

JOHN ASTIN



Actor. USA. Mr. Astin has worked worldwide in movies, drama, and video. He was nominated for an Oscar for his role in Prelude and has appeared on Broadway, in the movies, on TV in The Adams Family, and most recently in Night Court. At the Enter-Educate Conference, Mr. Astin, who is a graduate of Johns Hopkins University, hosted the viewing of Moving Images, a composite video of enter-educate-style television and video clips.

PASSING ON SOCIAL MESSAGES

Whether We Like it or Not...

Everything we do in the theater has a social message.

We don't always know how a social message is going to come out. Directors don't often know until a movie is completed what it is about. Sometimes, messages don't come out the way we planned. We may be talking about family planning and show a couple that likes to have sex a lot. And the result might be that we encourage people to have kids, whether they want them or not.

The Hardest Part...

I originally went into the theater because I cared about social change, and I wanted to influence society. I'm really happy when I'm working in a film that has a message with which I concur. In each role, I look for the most important human values in the character and try to bring them out. Even if the work itself does not seem to convey any social message, the viewer should be able to see what I was trying to do.

Is Playing the Game...

I have tried to get lots of works on the air that I thought conveyed important social messages, and I've met with lots of resistance. TV, especially, wants to sell soap, cigars, depilatory, or beer. I used to blame the system...or the network...or the studios...or materialism...or the government...or life itself. Then I began to understand that there was no one to blame but myself.

And Facing up to Oneself

As soon as I took personal responsibility for my work...for where I was in life...for what I had done or not done in my career, I began to move forward in a constructive way. I became happier, and I began to improve my work.

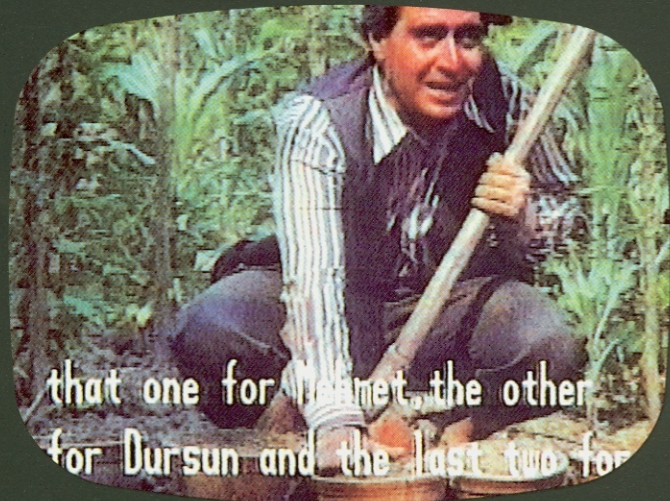
I recommend to anybody who is struggling with these forces to realize that it's not the other guy, it's us. If we change ourselves to bring about something of value, we will win. Otherwise, change is left up to fate, and that may not be so reliable. ■

THE ENTER-EDUCATE CONFERENCE

SATURDAY, APRIL 1, 1989

Featured Speaker:

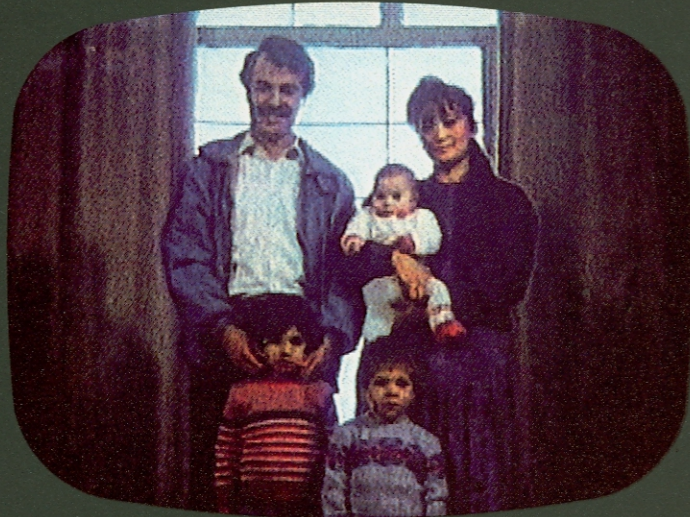
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Noted US actor John Astin hosted the viewing of the video composite Moving Images at the Enter-Educate Conference. Produced by Doe Mayer of the University of Southern California in collaboration with the Johns Hopkins University Population Communication Services, Moving Images and Pop Persuaders, another video produced for the EnterEducate Conference, are composites of entereducate style programs from around the world. Shown here are stills from the Turkey TV spot campaign (top and bottom) and a dolls' marriage scene from a Nepal film (middle).





A set from Farm of Dreams, the Telecine International television series that uses puppets and an outer space setting to appeal to children in the Middle East with positive health and cultural messages.