

Policy Guidelines for Selecting Films to be Screened for Audiences at the Library

Adopted by the Belvedere-Tiburon Library Agency October 20, 2003
Revised October 18, 2004
Revised November 20, 2006

Film presentations will follow the standards set forth in the "Policy and Procedural Guidelines for Library Sponsored Programs" adopted by the Belvedere-Tiburon Library Agency Board.

Films are among the most effective means for communicating ideas, however, selection of a film does not constitute the Library's agreement with or approval of the film's content. The FREEDOM TO VIEW is, along with the freedom to speak, hear and read, protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. There is no place for censorship of any medium of expression.

1. The Library's goal is to provide a venue for screening content rich, thought-provoking, entertaining, educational, insightful films, and to provide a format for the discussion of films with filmmakers and other media people; and to provide a format for an open and balanced discussion of audience perspectives and opinions.
2. All films selected have the Library's public service goals in mind and will comply with the copyright laws.
3. Film programs may include the preview of a yet to be completed or released film, as well as the readings of screenplays. The selection of such programs will follow the general guidelines used to select films.
4. Film programs may be chosen by a Library committee or Library staff member (for example, the Film Committee, the Bookmarks, the Children's librarian).
5. Notices and publicity for films will state that the film is for "Mature Audiences", "Teens" or "Children".
6. Films selected may be from a wide variety of genres (for example, short subject, documentary, drama, comedy, romance, action, adventure, biography, horror, science fiction, mystery, etc.).
7. Selection criteria for films may include the Library's schedule, the timeliness, point of view or innovation of the screenplay, the technical or professional quality of filmmaking, the ground breaking or cutting edge theme of the film, the film's length, its' educational and/or entertainment value, the film's insight into a way of life or culture, film reviews and/or awards garnered by the film, its official selection by film festivals, or the viewpoint of Program Committee members or Library administration personnel.
8. Films will not be excluded from selection because they present an aspect of life honestly or because they exhibit frankness of opinion or expression, or a diverse or contrary point of view (for example, a documentary may present a one-sided political viewpoint, a fictional film about young adults may contain realistic language and behavior).
9. Program announcements, publicity and advertisements in both print and digital format, will be reviewed and approved by the Library Director prior to publication.

FREEDOM TO VIEW

The Freedom To View, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore, we affirm these principles:

1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantees of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Educational Film Library Association's Freedom to View Committee and was adopted by the EFLA Board of Directors in February 1979. Libraries and educational institutions are encouraged to adopt this statement and display it in their catalogs or libraries. The text of this statement may be reprinted freely; permission is granted to all educational institutions to use it.

Adopted by the ALA Council June 1979.