

FIRST AMENDMENT TELEVISION LLC

Institutional Governance Framework — Version 1.0

One Philosophy, Two Divisions

How a single institutional philosophy governs First Amendment Television Journalism and First Amendment Television Films

Who First Amendment Television Is

First Amendment Television exists to tell truthful stories. Some are told through journalism. Others are told through dramatic fiction. The methods differ because the forms differ, but the institution's commitment to intellectual honesty never changes. This governance framework explains how one institutional philosophy governs two distinct creative divisions.

Both First Amendment Television Journalism and First Amendment Television Films are governed by the same institutional principles. Those principles are expressed differently according to the form of the work. This framework defines that expression so that it reads to a partner, funder, or broadcaster as a deliberate institutional structure — not an inconsistency.

Institutional Architecture

The Editorial Constitution is not the top of First Amendment Television's structure — it is one of two pillars standing on a shared foundation. The full hierarchy:

- Purpose — why society needs First Amendment Television: to preserve, examine, and communicate truth through journalism, documentary, education, and dramatic storytelling in service of a free society.
- Mission — what First Amendment Television exists to accomplish.
- Institutional Principles — the values that govern every decision: truth, intellectual honesty, respect for the audience, respect for contributors, professional craftsmanship.
- Editorial Constitution — how those principles govern factual work.
- Tutman Standard — how those principles govern the making of every production.
- Production Standards — how each division implements those principles day to day.

Purpose sits above Mission deliberately: purpose is timeless, while mission can evolve as the institution grows. If First Amendment Television one day expands into publishing, archives, or forms of media that don't yet exist, the mission may be revised. The purpose beneath it would not.

Positioning the Constitution this way does not diminish it. It strengthens it — the Constitution's authority comes from a clearly defined scope, anchored in a broader philosophy that both divisions draw from.

The Two Divisions

	FIRST AMENDMENT TELEVISION JOURNALISM	FIRST AMENDMENT TELEVISION FILMS
	Governed by Evidence	Governed by Storytelling
Primary production standard	First Amendment Television Editorial Constitution (v6) — fully binding.	Tutman Standard — fully binding. The Editorial Constitution applies only where a project touches real people, events, or historical claims.
Core discipline	Evidence over opinion. Sourcing, verification, editorial independence, institutional (not personal) attribution.	Craft over claim. Dramatic truth, character, structure — narrative license is expected and protected.
Fact-checking standard	Full — every factual assertion must be sourced and stand up to challenge.	Contextual — applies to underlying historical record for based-on-real-events work (Come Out Fighting, OMAHEKE, THIAROYE); does not apply to invented plot, dialogue, or characters.
Attribution	Institutional byline. No personal credit line on editorial	Standard industry credit (writer, director, producer) —

	FIRST AMENDMENT TELEVISION JOURNALISM	FIRST AMENDMENT TELEVISION FILMS
	work product.	personal attribution is normal and expected.
Representative titles	The Sticks and Stones Show, Still Rolling, The Riverkeeper	The Machine, PAX, The Other Baltimore, Come Out Fighting, Ven a Buscar a Tu Padre
What travels across both	The Tutman Standard's labor ethics (how cast, crew, and contributors are treated) and First Amendment Television's reputation for institutional rigor apply everywhere, regardless of division.	

Both are governed by the same institutional principles of truth, intellectual honesty, respect for the audience, respect for contributors, and professional craftsmanship.

Why the Distinction Matters

1. It protects the Constitution's authority.

The Editorial Constitution's power comes from being absolute where it applies: every factual claim in Sticks and Stones must survive scrutiny. That authority is diluted if the same document is stretched to govern invented dialogue in a psychological thriller. Keeping the line explicit keeps the Constitution credible where it counts most.

2. It protects narrative freedom.

Film and limited-series work needs room to serve character and story. A writer worried about defending every line against a journalism-grade sourcing standard will write a worse script. The Tutman Standard governs how that work gets made — fairly, with integrity toward contributors and subjects — without policing invented content the way the Constitution polices factual content.

3. It reads correctly to outside partners.

A buyer or broadcaster evaluating Sticks and Stones wants to know First Amendment Television's evidentiary discipline is airtight. A studio evaluating PAX or The Machine wants to know First Amendment Television can write and produce a compelling film. Presenting both under one undifferentiated "Constitution" invites the wrong question from either audience. Presenting them as two divisions under one institutional standard answers the right question before it's asked.

Three Constants Across Both Divisions

1. The Tutman Standard's labor ethic.

How everyone — cast, crew, contributors, subjects — is treated on every First Amendment Television production never changes by division.

2. Institutional reputation.

First Amendment Television's institutional byline and reputation for rigor is a single brand asset that both divisions draw on and are both responsible for protecting.

3. The audience must leave better off.

Every First Amendment Television production must leave the audience more informed, more thoughtful, or more capable of understanding the human condition than when they began. Entertainment alone is never the institution's highest objective — in Journalism or in Films.

Where Based-on-Real-Events Film Sits

Come Out Fighting, OMAHEKE, THIAROYE, and Ven a Buscar a Tu Padre live in First Amendment Television Films but carry a partial Journalism obligation: the underlying historical record must be sourced and defensible, even though scenes, dialogue, and characterization remain narrative craft. Treat these as Films-division projects with a Journalism-grade research file attached — not as Journalism-division projects with dramatic license.

First Amendment Television does not maintain separate ethical systems for journalism and film. It maintains one institutional philosophy expressed through two different creative forms. That consistency is one of the organization's defining assets.

For First Amendment Television, form determines method. It never determines ethics.