

Real World Graduation: Question 67: Actors' Causes

Edward D. Duvall
26 Jan 2019

Question 67

An actor is anyone who pretends to be someone they're not. If an actor works hard and persistently studies to become skillful at his profession, he can sometimes achieve great fame and earn a lot of money (that is, he becomes a celebrity, which is defined as being someone who is famous for being famous). When such an actor subsequently endorses a political proposition or supports some cause, he is often able to persuade many other people to adopt his views. Why are actors so successful in political causes?

- a) Acting skill is extremely rare, and those who have been blessed with it generally have a higher intellectual capacity. The general public is smart enough to recognize superior intellect, and is therefore inclined to trust the opinions of actors.
- b) Acting skill requires an unusual amount of insight into the character of people, which enables the actor to acquire a very keen sense of morality. The general public is smart enough to recognize superior moral perception, and is therefore inclined to imitate the actor and adopt his views.
- c) Achieving success as an actor requires an inordinate amount of hard work that most people cannot even imagine. Those who have put in this kind of effort demonstrate their total commitment to something; therefore, their endorsement of a political cause indicates a true level of commitment not observed among ordinary people. The general public is smart enough to recognize the virtue of sincere commitment, and is therefore inclined to imitate the actor.
- d) Being a famous and wealthy actor affords him the luxury of leisure time which he can use to increase his knowledge on subjects of interest to society. This is aided by his access to people of greater knowledge and he is then able to acquire true wisdom on issues important to society. The general public is smart enough to recognize true wisdom, and is therefore inclined to defer to the actor for guidance.
- e) Is generally one of the above, although it may vary from person to person and may be dependent on the importance of the political cause.

Answer to Question 67

This is a trick question; none of the answers are correct. It is true that an actor is one who pretends to be someone he is not, in other words, he makes a living by being a professional phony.

Answer a) is wrong because although it is true that acting skill is rare, it does not follow that actors are smarter than anyone else.

Answer b) is wrong because although it is true that actors acquire insight into men's habits and motives, it does not increase their morality; they are the same person they always were.

Answer c) is wrong because although some actors work hard, some don't, the same as any other line of work. But there is no evidence that acting is the hardest kind of work; if it were, there would not be so many people trying to be actors.

Answer d) is wrong because having wealth and leisure does not lead to wisdom; if it did, then one could argue that poverty and hard work lead to stupidity.

The truth is that people with common sense recognize that an actor is just another workman, no better or smarter or more moral or more of anything than anyone else, and that the endorsement of a political cause by an actor is usually nothing more than shameless self-promotion to keep the actor in the public eye (upon which his entire career depends). Makes you wonder why the media reports the opinions of actors, doesn't it? The media reports the opinions of actors for two reasons: a) it is easier than researching and reporting relevant facts; and b) using the name of a famous person may increase viewership. Both contribute to filling airtime and column space, with little effort by reporters and editors.