at Idaho Code Section 18-1507C, which criminalizes distribution of a visual depiction that depicts a child engaging in explicit sexual conduct and is obscene.

Based on BPL staff review, the nude images of children in *The Renaissance Nude* do not depict sexually explicit conduct.

Recommendation

Staff acknowledge that art can incite many reactions, and indeed, many of the essays in *The Renaissance Nude* explore various reactions to nude art created during the Renaissance. 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 Renaissance Nude* provides material to meet the diverse information needs and recreational interests of all people in the community due to its artistic merit and value as a human document helping to illuminate the Renaissance period.

Based on these findings, staff recommend keeping *The Renaissance Nude* in the adult non-fiction collection.



Documentation:

The Renaissance Nude was published in tandem and to further support an art exhibition at the Getty Center of the same name:

https://www.getty.edu/art/exhibitions/renaissance_nude/

Review sites:

Good Reads: <https://www.goodreads.com/en/book/show/39105247-the-renaissance-nude>

Amazon:

<https://www.amazon.com/Renaissance-Nude-Thomas-Kren/dp/160606584X>

Historians of Netherlandish Art Reviews: <https://hnanews.org/hnar/reviews/the-renaissance-nude/>

Citizen's Guide to U.S. Federal Law on Child Pornography

<https://www.justice.gov/criminal/criminal-ceos/citizens-guide-us-federal-law-child-pornography>

