



SYNOPSIS

They call Hollywood a "dream factory." And it's an appropriate metaphor. Like dreams, the stories we watch in the dark express our fears and desires. But unlike dreams, they have a powerful and lasting effect on social reality. Movies and the mass media help form our worldview, shape our identities, and define our roles – on screen and off.



Unfortunately, these effects frequently work to the detriment of some groups – including Asian American men. Too often, film and television misrepresent the world they claim to reflect. Their stories revise history, and rationalize inequities. Rather than to portray three-dimensional individuals, their characters often manifest prejudice and reinforce bigotry. Moreover, their ubiquitous and persistent messages encourage viewers to internalize confining definitions of identity and self-worth.



Ironically, film and television images extol our fundamental ideals of democracy and equality, and at the same time, betray them.

Through interviews, voice-over narration, and a fascinating array of film and television clips, *The Slanted Screen* chronicles depictions of Asian American men and the culture that shapes them. The one-hour documentary presents film and television images from the turn of the century to the turn of the millennium. *The Slanted Screen* properly situates these images through historical narration,

clips and photos.

In addition, *The Slanted Screen* presents candid interviews with actors, filmmakers, and scholars who share their unique insights and illuminating perspectives. Scholars provide their informed analyses of the interplay between images and attitudes. Veteran actors comment on their role in shaping the way Asian Americans are perceived in mainstream media. Newer talents give their account of the current cultural climate, and contrast their situation with that of their predecessors. Producers, directors and writers comment on their contributions and voice their opinions. Emerging independent filmmakers discuss how their work challenges conventional depictions of Asian American men. These participants not only share their anecdotes and "insider" views, but also reveal disarmingly candid sentiments and personal insights.

The Slanted Screen integrates these diverse voices to offer a rich and thorough exploration that is, by turns, enlightening, amusing, and disturbing. Above all, *The Slanted Screen* entertains --- and ultimately, inspires.

This synopsis was written by Antony Bolante.

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