Shameless

Madison Marilyn Becker

Utah State University

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Shameless
MADISON BECKER

The worlds of advertising and the media constantly display women’s bodies as objects of flawless perfection. Missing always is the body hair, cellulite, and other realities that all women live with. The effect of this is to constantly impress upon us the inadequacies of our own bodies and our own being. It is to teach us to feel ashamed. Shameless questions those representations of the female body. It offers an opportunity to the viewer to understand, to view, and to consider women’s bodies in ways that respond to, and contradict, those damaging idealized representations. The intimate images of my work show the reality of the female body and ask the viewer to acknowledge that each body is absolute, should not be compared to any other, but valued for what it is.
PLEASE TAKE ONE
MADISON BECKER
thesis exhibition
An exhibit exploring the realities of female body image

Gallery 102
Fine Arts Visual Building
Utah State University

SHOW OPEN
Monday, April 13 – Friday, April 17
10AM – 4PM

CLOSING RECEPTION
Friday, April 17
5PM – 7PM
MADISON BECKER  thesis exhibition
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Shameless
Forum letter:

Porn in the name of art

To the editor:

I just wanted to write in to voice my sadness with regards to the neglect of our school to uphold its own code of conduct. My major is housed in the Fine Arts building, and this morning as I was walking in the north east doors, I found myself greeted by an enormous photograph of a woman’s nipple staring out at me from the graduate showcase in Room 102. Why?

This photograph is large enough to be seen easily from a vehicle in the Aggie ice cream intersection. I am intrigued by the fact that every computer lab on campus has abundant warnings posted against displaying inappropriate material, and that our own student code states that “Publishing or distributing libelous, slanderous, obscene or pornographic literature or materials,” is a violation of said code, and yet in the name of art highly-pornographic material can be displayed where anyone, students and visitors alike, can see it without even having to look for it.

Now I understand the importance of the human form in fine art and respect the artist’s artistic licence, but I do not believe that it is justification for imposing porn on all those entering and leaving and passing by the Fine Arts building. I would hope that in the future the school would have a little more tact in upholding its code, and that if such exhibits are to be shown, that they are done in a location where only those who desire to see it can do so. Thank you for your time.

—Alonzo Rhodes
Art in the name of progress

To the editor:

I just wanted to voice my disappointment in a recent letter to the editor about the apparently “pornographic” image displayed in the Fine Arts Building. First of all is the image in question actually pornographic? What is the purpose of the photograph? And are the images of the female body on a college campus with adults something to be outraged about?

We must first understand what is and isn’t pornography. According to Merriam Webster dictionary, pornography is “the depiction of erotic behavior intended to cause sexual excitement.” The difference between porn (condemned material) and art (tolerated material) is incredibly subjective based on which society you reside in. For example, the famous sculptures in Greece made by masterful artists would likely be condemned as porn in many countries, due to differing moral reasons. So since the definition of porn is entirely subjective, what is erotic or religious in one society can be condemned as pornographic in another. So your statement that the photograph was “highly-pornographic” is not a fact, but your opinion based on what you think constitutes a material to be porn rather than art.

The letter is very misleading about what the exhibit is actually showcasing. After I read your distressed letter, I went myself to the room in question with the art display entitled “Shameless.” And yes, there was a photograph of a nipple near the window. Was it large enough to be seen easily from a vehicle in the Aggie ice cream intersection as you contend? I find that claim to be highly exaggerated and laughable to be honest. It was barely large enough to see standing right in front of the window. To make it sound like it was a giant woman’s nipple shining through the window like the blue A atop Old Main to offend people unknowingly is pure ludicrous.

The author of the letter wanted USU to take down the image because it violated student code for publishing pornographic images. Going back to the definition of porn, was the artist of the exhibit intending to cause sexual excitement which would make it porn? The purpose of “Shameless” according to material in the display is to question the media’s portrayal of the female body in an unrealistic light in order to “consider women’s bodies in ways that respond to — and contradict — those damaged, idealized representations.” One part of the

pornography conversation

CALVIN MAKELKY
STUDENT

“The display has positive intentions of spreading awareness about how girls today are feeling ashamed of their bodies and why they shouldn’t be ashamed.”

girls want to be thinner. 81 percent of ten-year-olds are afraid of being fat and half of 11-year-olds girls think they are overweight. So clearly the display has positive intentions of spreading awareness about how girls today are feeling ashamed of their bodies, and why they shouldn’t be ashamed because these photos are how female bodies look.

Therefore, I cannot see how this could reasonably considered pornographic. This is simply an artist’s piece of work that wasn’t intended to offend anyone, but intended to dispel unrealistic images of what a female body looks like in our society. If a picture of a nipple, which is on virtually every human on this planet, sexually excites or offends you, then I would advise you to simply look away. This is a public university, not a seminary. Because this is a state-funded institution, the exhibit is simply an expression that is protected by the constitution through freedom of speech in the first amendment.

Lastly, I find it most appalling that all of the issues we face as college students and Americans you get outraged over a woman’s nipple. Student loan debt, government surveillance, social inequality, climate change and police brutality are all valid issues we should be actually discussing instead.

— Calvin Makelky

Pornography addressed by department head

To the editor:

I am grateful to the student who wrote the “Porn in the name of art” forum letter for drawing attention to a relatively common problem and providing me with an opportunity to clarify the proper procedure for addressing concerns like his. Unless your primary goal is public recognition of your moral outrage, the most effective strategy for advocating for change is to meet with the most appropriate individuals in the correct order.

In this particular instance the simplest solution would have been to address his concerns with me, the head of the Department of Art & Design. However, in addition to writing to the Statesman, he emailed the dean of the Caine College of the Arts, Craig Jessop, and James Morales, Vice President for Student Services, both of whom forwarded his emails to me for comment.

I encourage students to identify and contact the individual directly in charge of the department with which they are concerned. If no response is forthcoming, then it is appropriate to contact deans or vice presidents. A letter to the editor of the Statesman is unlikely to result in a timely response or swift remedy, especially in the case of an exhibition lasting only five days.
Forum letters: Response to pornography conversation

Art in the name of progress

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MONTHLIES
2014
Intaglio, Glass, Embroidery Floss.

THE CURSE
2014
Intaglio, Glass, Embroidery Floss

300 NIPPLES
2015
Serigraph

FEMININE REALITIES 1
2015
Intaglio, Glass, Synthetic Hair

FEMININE REALITIES 2
2015
Intaglio, Glass, Synthetic Hair

PERSPECTIVE 1 PERSPECTIVE
2015
Serigraphs

SIZE 4 CELLULITE
2015
Halftone CMYK Serigraph

STRETCHED
2015
Halftone CMYK Serigraph

STRETCHED 2
2015
Halftone CMYK Serigraph

PRETTY IN PINK
2015
Accordion book with Serigraph prints

BUSH
2015
Accordion book with Etchings
42% of first grade girls want to be thinner.

81% of 10 year olds are afraid of being fat.

50% of girls ages 13-18 are overweight.

80% of 13 year old girls have attempted to lose weight.

65% of 5th and 8th grade girls report magazine images influence their idea of perfect body shape.