

## man pleads to lesser charge in child porn case

*Paris Achen Columbian staff writer*  
November 22, 2013; Page C3

A former attorney accused of possessing images of children engaged in sexual acts walked free Thursday after his attorney argued that sloppy language was included in a search warrant that police used to seize images from his home computer in Battle Ground. John P. **Blount**, 62, pleaded guilty Thursday in Clark County Superior Court to a lesser charge of misdemeanor indecent exposure as part of a plea deal. He received a 12-month suspended sentence.

**Blount** entered an Alford plea, a legal maneuver in which he did not admit guilt but pleaded guilty in exchange for Senior Deputy Prosecutor Camara Banfield's agreement to dismiss the felony charges.

He was originally charged with five counts of first-degree possession of depictions of a minor engaged in sexually explicit conduct. If he had been convicted of all of the charges, he would have faced a prison sentence of five years and would have had to register as a sex offender for a period of 10 years.

'Too broad'

**Blount's** attorney, Steven Thayer of Vancouver, said the search warrant issued to Battle Ground police was too broad and failed to identify a particular crime for which to search for evidence. Law enforcement also lacked sufficient probable cause to search **Blount's** computer, Thayer said.

**Blount's** wife, Cindy, reported to Battle Ground police in July 2011 that she found child pornography on the couple's home computer. But before the search warrant was issued, she called back to report that **Blount** had deleted the images, apparently out of fear that she would find them.

At that point, "probable cause had evaporated," Thayer said.

Nevertheless, the search warrant was issued, and police investigators seized several depictions of minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct on **Blount's** computer, according to court documents.

That evidence likely wouldn't have been admissible in a trial because of the problems with the search warrant, Thayer said.

"But for that, I probably would not have (agreed to the plea deal)," said Judge Scott Collier on Thursday. "It's also an issue of fairness and consistency."

[Discussion forums:](#)  
[Hot Issues](#)  
[The Fan](#)  
[The Softball Field](#)  
[The Soccer Net](#)  
[The Mat](#)  
[Neighborhood Issues](#)

Search the free  
columbian.com  
archives:

x

[Stories from today's Columbian.](#)

Thayer said that **Blount** has been in counseling for the past two years since the case was reported and has made good progress. He has no previous criminal history. **Blount** was registered as an attorney with the Oregon State Bar from 1984 to 1991, when he resigned. He was never a member of the Washington State Bar Association, according to a WSBA employee who conducted a search.

"I would like the court to recognize my regret," **Blount** said. "... I don't think I'll have a problem reoffending in the future."

Paris Achen: 360-735-4551; [http://twitter.com/Col\\_Courts](http://twitter.com/Col_Courts);  
<http://facebook.com/ColTrends>; [paris.achen@columbian.com](mailto:paris.achen@columbian.com).

*Articles appear as they were originally printed in The Columbian and may not include subsequent corrections.*

*All materials appearing in The Columbian are protected by copyright as a collective work or compilation under U.S. copyright and other laws and are the property of The Columbian Publishing Company or the party credited as the provider of the content.*

[Return to Search Results](#)

---

[columbian.com home page](#) | [columbian.com index](#) | [Archives home](#)

---

Copyright © The Columbian Publishing Co. P.O. Box 180, Vancouver, WA 98666. No part of this publication may be stored in a retrieval system, transmitted, or reproduced in any way, including but not limited to photocopy, photograph, magnetic or other record, without the prior agreement and written permission of the publisher.