

YALSA Board of Directors Meeting
ALA Midwinter Meeting, Dallas
January 20 – 24, 2012

Topic: Fabulous Films: Request for Board Action

Background: Sarah Sogigian, chair of the Fabulous Films for Young Adults Committee, is requesting two changes in the wording for the committee's policies and procedures. Details are provided below.

Action Required: Action

The committee suggests the following two changes to its policies and procedures:

1. Eligibility:

As is: To be considered for the list, films must be currently available for purchase in the United States. The film must be relevant in a noteworthy way to the chosen theme. In general, a whole film series will not be included on the list. Individual titles from a film series may be nominated and included. At the chair's discretion, the committee may consider multi-part film programs. All segments must be previewed. Titles that are re-edited or re-released must contain a significant amount of new material to qualify for consideration and will be treated as new titles.

Change to: "To be considered for the list, films must be currently available for purchase in the United States. The film must be relevant in a noteworthy way to the chosen theme. In general, a whole film series will not be included on the list. Individual titles from a film series may be nominated and included. At the chair's discretion, the committee may consider multi-part film programs. All segments must be previewed. Titles that are re-edited or re-released must contain a significant amount of new material to qualify for consideration and will be treated as new titles. Nominated films that are not widely accessible will not be accepted. Television episodes, TV series, or self-made films are also not eligible."

2. Creation of the list section:

As is: "Titles must be evaluated on their own merits and may not compared to other similar works."

Change to: "Titles will be evaluated on their own merits; however for purposes of creating the final list of 25 titles that best represent the committee's philosophy and purpose, some comparison among similar works may occur."

Rationale:

The committee suggests that with the changes in technology since the policies have been revised, the board must find a way to include films not made or marketed in the traditional formats. But we do have concerns that web-produced films will not be widely available to young adults, specifically

those who live in low-income areas. Additionally, there are still too many unknowns in terms of licensing with web videos. Hulu and Netflix streaming are currently being debated as legal resources for library viewing. The committee recommends the inclusion of web-produced films, only if they are available for purchase on DVD as well. An example would be “Dr. Horrible’s Sing Along Blog”, a three-part web feature that was subsequently released in full on DVD.

The committee does not recommend adding/changing the policies to include television shows. The committee is concerned that as more television is being released on DVD, there will be demand to include series on this list. To that end, more drastic changes may be required, including a new set of policies pertaining to television shows and changing the name of the committee. This year, several episodes of Glee were nominated. If series arc allowed, the committee would have to view the entire series for that on nomination; the arc of a series storyline require the viewing of more than one episode. And if one episode is considered, it will mean that our libraries will have to buy an entire set (series) on disc to obtain the one episode. If demand continues, perhaps a new committee will need to be formed.

The committee does not recommend adding self-made films to our list of acceptable criteria. While the committee welcomes and encourages independent and foreign film nominations, as well as mainstream films, we are concerned with adding self-made films to our list. The committee may have trouble obtaining a copy for screening purposes. Libraries may not be able to obtain copies of self-made films through their traditional vendors. Additionally, the licensing for public viewing of self-made films is unclear.

The committee suggests a rewording of the statement “Titles must be evaluated on their own merits and may not compared to other similar works.” The committee strives to create a list of titles that best reflect the mission of the group. While each title is viewed separately, it is impossible not to compare titles. For our 2012 list, quite a few titles reflected around the same central theme: overcoming personal obstacles to find oneself, usually through dance. While each movie is different, the committee would like to select the title that best fits our criteria, especially since the list is limited to no more than 25 titles. To do that, we feel at least some comparison is required.

Areas of the Strategic Plan the Proposal Supports:

“Objective 2d: YALSA establishes the future direction of teen and young adult services.” FFYA is committed to staying relevant in the lives of our members and teens they serve. We want to ensure that the list reflects the new technologies teens use to obtain information.

“Objective 3e: YALSA members and others serving teens and young adults who keep up to date on their knowledge and skills are recognized for their proficiency.” The annual list will continue to provide the best titles for the given theme; introducing librarians to new titles for collections and programs.

Additional Information

- Current Fabulous Films policies and procedures:
www.ala.org/yalsa/booklistsawards/booklists/fabfilms/policies

Respectfully submitted:

Sarah Sogigian
Chair, Fabulous Films for Young Adults