



November 3, 2023

We received your Request for Reconsideration regarding the book *It Feels Good to Be Yourself* by Theresa Thorn. We have owned this title since July 2019, and it has been checked out 15 times. We reviewed it and have decided to retain it in the Children's Nonfiction section.

According to our book vendor, this item's intended audience is children ages 6-7, grades 1-2, and the publisher recommends it for ages 4-8. The book cover, title, and book jacket include information that can help parents determine whether or not the book is appropriate for their individual child or family. The book is located in the nonfiction section of the children's area in the Dewey classification for social sciences. It is intended as an educational resource for families and includes a glossary, bibliography, resource lists and notes from the author and illustrator.

The online catalog includes details about the content in this book, and it also received positive reviews from publications like *Publishers Weekly* and *Kirkus* (excerpts below).

Some individuals may find the viewpoint of this book objectionable, but others are interested in the topic or find it relevant. Children's books can provide an opportunity for parents to discuss ideas in the way that works best for their families. The Christian County Library makes every effort to provide a broad selection of materials to meet the needs of diverse audiences, and we rely on parents and guardians to determine what is or is not suitable for their own households.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions or concerns.

Sincerely,
Renee Brumett, Executive Director
Christian County Library

Reviews:

Publishers Weekly, April 2019

Thorn offers an inclusive primer about gender that integrates vocabulary words and definitions into the text ("Non-binary is a helpful word that can describe a kid who doesn't feel exactly like a boy or a girl"). Illustrations feature gender-expansive individuals going to school, making art, and spending time with family, normalizing the expressions. With heavy lines and textured forms, the images by #OwnVoices illustrator Grigni are a blend of jewel-toned shapes with textured lines reminiscent of block prints. The spirit of free



*expression and creativity infuses every spread of this inclusive exploration. Ages 4–8.
(May)*

Kirkus Reviews, March 2019

This expansive, straightforward framing of gender emphasizes curiosity, joy, and positive self-expression. In Thorn's uplifting picture-book debut, young readers meet four children: Ruthie, a thin, transgender girl with light brown skin; Xavier, Ruthie's cisgender brother, who also has brown skin; Alex, a pale-skinned, round-bodied kid who is "both a boy and a girl"; and JJ, a brown-skinned child who uses a wheelchair and who is "neither a boy nor a girl." Through plain, intentional language, Thorn normalizes each child's gender identity and skillfully introduces the multifaceted concept of nonbinary gender: "Just like there are many different ways to be a boy or a girl, there are many different ways to be non-binary—too many to fit in a book!" As the main characters move through their vibrant neighborhood, families and children are portrayed with a prismatic array of gender expressions, skin colors, and physical features. Nonbinary illustrator Grigni's full-bleed images are magical in their jewel-toned palette. Among gender-centered picture books, this one stands out for its dazzling #ownvoices art and its simple yet nuanced phrasing—particularly when Ruthie shares her true gender with her family, and her parents (an interracial couple) respond with a loving group hug. "Oops! Ruthie was a girl all along—they just didn't know it at first." Giving kids and adults a hopeful model for discussing (and embracing) one another's gender is just one of the gifts offered by this valuable narrative. Exceptional. (glossary, resources, note on pronouns, author's note, illustrator's note) (Picture book. 3-9)