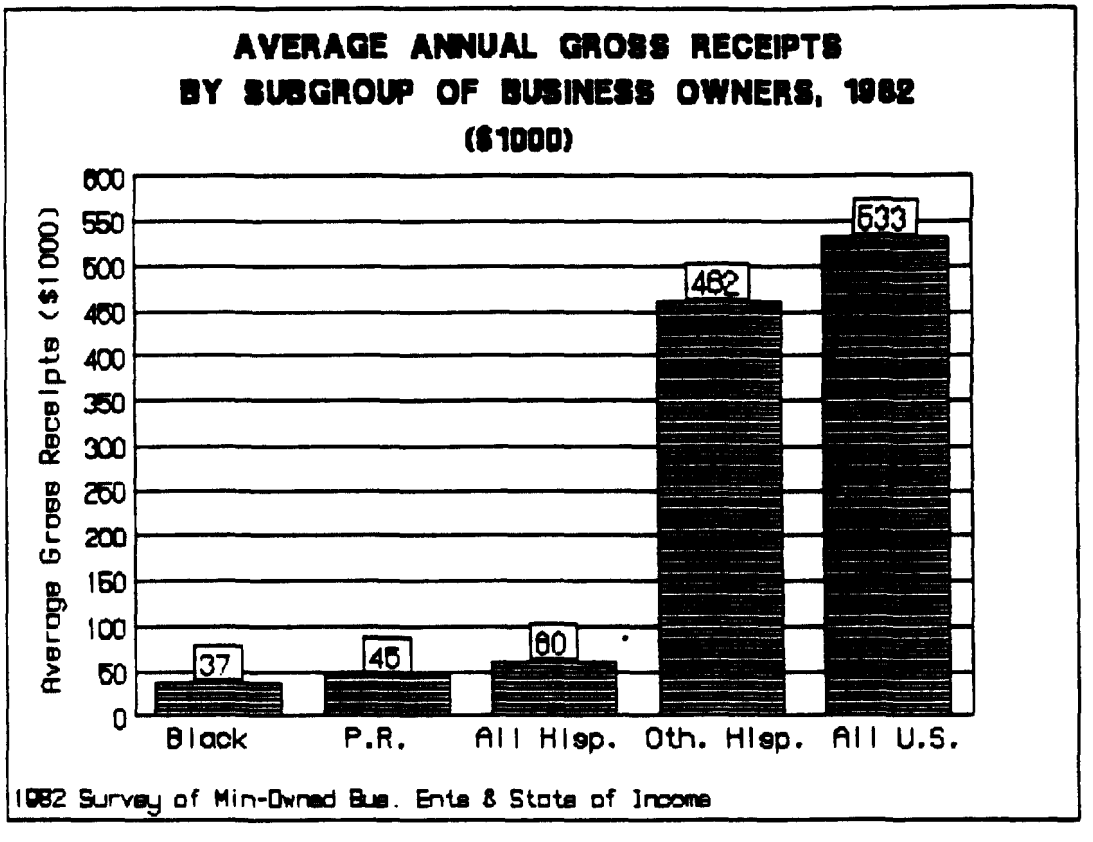
- **Businesses with average gross receipts of more than $1 million were six times as common among overall U.S. businesses than among Hispanic-owned enterprises.**

- **The average annual gross receipts for all U.S. businesses in 1982 were nearly nine times as high as for Hispanic-owned enterprises.** However, there were considerable differences among minority subgroups in average receipts, as shown in Figure 15.

- **Hispanic businesses were more likely to have annual gross receipts below $25,000;** more than two-thirds of Hispanic businesses in 1982 had gross receipts below this level, compared to about three-fifths of all U.S. businesses.

- **Services, followed by retail trade, were the most common categories of business enterprise for the overall U.S. population as well as for Hispanics,** but Hispanics were a good deal more likely to operate services or retail trade establishments, and considerably less likely to be engaged in finance, insurance and real estate, wholesale trade, manufacturing, or mining.

FIGURE 15



These comparisons make it clear that Hispanic businesses are not yet comparable to other U.S. businesses in such characteristics as size and legal form. The only Hispanic subgroup which has business ownership characteristics similar to those of overall U.S. businesses is the small subgroup of Other Hispanics, whose firms have average gross receipts of more than $450,000 and include a significant proportion of enterprises which are not sole proprietorships.

IV. FACTORS AFFECTING HISPANIC BUSINESS OWNERSHIP

A. Business Formation, Growth, and Survival

Analyses of business ownership typically consider three stages in the business cycle: business formation, growth or expansion, and termination. Unfortunately, research on Hispanic business is extremely limited; the Bureau of the Census did not begin its surveys of minority-owned businesses until 1969 and did not make them a part of its regular economic censuses until 1972. Industry coverage increased in 1977 and improvements were made in the survey methodology in 1982, so comparisons over time are inexact. As a result, only rough data are available concerning changes in the total number of Hispanic businesses; the surveys as published provide no information on when businesses were formed, or on their survival or growth rates. While some estimates have been done by matching Hispanic businesses from the 1977 and 1982 Surveys, there is no information on the number or proportion of Hispanic businesses which were formed after the 1977 Survey but failed before the 1982 Survey. Thus estimates of Hispanic business formation and failure rates exist but are imprecise.

It is generally believed that Hispanics have lower rates of business formation and expansion and higher rates of business failure than White non-Hispanics. This general conclusion is supported by the severe under-representation of Hispanics as business owners, compared to their percentage in the population, as indicated both by the economic surveys and by self-employment data from the 1980 Census. Available analyses suggest that the principal reason for low rates of minority business participation is probably low rates of business formation rather than high failure rates. A Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) report (Chen and Stevens, 1984) used the 1972 and 1977 minority business surveys to estimate that the annual business formation rate for Hispanics was 17.2%, compared to 16.6% for all minorities; no comparable data were available for non-minority business formation.

Data on failure rates are also incomplete. Some researchers have reported much higher failure rates for low-income entrepreneurs than for those with greater financial resources. The 1984 MBDA report found that annual average failure rates were very similar for all minority entrepreneurs, and that these rates were lower than expected; the reported annual failure rate for Hispanic businesses between 1972 and 1977 was 13.9%, compared to 12.7% for all minorities. Since the average failure rate for all U.S. businesses is about 8% per year, this report suggests that minority businesses may be about 50% more likely to fail than all U.S. businesses, and that Hispanic businesses may be almost 75% more likely to fail.

B. Obstacles to Hispanic Business Development and Survival

Factors negatively affecting minority business formation and survival have been studied more extensively, especially in the past 20 years. Most analyses focus on the importance of two factors: access to capital and the entrepreneur's business management skills and experience. A third factor sometimes considered is individual personality traits; however, this is

difficult to assess, and there is little evidence that Hispanics or other minorities are more or less likely than other population groups to possess these characteristics.

It is widely recognized that a major problem in Hispanic -- and indeed, all minority -- business formation and survival is lack of access to investment capital. Much has been written about the reluctance of mainstream financial institutions to finance high-risk small businesses, especially those located in inner cities or economically depressed small towns. Capital is particularly hard to obtain for rural businesses in such areas as the U.S.-Mexico border region. High interest rates during the early 1980s further discouraged use of available sources of capital, and contributed to business failures.

There is also evidence that many minority-focused investment capital programs and entities -- including Minority Enterprise Small Business Investment Corporations (MESBICs), corporate social investment programs, and many public loan programs -- have underserved Hispanics. Recent data on federal programs such as the 8(a) set-aside for minority businesses indicate reductions in total program activity and in benefits to Hispanic firms. Hispanic contracts under the 8(a) program were down by about 10% -- or $79 million -- in 1986 (NALEO, 1987); about two-thirds of federal contracts with minority firms come through this program. Hispanics received just 0.4% of all federal contracts in 1986. There is anecdotal evidence of increased efforts by some major corporations in the area of minority purchasing, but hard data are made available by only a limited number of companies.

Clearly, lack of access to investment capital from institutional sources is a major problem for aspiring Hispanic entrepreneurs. However, equally important is a lack of capital from personal sources. It has been estimated that minorities in the United States control less than 1% of the nation's investment capital (Hansen, 1981), yet most capital for small business formation comes from the individual owner and from family members. Employed Hispanics earn the lowest wages of any major population group; in the first quarter of 1986, Hispanic workers 25 and over had median weekly earnings of $250, compared to $277 for Blacks and $355 for Whites. Hispanics also tend to have very low net worth. Thus they often lack access to this critical initial capital. This is one reason why Hispanics tend to establish the kinds of businesses which require little initial capital; unfortunately, such businesses -- primarily services or retail stores -- also tend to remain small and to have high failure rates.

The second key factor related to business formation and success involves the knowledge, skills, and experience of the entrepreneur. Hispanics are at a disadvantage here for several reasons. A major problem is that they have the lowest average educational attainment of any major population; in 1985, the median number of years of education completed by Whites 25 and over was 12.7 years, for Blacks 12.3 years, and for Hispanics 11.5 years -- or less than high school graduation. Those who do complete high school and enter college are somewhat less likely than Whites to major in business or management as undergraduates, and as of 1980 only 9% of Hispanics who received master's degrees got them in business and management, compared to 15% of Whites.

The 1984 MBDA report noted that minority entrepreneurs who start traditional businesses such as retail trade and service firms typically have relatively limited education, and their businesses tend to generate low earnings. On the other hand, the much smaller number of minority entrepreneurs who start other kinds of businesses tend to be younger and better educated, and to enjoy higher earnings. Other researchers have reported that Hispanic business owners with high educational levels tend to have higher self-employment earnings than other minorities.

In addition to limited education, past employment discrimination has limited Hispanic opportunities to gain management experience through responsible positions within the private sector, and such discrimination still exists, although at a somewhat reduced level. In 1985, only 12.6% of Hispanics were employed in executive, administrative, managerial, and professional jobs, compared to 14.4% of Blacks and 25.1% of Whites. Several studies of the earnings gap between Hispanics and Whites have found that when education, experience, and other identifiable variables are controlled, ethnicity alone appears to account for a considerable proportion of these wage differences. Compounding this problem, a lack of Hispanic role models who are business owners or corporate officials within most Hispanic communities means that young Hispanics often do not consider entrepreneurship to be a realistic career option, and are not encouraged to seek the kinds of jobs which would yield experience to prepare them for business ownership.

Lack of appropriate experience is widely believed to both discourage business formation and increase the likelihood of business failure among Hispanics. Skills in management and marketing are particularly important. The Small Business Administration has estimated that more than 90% of small business failures result from management problems.

Fratoe has suggested another way of looking at minority business ownership. He believes that nationality group differences in business participation can be explained partly through a sociological approach, which considers not just the individual but also the minority community. This approach recognizes that Hispanics and other minorities lack the kinds of strong self-help networks which traditionally provide informal support and advice to new business owners, as well as helping to assure them a natural market for their goods and services. For example, few Hispanics have family members or close friends who are business owners and can serve as role models or provide advice to new entrepreneur; similarly, few Hispanics have the opportunity to receive training in a family member's business. Few Hispanic community organizations exist which can provide investment capital, and there are few financial institutions owned by Hispanics which might be expected to look with particular interest upon Hispanic business ventures. While some Hispanic communities do place high value on frequenting Hispanic-owned establishments, this is by no means universal. Thus a number of community factors appear likely to discourage -- or at least fail to encourage -- Hispanic business ownership.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Data available from the 1982 Survey of Hispanic-Owned Business Enterprises clearly indicate that Hispanics -- especially Puerto Ricans -- remain severely underrepresented as business owners. While there has been some growth in Hispanic-owned businesses, Hispanic entrepreneurship would have to increase at least 300% for Hispanics to be equally represented as business owners. The proportion of Hispanic businesses which have employees has decreased since the 1977 Survey, and average gross receipts have not increased enough to keep up with inflation. Moreover, a very large minority of Hispanic businesses are so small that they represent at best an income supplement for their owners, not a full-time occupation.

Factors affecting Hispanic business ownership remain only partially understood, but it is clear that lack of access to capital remains a critical problem, and that such major community problems as inadequate education, which negatively affect other life opportunities, also discourage business ownership. Business ownership is one of many avenues towards economic equality for Hispanics. Improvements in educational attainment and employment status will positively affect Hispanic business ownership by increasing the pool of qualified potential entrepreneurs within the Hispanic community. In addition, specific initiatives are needed to increase access to capital, improve management skills and opportunities, and provide increased markets for Hispanic firms.

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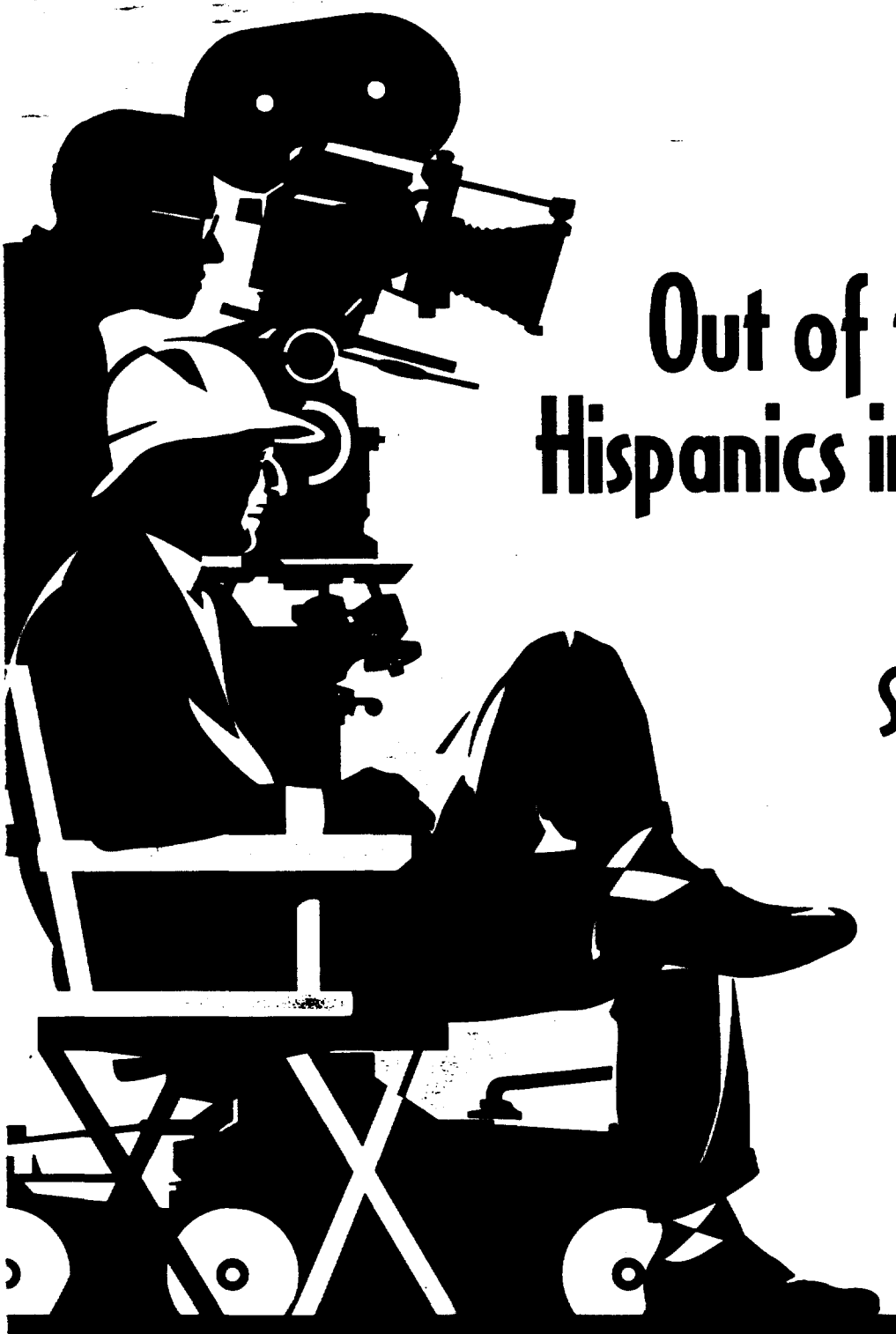

Out of the Picture: Hispanics in the Media

State of Hispanic America 1994

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Executive Summary

The "mass media" wields power that shapes Americans' attitudes toward each other and the world. Unfortunately, the media's approach to Hispanic Americans — who constitute at least nine percent of the U.S. population — has been largely unscrutinized by the media itself, the federal government, or other independent groups. The following report describes the treatment of Hispanics in the media, assesses the impact of that treatment, examines the challenges the current situation presents, and suggests recommendations for ensuring that the media provide accurate and sufficient representation and portrayals of Americans of Hispanic descent.

Treatment of Hispanics in the Media

The first section of this report describes the findings of studies on the treatment of Hispanics in the media. Overall, this research has produced remarkably consistent findings, revealing that:

- **Hispanics are almost invisible in both the entertainment and news media.**
- **When Hispanics do appear, they are consistently and uniformly portrayed more negatively than other racial and ethnic groups.**

To millions of Americans whose principal views of Hispanic Americans are shaped by what they see on the television screen, the nation's second largest ethnic minority is essentially "out of the picture."

The Impact of Underrepresentation and Negative Portrayals

The second section of this report assesses how media treatment of Hispanics contributes to a negative image of Latinos within the broader society. Through an extensive review and analysis of relevant research, this section concludes that:

- **While media scholars disagree about exactly how societal perceptions of minorities are shaped by the media, they generally agree that underrepresentation and negative portrayals of such groups are harmful to these groups' public image.**
- **Non-Hispanics are largely ignorant of the condition of Hispanic Americans and tend to hold negative views of Hispanics that are inconsistent with the facts. Moreover, these public perceptions are remarkably similar to stereotypical media portrayals of Hispanics.**
- **Negative stereotypes — which the media reinforces — directly contribute to actual discrimination against Hispanics.**
- **The media's treatment of Hispanics undermines the ability and likelihood that the general public and policy makers will identify public policies that address Hispanic concerns, and undercuts support for such policies.**
- **The media may contribute to negative self-images within the Hispanic community, particularly among Hispanic children.**

Challenges

The third section of this report examines the ways in which powerful institutionalized conditions, both within and outside the media establishment, contribute to the problem. This section concludes that:

- **Hispanics are underrepresented in employment in every media industry, and are particularly absent in positions of power.**
- **"Watchdog" institutions, including those within the media, independent public interest groups, and government agencies have all failed to demonstrate a sustained interest in monitoring the treatment of Hispanics in the media.**

Recommendations

Assuring accurate, sensitive, and proportional portrayals and news coverage of Hispanics will require a multi-faceted, comprehensive, long-term program involving the government, the industry, and the Hispanic community. Some of NCLR's recommendations for the various sectors with influence over the media are listed below.

A. Recommendations for Congress and the Federal Government

- **Congress should hold hearings to help call public attention to the problem. In addition, Congress should consider additional legislation to address the issue.**
- **The FCC should revise and strengthen its regulatory standards. The FCC should also impose severe fines and other penalties on licensees found to have violated equal opportunity guidelines.**
- **The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights should conduct a comprehensive study of media portrayals of minorities and women.**
- **The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission should place a high priority on the media.**
- **The Corporation for Public Broadcasting should aggressively seek out, produce, and promote high-quality Hispanic programming.**
- **The National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities should increase support for media-oriented Hispanic-focused projects.**
- **The federal government should increase the proportion of scientific research funding allocated to Hispanic-oriented media research.**

B. Recommendations for the News and Entertainment Industries

- **All sectors of the news and entertainment industry should voluntarily adopt — and widely disseminate — a set of principles or code of ethics that commits the industry to promoting equitable, accurate, and sensitive portrayals of Latinos and other minorities.**
- **The industry should adopt clear plans and strategies for hiring and promoting Latinos and other minorities.**

- Industry trade associations should increase cooperative efforts with Latino and/or minority caucuses of the various labor guilds and professional associations, and diversity clauses in standard collective bargaining agreements should be enforced more vigorously.
- The entertainment industry should provide increased support for education and training programs for promising Hispanic actors, producers, writers, and directors.
- The entertainment industry should provide increased support for Hispanic independent and community-based entertainment projects.
- Each segment of the news industry should conduct a periodic self-assessment of its coverage of the Hispanic community and should develop more effective internal mechanisms for monitoring the comprehensiveness and accuracy of its news coverage.

C. Recommendations for the Hispanic Community

- Local community organizations and other Hispanic leaders should expand their advocacy agendas to include a media focus.
- Hispanic-owned businesses and Latino elected and appointed officials should use their influence to promote more accurate and sensitive media portrayals of Latinos.

Foreword

For as long as I can remember, Hispanic community leaders have believed that media portrayals of Latinos are damaging not only to their own community, but to American society at large. For many years these concerns were largely ignored, perhaps because advocates lacked the hard evidence to support these claims, or because it was assumed that Latino issues had been redressed as part of the media's response to similar arguments put forth by African Americans and women, or because Hispanics were perceived to lack the political or economic clout to effectively press their claims.

The persistence of this problem in the face of the Latino community's rapid growth and increasing political clout demonstrates that reversing the situation is likely to be a formidable and long-term task. This reform effort has been and will continue to be hampered by the media's dismal Hispanic employment record. This process is likely to be complicated further by the rapid transformation and decentralization of the media industry, the growth of cable television and the concomitant proliferation of TV channels, the advent of the "information superhighway," and the growth of the practice known as "narrowcasting" to highly segmented audiences will all tend to increase the number of "players" whose cooperation will be necessary to improve the media image of Latinos.

However, there are reasons for optimism. First, as this report demonstrates, the evidence documenting the scope of the problem and its pernicious effects on all Americans is increasing; this evidence cannot easily be ignored or dismissed. Second, although much more progress remains to be made in this regard, Hispanic political and market clout is growing. In 1992, for example, the membership of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus grew by 50%, and four Latino Representatives now sit on the House Appropriations Committee. Increasingly, major corporations, who have been at the forefront of the effort to develop specialized marketing strategies targeting Hispanics, are beginning to understand their obligations to also examine the programming their advertising dollars are supporting. In addition, Hispanic-owned firms are becoming increasingly important in the nation's economy, and as sources of the advertising revenue which supports much of the media programming we see.

Third, there is a small but increasingly influential cadre of Latinos within and on the periphery of the entertainment industry itself. Notwithstanding the media's unacceptable employment record, there is a growing presence of Hispanic journalists, actors, directors, producers, and others who share a deep commitment to reforming the industry from within. This activism within the industry is increasingly being matched by Latino organizations. For many years, professional associations like the National Association of Hispanic Journalists, advocacy groups such as the National Hispanic Media Coalition, and nonprofit production companies such as the National Latino Communications Center, have worked hard to establish and promote a Latino-focused media agenda.

Although we have been interested in media issues for many years, this report represents the first step in a major new National Council of La Raza media reform initiative. As a part of this initiative, we intend to stimulate, carry out, and commission new, comprehensive research efforts to further document the scope of the problem, and to begin to assess previously neglected areas of the industry including the print media, public radio and television, cable television, and radio.

We intend to encourage responsible corporations to hold the industry accountable for the programming their advertising pays for — which, after all, is supported by the Hispanic community through its purchases of the goods and services produced by these corporations. We intend to vigorously advocate for the government to uphold its responsibility in this matter — to expose the pattern of discrimination against Hispanics through reports and hearings, to deny licenses to and impose penalties against those who have

demonstrated their unwillingness to take steps to resolve the problem, and if necessary to press for new legislation to require equity in programming. Most importantly, we intend to inform our own community of the situation, to help ourselves become more educated consumers, to understand that we need not accept the situation but can take positive steps to induce reform.

Fourth, I am optimistic because I know reform can occur. Like many Americans, I have seen with my own eyes, and heard with my own ears, how media coverage of African Americans and women has improved in the last three decades. I have seen how stereotypes like the infamous Steppin' Fetchit have been replaced by *The Cosby Show*. Like other Americans, I sat transfixed before my television, week after week, by the Public Broadcasting Service documentary of the Black civil rights movement, *Eyes on the Prize*. I have seen and read how media portrayals of women and the family have similarly evolved over the last three decades. I understand that the media's coverage and treatment of these groups is still far from perfect, but no one can deny the progress that has been made. I would not be honest if I did not admit to some frustration that the progress in improving media portrayals of these groups was not accompanied by similar improvements for my own community. However, I take comfort in the knowledge that while my colleagues in the civil rights movement have helped to show the way, it's now our turn.

Finally, I am optimistic because of my conviction that reform is not only possible, it is inevitable. I may not be a media expert, but I do know that the media, like every other sector of the American economy, respond to the bottom line. Hispanics are not only among this country's fastest-growing population groups, we are already among the nation's greatest consumers of the media. Over time, as our community "votes with its eyes and ears," the media will either be reformed or it will be replaced, replaced by new entertainment and news formats, by new programs, by new networks, that portray Latinos as we truly are — hardworking Americans who care about their families, their neighborhoods, and their country.

Raul Yzaguirre, President
National Council of La Raza
July 1994

I. Treatment of Hispanics in the Media

A. Overview

The "mass media" — an almost undefinable mix of television news and entertainment, feature films, and print materials of all kinds — constitutes an enormous "socializing force" in today's society. The media wield power that shapes Americans' attitudes toward each other and the world. Unfortunately, the media's portrayal of Latinos* — who constituted at least nine percent of the 1990 U.S. population and are projected to become the largest minority in the country early in the next century — has been largely unscrutinized by the press, the federal government, or by other independent groups. Given the growing importance of the Latino population, and recent policy debates about the effects of violence in the media on society, it is appropriate that the media's treatment of Hispanics be carefully studied and assessed.

Until very recently, relatively little research has been conducted on the treatment of Hispanics in the media. However, the number of such studies is growing, and existing research has produced remarkably consistent findings. These studies, described in the following section of this report, reveal that:

- **Hispanics are almost invisible in both the entertainment and news media.** Hispanics are virtually absent as characters in the entertainment media and as correspondents and anchors in news media.
- **When Hispanics do appear, they are consistently and uniformly portrayed more negatively than other race and ethnic groups.** Latinos are more likely than other groups to receive portrayal in the media that reinforces crude and demeaning cultural stereotypes. Positive media portrayals of Latinos are also uncommon.

Although most of the research described and analyzed below refers to the television medium, similar studies covering feature films and print media are also included where appropriate. As this report demonstrates, to the millions of Americans whose principal views of Hispanic Americans are shaped by what they see on the television screen, the nation's second largest ethnic minority is essentially "out of the picture."

B. Absence of Hispanic Portrayals in the Media

1. Entertainment

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, spurred by the findings of the Kerner Commission that criticized the role of the media in the race riots of the 1960s, a number of researchers began to systematically study media portrayals of minorities. Most of these studies focused on African Americans and women; almost none included Hispanics. In the late 1970s, a few studies began to examine portrayals of Latinos. These studies found that, while both Blacks and Hispanics were underrepresented among television entertainment characters, Hispanics were the least likely to appear in these programs.

For example, the Annenberg School of Communications' Cultural Indicators Project found that between 1969 and 1978 only 2.5% of prime time television characters were Hispanic compared to 8.5%

* The term "Hispanic" is used by the U.S. Bureau of the Census to identify persons of Mexican American, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central and South American, and Spanish descent. Throughout this report, it is used interchangeably with the term "Latino."

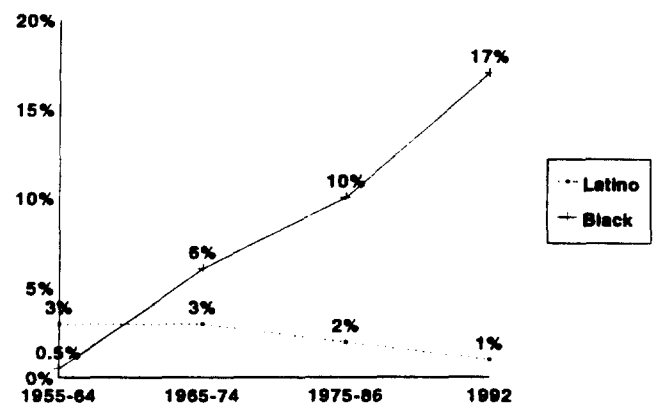
who were African American.[1] A follow-up Annenberg study of the 1977-1979 television seasons found the proportion of weekend Black characters (6.5%) and Hispanic characters (1%) significantly smaller than those on prime time.[2]

Similarly, in a three-season (1975-1978) study of fictional commercial television series characters, researchers at Michigan State University concluded that "Hispanic Americans are significantly underrepresented in the TV population." Out of a total of 3,549 characters, the study found only 53 Latinos — or 1.5% of the total population of TV characters — with speaking roles. Hispanic American females were especially scarce and no Hispanics appeared on Saturday morning shows. The study showed that in a typical week of watching television (total of 21 hours), the average viewer would only see five or six Hispanic American characters.[3] In a decade-long (1971-1980) study of television's portrayal of minorities and women in drama and comedy drama, Brigham Young University researchers concluded that "the relatively powerless 'other' minorities [including Hispanics] have become virtually excluded" from such programming.[4]

While the number of African Americans on television has increased in recent years, Latinos are still largely absent from the screen. The emerging research in the 1970s provided "ammunition" to groups seeking to increase the number of minorities on television. As a result, the number of African Americans on television grew dramatically in the 1980s. By the 1990s, according to one study, the percentage of African American characters seen on television exceeded their percentage of the population.[5] However, recent studies document that the number of Latinos on television and in film remains persistently small.

Figure 1

TV Ethnic Portrayals Over Time



Source: Center for Media and Public Affairs

The Center for Media and Public Affairs, a Washington, D.C.-based public interest research organization, has monitored the proportion of Hispanic characters on TV over the years. In *Watching America*, an analysis of programming from 1955 to 1986, the Center revealed that Hispanics hovered around the two percentage point mark of television characters throughout the 30-year period. Even more disturbing was the Center's finding that the trend was going in the wrong direction. For example, the Center found that the proportion of Hispanics on television had actually *decreased* from about three percent in the 1950s to around one percent in the 1980s.[6]

According to more recent studies, this negative trend continued through the late 1980s and early 1990s. For example, in a 1992 study, Pitzer College researchers surveyed a week of network television

programming during the fall of 1992. Out of 569 characters appearing in speaking parts on ABC, CBS, NBC, and Fox, Latinos accounted for just 1.6% or 9 of the 569 characters.[7] Another study covering a week of network, Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), and selected cable programming in the spring of 1992 concluded that "Hispanic characters are particularly absent from commercial entertainment television," and that Latinos and other ethnic minorities "are practically excluded as actors, actresses, or even caricatures in mainstream commercial programs."[8]

The absence of Latinos in prime time — when TV viewing is at its peak — is even worse than in the aggregate. In a 1993 study of minorities and women in television from 1982 to 1992, the Annenberg School found that Latinos averaged only 1.1% of prime-time characters over the ten years of the study, compared to 10.8% for African Americans. Moreover, while the percentages for African Americans have fluctuated over the ten seasons from 6% to 16%, Hispanics were within 1% of the 10-season average each year,[9] suggesting that underrepresentation of Latinos on television was a chronic, essentially permanent condition over this decade.

Feature Films

Although NCLR's literature search did not reveal comprehensive research studies of feature film portrayals of Hispanics, the limited available evidence strongly suggests that trends similar to those found on television exist with respect to feature films. For example, the 1993 Screen Actors Guild/American Federation of Television and Radio Artists study found massive levels of underrepresentation of Hispanics in film roles. According to the study, while White and Black performers are two percentage points *ahead* of their numbers in the U.S. population, and Asian/Pacific Americans and American Indians are hired proportionately to their population size, the percentage of Latino/Hispanic performers hired is five percentage points *below* their proportion of the U.S. population. The representation of Hispanic actors would thus have to more than double for Latinos to be proportionately represented in feature films.

Source: Screen Actors Guild, *Employment in Entertainment: The Search for Diversity*, 1993.

The Annenberg report further noted that "people of color" make up less than five percent of the Saturday morning program population. African Americans averaged 2.9% during the 10-year period, although they reached 6.9% by the 1991-92 season. However, Hispanics are seen, on the average, only once every two weeks (0.5 percent). The report concluded that "despite changes in styles, stars, and formats, prime-time network dramatic television presents a remarkably stable cast,"[10] confirming the notion that the absence of Latino portrayals on Saturday morning programming during any single chronological time period cannot be attributed to year-to-year variation.

Another method of assessing the presence of Hispanics "on-screen" is to measure the proportion of total roles — regardless of whether such roles portray an identifiably ethnic character — which are held by Latino actors. A 1993 study by the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA) documented highly disturbing employment patterns covering all SAG-sanctioned dramatic TV productions including episodic series, mini-series, and movies made for television.

According to the SAG/AFTRA study, Whites receive 82% of all roles (Whites constitute 76% of the U.S. population), and Blacks hold 13% of roles (approximately the same as their proportion of the general population). Asian/Pacifics and American Indians are underrepresented by one percentage point. However, Hispanics, who constitute at least nine percent of the population, receive only three percent of on-screen roles; in other words, Latinos are underrepresented in on-screen television roles by a full six percentage points.[11] These data demonstrate that, in order to reach parity, Hispanic employment on-screen would have to increase immediately by 300%!

Overall, the available data conclusively demonstrate that, by every standard, Hispanics have been severely and chronically underrepresented in TV entertainment programming for nearly 40 years. Moreover, Latinos do not appear to have shared in the gains made by African Americans and women in recent years with respect to increased representation as characters on television entertainment programs.

2. News

Television viewers are presented with fewer news and public affairs programs than entertainment shows; similarly, the reading of news-oriented print materials occupies a shrinking percentage of the typical American's recreational or leisure time. Notwithstanding these trends, the extent to which ethnic minorities are portrayed in news and public affairs programs on television and in print is of vital interest to society. News programs by definition are supposed to portray reality, while much of the other media are fictional in nature. Newspapers and television's public affairs programming help shape public opinion on policy issues — and may have an even greater effect on views of policy makers. Finally, the nation's "Fourth Estate," which enjoys unique protections under the Constitution, has a correspondingly unique ethical responsibility to assure equitable, accurate portrayals of all minority groups in its news coverage. Although there has been relatively little research on this issue, available data strongly suggest that the mainstream news media have failed to assure such equitable coverage.

As with television entertainment portrayals, coverage of issues with Latino themes is extremely rare in the broadcast news media. The 1983 Project CASA study found that only 18% of television stories and 17% of radio stories qualified as Hispanic-focused. Moreover, the vast majority of these stories focused on crime and other "hard" news; less than 14% of television and 4% of radio stories dealt with minority social or economic policy issues.[12]

Inadequate broadcast news coverage of Hispanics is particularly obvious when measured by the number and proportion of Latinos who appear on screen as correspondents, anchors, and other "newsmakers." For example, Hispanics historically have been severely underrepresented as on-screen correspondents in the broadcast news media. The landmark U.S. Commission on Civil Rights study, *Window Dressing on the Set: Women and Minorities in Television*, found **no Hispanics**, male or female, among the 85 TV network correspondents in 1976.[13]

Nearly two decades later, it appears that the situation has improved only marginally. A 1992 *Vista* magazine article reported on a study which found that, of all the television stories on network newscasts in 1989, 91% were filed by White reporters, 5% by Black reporters, 3% by Asian reporters, and only 1% by Hispanic reporters.[14] The 1993 Annenberg study found that Latinos make up 1.5% of television network "news deliverers," i.e., correspondents and anchors, a percentage lower than any other group studied. By contrast, African Americans are 14.2 percent of news deliverers.[15]

The print media do not appear to fare much better. While comprehensive, longitudinal research in this area is particularly scarce, anecdotal evidence strongly suggests that major newspapers frequently fail to adequately present Hispanic perspectives in their coverage of the news. One early study of three daily newspapers in San Antonio, a city which at that time was almost half Hispanic, found that Hispanics were underrepresented in all categories of news coverage when compared with Whites of similar socioeconomic status. The researcher noted:

> The results of the study are similar to the findings of studies of media treatment of other minority groups. They indicate that the newspaper image of

> Mexican Americans in San Antonio is inaccurate. Mexican Americans are not explicitly labeled, directly stereotyped, or otherwise discriminated against. They are neglected. At almost all occupational and income levels they are underrepresented in the news.[16]

A 1983 Project CASA study examined local daily newspapers over a two-week period in six southwestern cities in which Hispanics represented 20% to 65% of the population. The authors concluded that:

> [P]rimary Hispanic coverage (Hispanics as the focus of the story) was well below population proportions.... As for Spanish surname citations in newspaper bulletins, if Mexican Americans are born, wed, and die in numbers equivalent to their presence in the population, the newspapers don't report it. Such citations of Mexican Americans appear less than half as often as Hispanic population proportions would predict.[17]

Latinos also appear to be underrepresented in newspaper coverage of civil rights issues. For example, an NCLR analysis of 626 articles on civil rights issues — an area in which one might expect Latinos to be significantly overrepresented — in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* from January 1989 through November 1990 revealed that only 50, or 7.9%, even mentioned Hispanics.[18]

Even when print news coverage includes Latinos, it appears that this coverage is inadequate. Specifically, such coverage appears to focus on Latinos as "objects" of the news to be commented on by others, rather than as "subjects" of the news who have an authoritative or legitimate perspective to share. One 1980 study of six southwestern newspapers, for example, found that only one-third of the sources cited in stories relating to Hispanics were themselves Hispanic.[19] A more recent analysis revealed that about one-half of identifiable sources cited in Hispanic-related broadcast news stories had Spanish surnames.[20]

The Annenberg School also examined the proportion of Hispanics on major network news that are either delivering the news, making news, or cited as sources or authorities. According to the study, Latinos make up 1.5% of all newsmakers, only 0.3% of news deliverers, and were not cited at all as sources, spokespersons, or authorities — by far the lowest proportion of any other group.[21]

Based on the available data, it appears that Hispanics are seriously underrepresented as on-air correspondents and personalities in the broadcast news media, and perhaps in the print media as well. Moreover, even when Latinos appear in the news, they do so very infrequently as experts, authorities, or newsmakers.

C. Negative Portrayals

1. Entertainment

Not only are Hispanics severely underrepresented in entertainment programming, those that do appear in such programs tend to be portrayed negatively. These negative portrayals fall into two broad categories. The first category involves general "good vs. evil" or "successful vs. unsuccessful" roles. On the one hand, Latinos are less likely than other groups to be cast in positive roles; on the other hand, Hispanics are more likely than other groups to be portrayed negatively. The second category involves characterizations that are stereotypical — often crudely and blatantly so.

Content Analysis

Over the past several decades, scholars have been able to refine both quantitative and qualitative media research techniques, grouped together under the term "content analysis," to assess the subject content of media programming. At its most basic level, content analysis involves the viewing of television programs (or reading of printed material) by trained "coders," and the recording of various quantitative and qualitative observations about such material in a uniform manner. One aspect of such analysis consists of "headcounts," which can verify the numbers of times racial and ethnic groups appear on television. Other quantitative techniques involve the systematic classification of program content into predesigned, discrete categories, e.g., the social backgrounds of characters and their functions in the story plot. Another technique, used to assess the qualitative nature of program content, develops categories and identifies illustrative examples based on common themes, symbols, and other program attributes to specifically accommodate the research material. Most of the studies cited in the preceding section and this section are based on some combination of each of these types of content analysis.

Although the first study to systematically examine Hispanic television portrayals was not published until 1980, an impressive body of evidence has emerged in recent years. Using a standard research technique known as "content analysis" (see box), a number of scholars have documented the extent to which television entertainment programming tends to portray Hispanics negatively; these studies are described below.

One major study by Robert and Linda Lichter of the Center for Media and Public Affairs analyzed a sample of 620 fictional entertainment programs involving 7,639 individual characters with speaking roles from the 1955 through 1986 seasons. The study, published in 1989, found that only 32% of Hispanics on television from 1955-1986 were portrayed positively, compared to 40% of Whites and 44% of Blacks. By contrast, 41% of Hispanics were portrayed negatively, compared to 31% of Whites and only 24% of Blacks.[22] Subtracting the percentage of negative characters from that of positive characters produced overall measurements of "+20" for Blacks, "+9" for Whites, and "-9" for Hispanics.[23]

Similar findings were reported in a 1993 study by the Annenberg School of Communications covering the 1982-92 period, which grouped characters into simple "hero" vs. "villain" categories. According to the Annenberg report, although positively valued ("good") characters outnumber evil ("bad") by a factor of between two and three to one overall, foreign, young, and Latino/Hispanic men were found to have the least favorable "hero/villain" ratios.[24] Citing its 20 year-old database of 21,000 total characters on television, the Annenberg School has found that for every 100 "good" White characters, there were 39 villains, yet for every 100 Hispanic "good" characters, there were 75 villains.[25]

Not only are Hispanics portrayed negatively in a traditional "good vs. evil" sense, they frequently appear on television as stereotypes and caricatures. In the Michigan State University study covering fictional programming over three TV seasons, Greenberg and Baptista-Fernandez found that "[Hispanic characters are mostly] males, of dark complexion, with dark hair, most often with heavy accents. Women are absent and insignificant."[26] Based on this research, the authors concluded that, when cast, Hispanics tend to wind up in stereotypical roles, "usually as crooks, cops, or comics."[27]

Similarly, a 1992 University of Texas study examined a week of programming on the networks, PBS, and selected cable outlets. After noting the severe underrepresentation of Hispanics, the study concluded, "If they [Hispanics] appear, they are mostly token or stereotypical characters in secondary roles with few lines or with minimal contributions to the story plots."[28]