

# The Museum of Modern Art

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## MUSEUM TO CONDUCT SYMPOSIUM ON FILM RATING SYSTEM

In view of the recent controversy over the refusal of some newspapers to accept advertising for X-rated films, The Museum of Modern Art's Department of Film will conduct a symposium open to the public on the subject of the Motion Picture Association of America's Film Rating System and its effect on newspapers around the country, to be held on Tuesday, June 13, at 8:00 P.M., in the Museum auditorium.

Among those who will participate in the symposium at the invitation of Willard Van Dyke, Director of the Department of Film, are Jack Valenti, President of the Motion Picture Association of America; William Friedkin, director of the Academy Award winning film "The French Connection"; Ephraim London, the distinguished attorney who successfully argued the case for Rossellini's "The Miracle" before the U.S. Supreme Court; William Wolf, film critic for Cue Magazine and chairman of The New York Film Critics; and screenwriter Walter Bernstein. In addition, several newspaper publishers have been invited to participate. Willard Van Dyke will moderate the discussion.

The rating system is an attempt at self-regulation by the motion picture industry. Recent debate has focused on refusals of newspapers around the country to advertise X-rated films, pictures to which no children under 17 or 18 are admitted. Objections made to this practice point to the fact that there are no distinctions made between different types of X-rated films, critically acclaimed works by prominent filmmakers on the one hand, and blatant exploitation films on the other hand. Further objections state that refusal to run advertisements deprives the public of information so it can be forewarned; also that this refusal

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amounts to a form of economic sanction. It is further said that rejection of advertising implies artistic censorship of the filmmaker.

The newspapers involved claim that allowing X-rated films to advertise constitutes promotion by the paper of screen sex and violence. They further argue that to distinguish between "artistic" and "non-artistic" X-rated films involves the application of a double-standard by the paper.

"It is hoped," comments Willard Van Dyke, "that a free and full debate may help clarify what is clearly a controversial subject." The symposium will be open to the public free of charge, with seating on a first come, first served basis.

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