

2012.05.24

Re: Correcting an oversight in DVD due dates

To the Board:

TPL managers have refused to correct an oversight in due dates for DVD *sets* – multi-disc packages containing, for example, more than one full movie, a very long movie, or a full season of TV episodes. (Not included here: Items with a second disc of DVD extras, interviews, and the like; DVD/Blu-Ray combos; and sets with theatrical and director's cuts.)

Most DVDs have a loan period of one week; most are renewable. One week is long enough to watch a typical DVD, whether feature, musical, instructional, or otherwise. It is *not* long enough to watch entire TV seasons or epic motion pictures. Examples:

- ¶ *In Treatment* Seasons 1, 2, and 3: **21½, 17½, and 14** hours, respectively
- ¶ *Berlin Alexanderplatz*: **16½** hours

Yet while TPL loans pedometers, which require seconds of attention at a time, for up to *nine weeks*, and even loans language-learning DVDs for *three weeks*, TPL managers refuse to correct what obviously started out as an oversight in Library policy. Managers' argument, to the extent it is one, holds that one-week loan periods reduce the length of time patrons must wait on hold for an item. That only applies to holdable items in the first place. Meanwhile, *nobody* wants to wait endlessly for a DVD set *they'll never be able to finish*. It's cheating the patron two ways.

At the same time, TPL has the temerity to ding patrons a buck a day for overdue DVDs – an insulting cash grab at the best of times that seems like an intentional trap in the case of DVD sets.

The Board can show it is actually useful and is on patrons' side by ordering the error fixed. Remedy sought: Create a new item category (e.g., DVD Set) for packages containing *more than one separate program on more than one disc*. Allocate a three-week loan period. No change to hold rules. Can apply also to legacy multi-videotape sets.