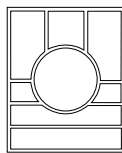


Still Missing: Latinos In and Out of Hollywood



Report commissioned by
The Screen Actors Guild

Research conducted by
The Tomás Rivera Policy Institute



The Tomás Rivera
POLICY INSTITUTE

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Artwork by Robert Gil De Montez: "Movie House"

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Screen Actors Guild

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Acknowledgments

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President's Letter

The purpose of the *Still Missing in Action* report by the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute is to promote inclusion within the entertainment industry for Latino/Hispanic performers. It is indeed gratifying to participate in the final phase of this very important study, which has served to underscore the Screen Actors Guild commitment to diversity and affirmative action.

On May 5, 1999, several months before the furor over the fall television line up, the EEO Latino/Hispanic subcommittee presented the findings of the preliminary study *Missing in Action: Latinos In and Out of Hollywood*, which was commissioned and funded by the Screen Actors Guild-Producers Industry Advancement and Cooperative Fund. This national report began to focus attention on the fact that Latinos/Hispanics continue to be underrepresented on television and in film, even though it is the fastest-growing population in the United States. Additionally, the Guild hosted top-ranking entertainment industry leaders, including actors, writers, producers and directors, at a first-of-its-kind, one-day symposium, entitled "Big Screen, Small Screen: Latinos Are Watching, Are You Reaching Them?" aimed at finding viable solutions to the underrepresentation of Latinos/Hispanics in film, television and commercials. The symposium began with the release of the SAG-sponsored study, exploring the ways in which Latinos/Hispanics engage the entertainment industry, both as audience members and performers.

First and foremost, the TRPI study challenges the myth that there are not enough qualified Latino/Hispanic performers to compete for roles in film, television and commercials. We hope with this study to convince industry insiders that diversity can improve their bottom line – and they need look no further than the Screen Actors Guild for highly competent Latino/Hispanic performers. We believe many producers and programmers are missing opportunities to reach a larger, broader audience through more diverse casting. This study demonstrates that people want to see themselves and their lives reflected onscreen.

The Guild and the members of its Ethnic Employment Opportunities Committee are pleased with the outcome of this study and with the gradual improvement in industry responsiveness to various SAG Affirmative Action initiatives over the past decade.

The Guild continues to be committed to working with national and grassroots organizations to aid them in their efforts to develop the most productive and effective responses to this extremely frustrating situation, which directly affects so many of our members. This study is a tool we will provide to executives to assist them in creating the true *American Scene*, which includes a fair representation of the Latino/Hispanic American landscape.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William Daniels". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

William Daniels
President, Screen Actors Guild

Executive Summary

In their 1999 report *Missing in Action: Latinos In and Out of Hollywood*, the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) and the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute (TRPI) concluded that Latinos represent a vast and untapped market for Hollywood entertainment product. A year later, new research bolsters those findings and adds new ones.

As the previous report concluded, Latinos* remain active consumers of movies, television and video and continue to be the fastest growing segment of the U.S. population. A key to reaching that market is still available to the entertainment industry: the large pool of untapped Latino and Latina actors.

But a new survey of Latino members of the Screen Actors Guild reveals more details about the obstacles that increasingly make Latinos one of the most underrepresented groups in television, movies and other entertainment.


How underrepresented? On average, Latino SAG members reported working only one day a month in the previous year. And fully one-third reported no work at all.

Why? The survey revealed some of the most prevalent obstacles: stereotyping of Latino actors on the part of casting directors, writers and other “above the line” talent. Partly as a result, the actors reported that they saw their opportunities for work declining.

This report also contains new findings based on responses from industry executives about the reasons Latinos remain scarce in TV, movies and other entertainment. Among other things, executives said that the Latino advocates needed to make a strong financial case for hiring Latino actors in “crossover” roles and for producing Latino-themed entertainment. To make such a case, the executives admitted that they needed a better understanding of the Latino audience and its financial dynamics.

These and other findings in this report confirm that the Screen Actors Guild can help increase the representation of Latinos in Hollywood as a means for the industry to tap the Latino market:

- SAG should continue to collect and update existing data, e.g., Latino audience entertainment expenditures, in order to support a financial case for hiring Latino actors.
- SAG can educate the industry on the financial dynamics of the Latino market to demonstrate the very real market incentives to increasing Latino representation in front of the camera.
- SAG should provide information necessary to educate industry executives on the racial heterogeneity and economic diversity of the Latino community in order to eliminate Latino ethnic stereotypes.
- SAG can sponsor affirmative action efforts to bring in new Latino and other minority members.

- 
- SAG can actively advocate for its Latino members to top industry representatives to stop pernicious and discriminatory stereotyping.
 - SAG can nurture its Latino and other minority members through long-range professional development programs.
 - SAG should conduct further studies comparing Latino SAG members with non-Hispanic white SAG members and research that examines comparisons with SAG members of other ethnicities.

* We use the terms Latino and Hispanic interchangeably to refer to individuals who trace their origin or ancestry to the Spanish-speaking parts of Latin America or the Caribbean.

Report Background

The Screen Actors Guild (SAG) in 1998 commissioned the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute (TRPI) to conduct a comprehensive investigative report on the concerns raised by Latino SAG members in the entertainment industry. Volume One of the research, *Missing in Action*, was released in early 1999. Since then, TRPI has conducted additional research further revealing the reasons why Latinos are one of the most underrepresented groups in television, movies and other entertainment.

TRPI scholars focused on the question of how Latino SAG members are underrepresented and why. This second report, *Still Missing: Latinos In and Out of Hollywood* includes results from a national survey of Latino SAG members and interviews held with industry decision makers assessing their personal perspectives on issues raised in the first report.

The survey of Latino SAG members, conducted during the summer of 1999, confirms many of the findings raised by focus group participants as reported by TRPI researchers in its original report, *Missing in Action*. Out of the 4,800 Latino SAG members, over 1,200 responded to the TRPI questionnaire. This 25 percent response rate to a mail questionnaire underscores the saliency of the issues confronting Latino SAG members in the industry.

As a supplement to the survey, TRPI researchers also conducted one-on-one interviews with industry representatives from both the television and film industries, including directors, producers and network or studio representatives. The interviews took place between June and December 1999. During this period, the 1999 prime television schedule came under fire for its lack of minority actors and actresses. National civil rights advocacy organizations called for a national “brown out,” or boycott, of television network shows during certain weeks in the fall. These events affected the scheduling of interviews for this study. However, TRPI’s second report includes significant findings from interviews with top executives who responded candidly about their fiscal responsibilities and limited understanding of Latino audiences.

This study of the employment experiences of Latino SAG members is congruent with TRPI’s mission statement of conducting and disseminating objective, policy-relevant research, and its implications, to decision makers on key issues affecting Latino communities.



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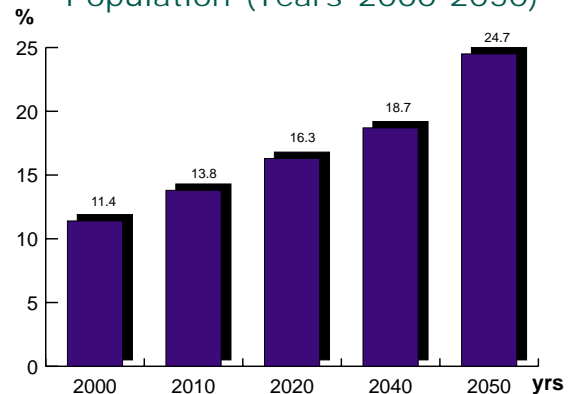
The Entertainment Industry and the Latino Community

In 2000 Latinos¹ account for one out of nine Americans, a percentage that is sure to increase due to high birth rates and immigration from Latin America. By the next generation, in 2020, one in six Americans will be of Hispanic descent. (See Figure 1).

With this surge in population comes enormous buying power. National Latino buying power in 1998 was \$404 billion annually, making the U.S. Latino consumer market among the top 20 largest consumers markets in the world (See Table 1). Even though their annual per-capita income is significantly less than the national average (\$31,073 vs. \$42,681), Latino families spend about 4 percent of their after-tax income on entertainment (e.g., movies, sporting events, family recreational activities), according to the Consumer Expenditure Survey (CES) of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. In the five years for which data is available (1994-1998), Latino families increased their spending on entertainment by 5.6 percent, while entertainment spending by non-Hispanic white families decreased by 5.3 percent.

Latinos spend on average about \$1,148 a year (1998) on entertainment (see Table 2). While this is only 59 percent of what non-Hispanic white families spend, this figure represents an average of \$266 more a year than what black families spend on entertainment. And Latino family entertainment expenditures seem to increase during good

Figure 1
Projections of U.S. Latino Population Percentage Compared to Total Population (Years 2000-2050)



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1996.

Table 1
A Comparison of the U.S. Latino Market vs International Markets (1998)

Rank		GNP (Millions \$)
1	United States	8,511,000
2	China	4,420,000
3	Japan	2,903,000
4	India	1,689,000
5	Germany	1,813,000
6	France	1,320,000
7	United Kingdom	1,252,000
8	Italy	1,181,000
9	Brazil	1,035,200
10	Mexico	815,300
11	Canada	688,300
12	Spain	645,600
13	Indonesia	602,000
14	Russia	593,400
15	South Korea	584,700
16	U.S. Latino	404,700
17	Netherlands	348,600

Source: TRPI analysis of CIA World Fact Book GDP data, 1998 and Strategy Research Corp. buying power studies.

economic times: Latino families spent over \$10 billion a year on entertainment in 1998 (see Table 3).

In 1998, Latinos spent \$73.27 per family per year on admissions (movies, theater, opera and ballet), compared with \$49.19 per family for blacks and \$97.36 for non-Hispanic whites (see Figure 2). We assume, given the socioeconomic characteristics of this population, that 80 percent of the \$663 million total (see Table 4) admissions expenditures are for movies. Therefore, the Latino community represents a \$530-million annual

movie admissions market. In fact, if one looks at admissions as a percentage of overall entertainment expenditures, Latinos spend the largest share: they spend 6.5 percent of their entertainment expenditures on admissions, while blacks spend 5.9 percent and non-Hispanic whites spend 5 percent.

How can Hollywood tap this enormous market? Previous TRPI surveys have shown that Latino audiences make decisions based in part on the presence of Latino actors in the entertainment they seek. Latino audiences also base entertainment decisions in part on whether the television programs, movies or video contain Latino themes. (It should be noted that such factors are only one of several that figure into the Latino audience's decision-making process.)

Despite these findings, however, "Hispanics have historically been the most underrepresented of all the minority groups in film and TV, and there is no sign that their numbers are increasing," according to *The Hollywood Reporter* (November 1999). This underrepresentation extends in front of and behind the camera, as well as in the depiction of Latinos. And the numbers are getting worse.

The Lack of Latino Faces in Hollywood

Latino actors represented just 4.3 percent of SAG members in 1999—the latest year for which there are data—up from 3.4 percent in 1993, according to the Screen Actors Guild's own figures.

Table 2
Hispanic, Black, & White Family
Entertainment Expenditures
(1994-1998)

	Hispanic	Black	White
1994	\$ 937	\$767	\$1,732
1995	1,058	926	1,759
1996	1,087	882	2,049
1997	1,137	872	2,019
1998	1,148	882	1,933

Source: TRPI analysis of National Consumer Expenditure Survey. "White" category includes Hispanics/Asian Pacific Islanders.

Table 3
Total Latino Family
Expenditures on Entertainment
(1998)

Average Family Entertainment Expenditures (\$1,148)
x
U.S. Latino Families (9,051,000)
=
\$10,390,548,000

Source: TRPI analysis of U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Latino directors, similarly, represented only 2.3 percent of all directors, down from 3.1 percent the previous year. Latino writers for prime-time television accounted for only 1.3 percent of all such writers.

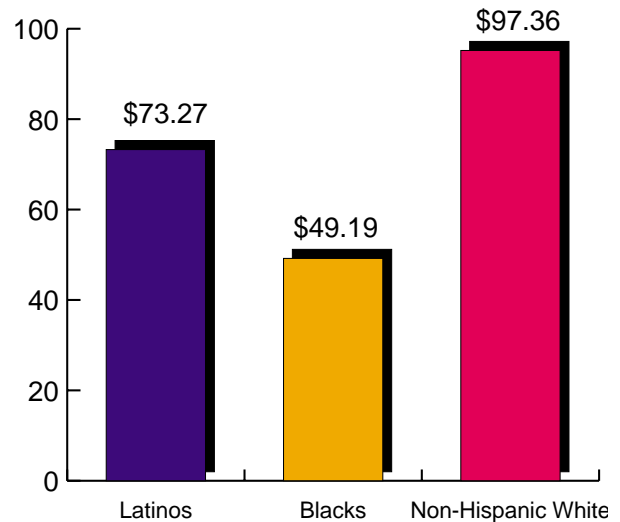
In general, Latinos rarely occupy more than 2 percent of the available jobs in the film and television industry, according to documentation kept since the mid-1980s by the guilds representing actors, writers and directors. Filmmaker Jesús Salvador Treviño has called this finding the “2 percent factor.” The problem has been well documented by the guilds, leading to a consensus about minority underrepresentation since the media reform efforts of the late 1960s and 1970s. The Latino community, however, has grown from 4.5 percent of the national population in 1970 to 11.5 percent in 2000. In short, there are roughly two and a half times more Latinos vying for the same 2 percent of entertainment jobs.

The growth of Latinos in the population occurs at the same time employment levels remain consistently low. Latino actors are employed in a proportion less than one-third of their representation in the general population. Latino writers are employed in a proportion less than one-tenth of their representation in the population.

In the executive ranks, Latinos enter the 21st century with a lower level of access and representation than at any time since the issue first emerged during the protests of the 1960s. A survey² by the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute found that Spanish-surnamed employees ac-

counted for just 2 percent of the executive positions in television networks and movie studios, or just 11 positions out of 553. Furthermore, no Latino executives occupied a creative decision-making position; the most common position for a Latino executive was vice president of

Figure 2
Annual Expenditures on Admissions
(1998)



Source: TRPI analysis of National Consumer Expenditure Survey.

Table 4
Total Latino Family Annual
Expenditures on Admissions
(1998)

Average Latino Family Admissions Expenditures
(\$73.27)
x
U.S. Latino Families
(9,051,000)
=
\$663,166,770

Source: TRPI analysis of U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

business affairs. More important, four out of seven networks and six out of ten studios did not employ a single Latino within its executive ranks. In other words, roughly 60 percent of networks and studios do not employ any Latino executives.

Obstacles to Latino Actors

“These casting directors called my manager and said, ‘We told you we wanted somebody who was Mexican. We wanted somebody dirty. He was white as far as we were concerned.’ ”

—Latino SAG Member, Los Angeles

How do Latino actors describe their experiences trying to find work in Hollywood? In 1999, the Screen Actors Guild and the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute conducted the first-ever survey³ of SAG’s 4,800 Latino members. About one-fourth responded to the mailed, self-administered questionnaire. Though the responses do not necessarily represent the opinions of all Latino SAG members, the results are revealing: being Latino in Hollywood has its good and bad points, but Latinos face many barriers to employment, particularly erroneous stereotyping on the part of casting directors, writers and others.

The survey results reinforce the findings of focus groups that were conducted by the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute and reported in the earlier report *Missing in Action: Latinos In and Out of Hollywood*. Those focus groups included more than 100 Latino SAG actors in three cities: Los Angeles, New

York and Miami. In response to questions about stereotyping and job opportunities, the focus groups revealed that being Latino is a double-edged sword in the entertainment industry. Despite the ethnic pride actors felt, many conceded that being identified as a Latino came with disadvantages. The results of the focus groups provided the basis for this more broad-based survey, whose findings are reported here for the first time.

Like the focus groups, the survey found that being a Latino actor in Hollywood is a mixed blessing. The majority of respondents—almost 67 percent—reported that they did not experience differential treatment on the set because they were Latino, but most said they faced difficulties because they were Latino. More than 90 percent asserted that Latinos lacked employment opportunities in the entertainment industry.

About half of the respondents were unsure whether having a Latino surname affected their chances to audition for parts or win roles. Of the other half, about 73 percent felt that having a Latino surname was a disadvantage compared with those who felt it was a benefit. As one respondent noted on the questionnaire,

“Although I only work as an extra, lately I truly believe that because of my name, I am called for shows dealing with police, hospitals or street crime. And I have never been called for ballroom, dinner party or ‘period’ scenes.”

The findings also revealed details about the stereotyping that actors encounter during the casting process:

- More than half of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that “Latinos must fit a particular stereotype in order to be cast as Latinos. Latinos who do not fit this stereotype do not receive Latino roles.” The majority of Latino actors reported that they had been cast in Latino roles in the past year. Only 9 percent disagreed, and 2 percent strongly disagreed. Fully two-thirds of respondents reported that they had been rejected for a role because they did not fit this Latino stereotype.

- What does this stereotype consist of? Those holding stereotypes about Latinos expect actors to look *mestizo*, a racial mixture combining Indian and European features. About 45 percent of respondents reported that this was part of the entertainment industry’s stereotype about Latinos (see Table 5). One respondent reported that a casting director said, “Who are you kidding? You’re not Mexican. You have green eyes.”

- Survey respondents also said they encountered stereotypes about their language abilities. About 30 percent reported that they were expected to speak poor English or to speak with an accent. “On Spanish[-language] sets, they often ask me if I’m really Hispanic,” one actor said. “On English[-language] sets, they often comment about how little accent I have to be a Latina.”

- More than 5 percent of respondents said they also encountered expectations that they would be submissive (the

“benevolent servant”), would look like a criminal, or would be highly sexualized.

- More than 70 percent of respondents reported that casting directors (CDs) were the most likely to express Latino stereotypes. It is important to note that CDs would be the individuals involved in a production with whom most Latino actors have contact. Far fewer Latino actors are subsequently cast in roles, therefore as a group they have less contact with producers, directors and writers. The data supports this. About 61 percent reported that writers held stereotypes; 59 percent reported that producers did; and 54 percent reported that directors did. In contrast, about 48 percent of respondents reported that agents used stereotypes. Overall, few respondents (just 8 percent) reported that no one in the industry used these stereotypes.

In response to questions about jobs, Latino SAG members were more likely to report declining rather than growing

Table 5
Components of the Entertainment Industry’s Stereotypes of Latinos

<i>Characteristic</i>	%
Mestizo features	45.8
English not first language	29.1
Benevolent servant	24.1
Criminal	19.6
Sexualized	8.6
Urban lifestyle	6.2
Mulatto features	3.0
Spitfire	2.9
Americanized	2.7
Submissive	1.6

opportunities. The survey asked respondents to reflect on areas covered by SAG contracts that have grown in importance during the respondent's career and on areas that have declined. Overall, respondents were more likely to report decline than growth, though in many cases the number of respondents experiencing decline only slightly exceeded the number of those experiencing greater opportunities (see Table 6). (We should also note that this question had a higher non-response rate than other questions. This may reflect a greater discomfort in answering such a question among respondents newer to SAG or among those who have only acted in one or two areas. The low response rate may also mean that newer SAG members have had fewer experiences from which to draw conclusions.)

A majority of respondents did not report growth in any area. About 40 percent of respondents reported growth

in opportunities in film, television and commercials during their careers. In film and television, respondents were about as likely to have seen decline as growth.

In most SAG contract work areas, the share of respondents reporting decline during their careers exceeded the share of respondents reporting growth. This pattern was seen most dramatically in stage and industrial work. In several cases, such as television and voice-over work, the shares reporting growth and decline were roughly equal. In only two areas—commercial work and film—did respondents reporting growth significantly exceed respondents reporting decline. In commercial work, 39 percent of respondents reported growth in opportunities compared to 30 percent who reported declining opportunities. In film, 43 percent reported growing opportunities compared to 41 percent who reported declining opportunities.

Table 6
SAG Work Areas Respondents Have Seen Increase in Importance During their Careers and Areas that Have Declined in Importance During their Careers

<i>Area</i>	Areas that Have Grown in Importance %	Areas that Have Declined in Importance %
Film	43.0	40.9
Television	40.1	41.5
Animation	6.7	15.9
Stage	13.9	26.7
Interactive	5.3	13.6
Voice-over	20.9	19.5
Industrial	10.1	22.2
Commercial	38.6	30.2

Note: Approximately two-thirds of respondents answered these questions.

The View From Inside

It's a truism in Hollywood that it's not what you know; it's who you know. Close-knit and insular social networks determine who gets work, whose project gets made and what deals get struck. Those on the outside—such as Latinos and other minorities—are out of the loop.

The Tomás Rivera Policy Institute asked a group of Hollywood insiders why they think Latinos remain virtually invisible in the entertainment industry¹, and how they think things can change.

The answers are not surprising, but instructive. First and foremost, the insiders said that economics determine what gets made, and they held the perception that Latino-themed movies and television programs do not succeed financially. Among other things, Latino actors are not well known enough to draw audiences, the insiders said. Studios and networks are reluctant to back Latino-themed entertainment if they fear it will NOT REACH the broader audience.

How to change things? The insiders said that the directives must come from the top: a commitment from the highest levels to include more Latinos and other minorities. Beyond that, advocates of more Latino and other minority representation must understand the industry and make rock-solid economic arguments for the value-added component of hiring Latino actors and for the creation of Latino-themed entertainment.

Following are a sampling of the responses from insiders who consented to be interviewed by the TRPI on the condition that they remain anonymous.

Q: Latino actors claim that there is a stereotypical image of Latinos in both television and the theatre. What's your opinion?

Movie director: At cocktail parties you have to realize that Latino concerns are referred to as the concerns of “those Mexicans.”

Television network executive: On the contrary, there is a bending over backward not to cast minorities in socially negative roles. We are very careful, for example, if we are casting a criminal to make sure he does not look Hispanic or black. There are no stereotypes.

Studio executive: There is a tremendous amount of ignorance out there. Writers write on topics they are familiar with. Since many writers do not come into contact with Latinos, or the Latinos they come into contact with are in the service industries, that's what they write about.

Studio executive: SAG represents a victimhood perspective. The reality is that economics determine the portrayal of Hispanics.

Q: Who is responsible, if anyone, for the lack of Latinos on the screen?

Studio Executive: If Latino faces are missing, it's the fault of all the networks. Look at the Spanish-language networks. The faces you see there are white, just as white as on English television. Spanish TV is as much a culprit as English TV.

Director: There is not enough experience among Latino actors. “Q” ratings [recognition ratings] are very important, especially in the overseas market. Latino actors have not developed the visibility to attract starring roles or solid character roles. There is compartmentalized thinking in the industry. Who do studio executives know? That’s the key. Unfortunately for Latinos they don’t know the right people.

Studio Executive: I would say it’s primarily the writers. There is an incredible insensitivity out there. We have to watch ethnic stereotypes coming across the board all the time. It’s amazing how narrow some views are. You have to realize how big some of these studios are and how things get lost between the top of the ladder and levels below. There is not overt discrimination.

Q: Given the growth of the Latino community in the United States, why is there a lack of Latino-themed entertainment?

Studio executive: There are really two Hispanic markets. The acculturated Latino market, which is predominantly English speaking, and the immigrant market, which in contrast, is Spanish speaking and has limited English speaking and understanding skills. ... Without a Spanish-language product to reach the immigrant audience, it is going to be difficult to market films that have a convoluted plot line that can be only fully understood with fluency in English. That is why action films do so well in the Latino immigrant market, but films like *Shakespeare in Love* don’t do as well.

With the Latino English-speaking market, there is a problem as well. How do you reach the English-dominant Latino audience? Since Latino English speakers

don’t by and large have targeted publications or television networks—in contrast, for example, to the black audience, which has *Jet*, *Ebony* and *Black Entertainment Network*—you have to use the general media to market. If you do this, then it becomes a simple matter of cost effectiveness. Do we market an ethnic-themed product that will only appeal to a limited number of people, or do we market a product that has more mass appeal? The answer—especially if you are not a risk taker—is to forego the ethnic product and rely on general-themed entertainment.

Moreover, there is a problem with the current batch of Latino-themed entertainment that has come out to date. Most of it focuses on the poor immigrant family trying to escape the *barrio* and make it in American society. Latinos themselves don’t want to see this, since so many of them are precisely in that situation. What the Latino on the street wants to see is himself in another situation, not to be reminded of poverty or hardship. Movies after all are about entertainment, not social commentary. If a Latino-themed movie comes out that captures the fantasy of movies that have done so well ... among the general market, that movie will be a success. ... To make matters worse, this type of story [“up from the *barrio*”] does not sell well in the international market, which is becoming so critical to the bottom line.

Director: The reason we have so few Latino-themed movies is the lack of success of previous movies with this topic. With the exception of *La Bamba*, there have been no other successful Latino-themed movies. Every time a movie fails to generate revenues, the conclusion is that it’s the Latino theme that accounts for the failure. With the exception of a few individuals, there is not enough experience among Latino directors—nobody of name value who has a proven track record in making

[his] products successful. Economic power in Hollywood is critical; that's the way things change in Hollywood. It's all in the bottom line. The only way change will occur is if it's profitable to the studios. Take, for example, Jennifer Lopez. She gets jobs because of success. To bring change about, you have to remember that you have both an artistic and a business mentality present.²

Studio executive: The bottom line of why there is a lack of Latino-themed entertainment is that a business case has not been developed for developing such material. Everyone in the industry is aware of the growing Latino market, but no one knows how to reach that market. We have to figure out how to reach Hispanic eyeballs. If you develop a business case for having Latino-themed material—for having Latino actors in leading roles—then change will come about. Instead, what advocacy groups have done is to develop a social case. Studio executives will lend half an ear to a social case, but the bottom line is that the corporate suites are running a business, and business is about profits or potential profits. Every company is trying to create characters that make money. Develop a business case, and you will bring about change.

The other reason we as an industry have not responded well to minority concerns is that we in the industry are not [consistent] in our efforts to promote diversity and inclusivity. Sure, we'll begin a minority writers' program this year, or we'll bring in minority interns for two years, but as time passes these programs fade away. If we had been constant with our minority intern programs among writers, producers and others 20 years ago, this problem of minority inclusion would have been solved by now. We have to remain constant in bringing in minority representation.

Studio executive: What has hurt Latino and black efforts to pressure the industry is that these minority organizations have lost credibility. We hear about boycotts, and these boycotts aren't even conducted during sweeps week. Or we hear about a press conference where Latinos are going to boycott a show, and the Nielsen ratings don't reflect a drop in viewership. Why don't minority organizations—if they're interested in pressuring the industry—work together and do something that is credible? If people in the community were to write to the networks or to advertisers, the effect would be felt immediately. There's a rough rule of thumb that every letter we receive reflects the opinions of 10,000 people. Yet are we receiving letters? The answer is no, we're not.

Q: How do you bring about change?

Television executive: I don't know.

Studio executive: The industry has to remain constant in its efforts to promote inclusivity for all. Think about what an entertainment conglomerate represents. There are specials, prime-time television shows, ... children's programming, sports coverage. In other words, there are many opportunities for Latinos to begin in the industry. But we have to maintain a long-range program that ensures that this does happen. Look at the number of pilots that are made each year. Only a few are selected. We simply don't know which are going to be successful or flops. The industry is not fine-tuning itself to the characteristics of the mass audience. If we knew more about the characteristics of the Latino audience, and how to reach this audience, we would see change.

Studio executive: If it's important at the top, change will occur. You, the Latino community, have to be real direct. Why are there no Latino writers? You have to ask basic questions like this and ask for specific answers. That means getting to know the industry, since to an outsider it's so complex.

Studio executive: Market imperatives are the key. If the Latino audience can be reached with a product that appeals to them, you will see other studios and networks jumping on the bandwagon to develop product. And product will include Latino actors and Latino-themed material. Look at what happened in the overseas market. In Germany, American films dominated the movie industry for years. But as

Germans began making German movies that appealed to the German audience, U.S. films lost ground. In the long run this has meant more employment opportunities for German actors and for German-themed material. What the Latino community needs are entrepreneurs who will do the same things that German entrepreneurs did: Get capital together and finance their own productions.

Studio Executive: Don't let the industry fool you. The creativity defense is crap. Once the directives come from above, change will follow.

Director: The Hispanic movie-going audience has to put [its] dollars where [its] culture is.

Notes

1 TRPI researchers conducted one-on-one interviews with industry representatives from both the television and film industries, including directors, producers and network or studio representatives. The interviews took place between June and December 1999. During this period, the 1999 prime-time television schedule came under fire for its lack of minority actors and actresses. National civil rights advocacy organizations, including the Hispanic Foundation for the Arts, the National Council of La Raza (NCLR), the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), and Hispanic Americans for Fairness in Media, called for a national "brown out," or boycott, of television network shows during certain weeks in the fall. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and Latino and Asian American advocacy groups, met with networks and other industry representatives to express their concerns about the lack of minority depictions.

These events affected the scheduling of interviews for this study. The SAG Latino Subcommittee and the office of the President of SAG identified sixteen individuals as likely candidates for interviews, but only a handful consented to interviews. The others did not respond despite repeated letters and calls. Two industry executives told TRPI researchers, "We're running a business and we have no time for this."

2 Proponents of Latino inclusivity in the industry point to the success of the final episode of *NYPD Blue* starring Jimmy Smits and of the movie *Selena* opening weekend (11.6 million) or the *Mask of Zorro* all of which starred Latino actors.

Latinos at Work

The SAG/TRPI survey showed that most Latino actors are only marginally employed in Hollywood. They work across the entertainment industry, tapping their wealth of skills and experiences. In an effort to develop a profile of their job seeking and labor experiences, TRPI asked respondents to identify how they identified possible acting opportunities for SAG-contract work, who helped them in this process, what sorts of casting opportunities they had and what their experiences have been on the set.

Looking for Work

There is no single path to work in the entertainment industry. This truism applies to all actors, but arguably more so to Latinos who have been involved in this industry since the early days of Hollywood, but whose representation has diminished inexplicably behind and in front of the camera today and have fewer of the connections and professional contacts that often provide actors with inside tracks to casting opportunities and employment. Latino SAG members tap multiple resources to identify job opportunities and auditions.

The majority of respondents had agents, but used them selectively. Agents were most often used to identify and to obtain auditions for jobs in television commercials; more than two out of three respondents had agents for this purpose. The next most often use of agents by Latino SAG members was for film and television work. Latinos used agents less

for other types of work—voiceover, stage, dance and sports. Most Latino actors—79 percent—did not have managers.

According to survey respondents, agents were key in providing information about casting calls or auditions; more than 58 percent of respondents said they obtained such information from agents. This share far exceeded the actor's own efforts to obtain such information (23 percent). Fewer respondents said they obtained such information from casting directors (9 percent), friends or colleagues (6 percent), and groups and organizations assisting Latino actors (1 percent).

The low degree to which Latinos obtained casting information from organizations was attributable in part to a lack of awareness. Only 30 percent of respondents knew of such organizations. Among those who did know of such organizations, slightly more than half mentioned HOLA, and one-third identified Nosotros.

About 55 percent of respondents said that an agent was the most important person in getting an audition. About 32 percent said casting directors were the most important. Among the relatively small share of respondents who mentioned a *second* most important person, most mentioned casting directors. Most of these respondents had named agents as the first most important.

But one-third of respondents said a director was the most important person in deciding who wins a role. About 30 percent of respondents identified casting directors as the key person. Of the re-

spondents who identified either a director or casting director, about half identified a producer as another important person in the decision-making process.

Latino actors overwhelmingly said they were asked to try out for ethnic Latino roles when given a chance to audition (see Table 7). The next most common were crossover or non-Hispanic roles (22 percent). About 14 percent of respondents said they auditioned for Latin American roles, and only a small share said they auditioned for roles playing members of other ethnic groups.

Working in Hollywood ... One Day a Month

The survey confirms that acting jobs are hard to come by. In the past year, survey respondents said they worked an average of only 10 days. Foreign-born Latino SAG members said they averaged a bit more: 13 workdays in the past 12 months. The survey does not offer an explanation for this difference, but one

explanation is that foreign-born actors may have more opportunities because they are bilingual and can work in either English- or Spanish-language productions. About one-third of respondents reported no work at all in the previous year. In each job category, unemployment is roughly 50 percent. About 45 percent of respondents said they had done no commercial work in the previous year, 47 percent reported no television work, and 52 percent reported no theatrical work.

Contrary to popular perceptions, most Latino actors work in English-language productions, not Spanish ones. While Spanish-language television offers Latinos a work opportunity less likely to be available to non-Latino actors, it should be noted that relatively few have worked in this medium, perhaps due to the fact that much of Spanish language television work is non-union and SAG members are prohibited to work in these types of productions.

SAG work falls into eight broad

Table 7
Types of Roles for Which Respondents Have Auditioned
in the Previous 12 Months

<i>Type of role</i>	Theatrical Auditions		Commercial Auditions	
		%		%
Ethnic Latino/Hispanic		54.4		55.1
Cross-over (non-Hispanic)		22.6		22.2
Latin American		13.9		13.9
Italian		4.0		1.6
Black		3.8		2.3
Asian		1.8		0.7
Native American		2.9		1.4

categories: theatrical (film), television, animation, stage, interactive, voiceover/ADR, industrial and commercial. When asked to report on their shares of work in each of these categories in the previous year, members reported that three of the categories—theatrical, television and commercial—accounted for the largest share of work (see Figure 3), or almost 80 percent. Of the three, work in commercials was the most common, accounting for about 28 percent of all work in the year prior to the survey. Few respondents reported that they did any work in the other five SAG categories; just 2 percent, for example, reported any animation or interactive work.

In commercial work, it should be noted, Spanish-language commercials pay less than English-language spots because there are fewer markets. Residuals are correspondingly lower and may be a factor in the lower wages Latino actors report vis-a-vis their minority counterparts.

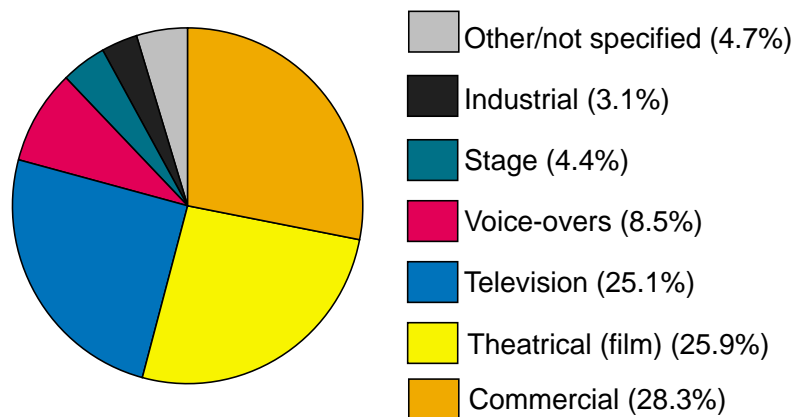
Among those who had worked in the previous year, a slight majority reported that they played ethnic or Latino roles (see Figure 4). The next most frequently mentioned categories were crossover or non-ethnic roles (24 percent) and Latin American roles (12 percent).

Respondents reported that most of their work was in English-

language productions. A majority of Latino SAG members reported that they did *no* Spanish-language work, and few of the respondents who found employment said they did no English-language work. There is considerable variation, however, by category of work. More than 85 percent of respondents who did theatrical work and nearly 80 percent of those who worked in television said they did so in English (the question asked respondents to focus on work throughout their careers). Respondents reported that approximately 49 percent of the voice-over work that they have done had been in English and 41 percent had been in Spanish. But 55 percent of respondents said they had done commercial work in Spanish, and 65 percent had done voiceover work in Spanish during their careers.

Over the course of their entire

Figure 3
Type of SAG Contract Work Performed
in the Past Year



careers, about one-third of respondents said they had worked in Spanish-language television. Foreign-born respondents were much more likely to report this work in Spanish-language television, perhaps reflecting linguistic abilities less likely to be held among U.S.-born

Latinos. Nearly half of the foreign-born Latinos said they worked in Spanish-language television, compared to roughly one-quarter of the U.S.-born actors.

One reason few Latinos have worked in Spanish-language television may be that such work experiences were

reported to be less positive than those in English-language productions. Among respondents who reported a difference, about three times as many were likely to report that their experiences were better in English-language productions than in Spanish-language productions (about 41 percent vs. 14 percent). Four in 10 respondents reported no difference between English- and Spanish-language productions (see Figure 5).

Latino actors were generally more likely to report that they preferred the opportunities English-language productions offered (see Table 8). The exceptions are worth noting: Respondents were more than twice as likely to report that Spanish-

Figure 4
Types of Roles Played in the Previous Year
by Survey Respondents

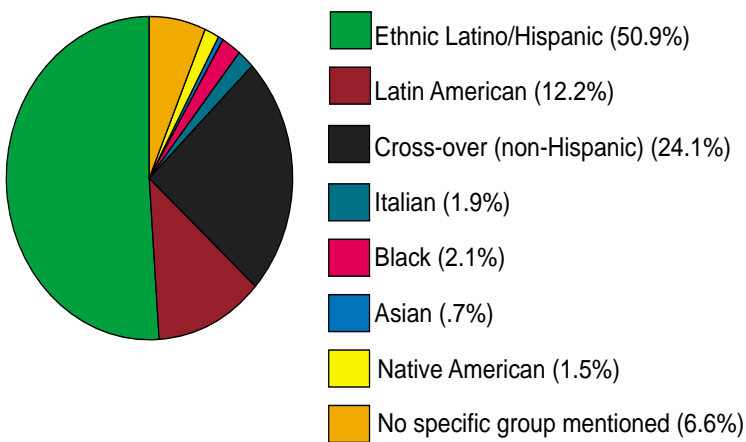
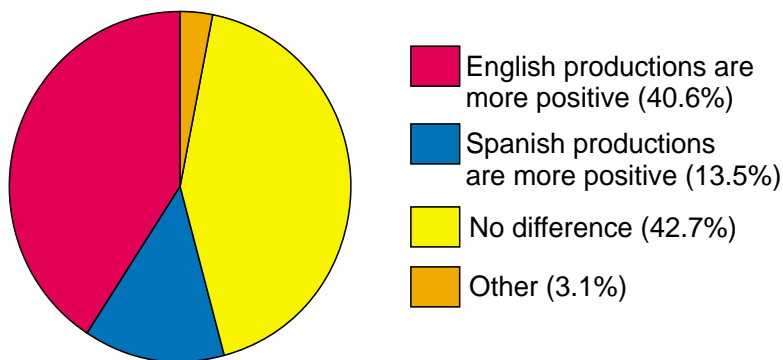


Figure 5
Relative Experiences in English- and Spanish-
Language Productions Among Respondents who
had Acted in Both



language productions offered greater variety of roles to Latino actors; more than two-thirds of respondents said so. Respondents also reported that Spanish-language productions were less likely to rely on stereotypes. But English-language productions were viewed more positively than Spanish-language productions in three areas: paying union scale, providing good working conditions and offering a wider variety of roles. There was near universal consensus (76 percent) by Latino SAG actors that Spanish-language productions were less likely to pay union scale.

Two final observations are worth noting from this series of questions. Respondents viewed Spanish-language productions favorably in terms of providing greater opportunities for fair-skinned Latino actors, with the opposite true for dark-skinned Latinos. About 69 percent of respondents reported that Spanish-language television did better than English-language productions in terms

of hiring fair-skinned Latinos, while just 48 percent thought that it did better in terms of hiring dark-skinned Latinos.

When asked to take all these factors into account, respondents were divided in their preferences for English-language vs. Spanish-language productions. About half preferred both equally. Among those who stated a preference, 19 out of 20 preferred English-language productions.

Member Participation in Screen Actors Guild Activities

Members do not report a great deal of involvement in SAG-related activities. Just 2.8 percent reported that they are “very involved” in SAG activities. Another 19 percent reported that they were “somewhat” involved (see Figure 6). At the other extreme, nearly half of respondents reported that they had minimal involvement in SAG and nearly 30 percent reported absolutely no involvement.

Table 8
Relative Experiences and Expectations on English- and Spanish-language Productions

	Spanish-language productions			
	More likely to	Less likely to	Same	Not sure
	%	%	%	%
Offer more opportunities for fair-skinned Latinos	72.8	22.4	1.4	3.5
Offer a greater variety of roles for Latino actors	68.9	27.9	1.4	1.9
Offer more opportunities for dark-skinned Latinos	47.8	45.5	1.4	5.2
Offer a wide range of roles	44.8	51.0	1.7	2.5
Rely on racial stereotyping when casting	39.6	56.9	1.5	2.0
Provide good working conditions	22.3	68.3	4.6	4.8
Pay union scale	16.7	75.5	3.8	4.0

These rates probably overstate the actual levels of Latino involvement in SAG, since the willingness to complete a mail survey in itself represents a certain level of involvement; SAG members who would complete such a survey are more likely to be involved in SAG activities. Although we do not have comparative

data for the Latino SAG membership as a whole, it's also worth noting that survey respondents had a lengthy average membership in the organization of 9.2 years. These facts suggest that the pool of TRPI survey respondents is likely well informed about SAG, its activities and its outreach to Latino members.

Despite the relatively low levels of reported involvement in SAG, survey respondents said that they are moderately or well-informed about SAG activities (see Figure 7). Slightly more than 15 percent reported that they were well informed; 31 percent reported that they were not well informed. The remainder—approximately 54 percent—reported being somewhat informed.

The most common means of keeping informed was through the SAG newsletter. Slightly more than 90 percent reported that this was a tool that they used. Conversations with SAG members and trade journals (e.g. the *Hollywood Reporter* or *Variety*) were the next most common tools for keeping informed, used by approximately 45 percent and 40 percent of members respectively. Approximately 20 percent reported attending meetings. No other activities were undertaken by more than 10 percent of members in order to keep informed about SAG activities. Just 6 percent of respondents reported that they had no means of receiving infor-

Figure 6
Reported Respondent Involvement in SAG

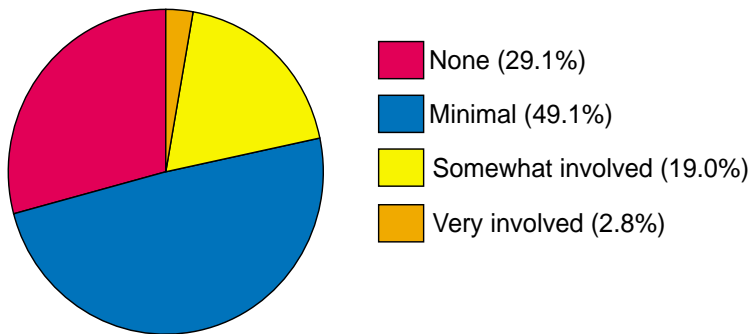
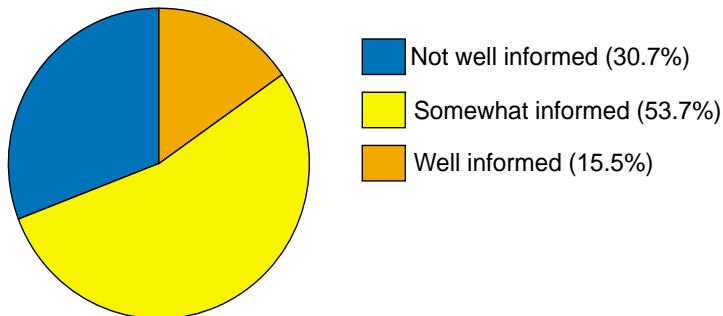


Figure 7
Reported SAG Member Level of Knowledge about SAG



mation about SAG activities.

For the most part, survey respondents did not believe that SAG is doing enough to improve the employment of Latino SAG members (see Table 9). Slightly more than two-thirds reported that this was the case. Just 20 percent reported that SAG was doing enough; the remainder of the respondents was not sure.

Survey respondents made a number of suggestions about what SAG can do to improve the employability of Latino SAG members. The most common suggestion—raised by approximately 55 percent of members—was to discourage Latino stereotypes. No other possible SAG activity to enhance the employability of Latinos received comparable levels of support from survey respondents. Approximately one in six respondents asserted that SAG should work to alter casting methods. All other suggestions were made by less than 10 percent of respondents. Among these were (in descending order of mentions): implementing assistance programs for Latino SAG members, improving compensation and increasing contact with Spanish-language productions.

In sum, survey respondents reported that they were not particularly involved in SAG activities, but that they were informed about what the Guild was doing. The majority of respondents reported a particular need; specifically, that SAG do more to improve

the employability of Latino SAG members. To this end, respondents were particularly concerned that SAG work to discourage stereotyping of Latinos in the entertainment industry. Should SAG seek to undertake new efforts in this area, the survey demonstrates the availability of networks to disseminate information about SAG activities. Particularly notable among these networks is SAG's newsletter, which is nearly universally cited as a source of information by SAG members.

Table 9
Latino SAG Member Recommendations for
SAG to Improve the Employability of
Latino SAG Members

	# of responses
Discourage stereotypes	638
Alter casting methods	200
Implement assistance programs	108
Do what it's already doing	80
Improve compensation	21
Increase contact with Spanish-language productions	12

Note: Multiple responses were possible for this question.

Conclusion

Latino actors face an uphill battle to find employment in the entertainment industry. Interviews by TRPI of Hollywood insiders reveal some reasons, including long-standing misperceptions about Latinos and the viability of Latino-themed entertainment.

A detailed survey of Latino SAG members paints a portrait of the hardships faced by Latino actors and their low levels of success in an industry that still favors non-minorities.

But Hollywood is missing out on the Latino market, a large, growing and untapped audience for its entertainment products. And it is ignoring a valuable resource to help reach that market: the vast, underused pool of Latino talent in its own backyard.

This report underscores the role SAG can play in helping Latino actors find success, and in guiding the entertainment industry to the best use of Latino talent:

- SAG should continue to collect and update existing data, e.g., Latino audience entertainment expenditures, in order to support a financial case for hiring Latino actors.

- SAG can educate the industry on the financial dynamics of the Latino market to demonstrate the very real market incentives to increasing Latino

representation in front of the camera.

- SAG should provide information necessary to educate industry executives on the racial heterogeneity and economic diversity of the Latino community in order to eliminate Latino ethnic stereotypes.

- SAG can sponsor affirmative action efforts to bring in new Latino and other minority members.

- SAG can actively advocate for its Latino members to top industry representatives to stop pernicious and discriminatory stereotyping.

- SAG can nurture its Latino and other minority members through long-range professional development programs.

- SAG should conduct further studies comparing Latino SAG members with non-Hispanic white SAG members and research that examines comparisons with SAG members of other ethnicities.

Through advocacy, education, outreach and networking, SAG can help ensure that Latino actors no longer find themselves missing in action.

Appendices

SAG Member Survey Respondents

As we have demonstrated in previous reports, Latino SAG members are a diverse group who reflect a wide spectrum of experiences within the acting community. Although we seek to present a comprehensive portrait of their experiences with and attitudes toward the entertainment industry, we could not speak individually to the nearly 5,000 Latino members of SAG. Instead, we sought to measure their experiences and opinions through a mail survey. TRPI mailed this survey to each Latino SAG member (and followed up with a reminder postcard). Approximately one-fourth responded. This is certainly a good response rate for a mail survey, where one response for every 10 surveys mailed is more the norm. Nevertheless, the responses do not necessarily represent the opinions of all SAG members.

The TRPI survey is the first of its kind. As a result, there are no comparable data with which to judge the representativeness of the sample of Latino SAG members discussed here. We are confident, based on the size of the respondent pool, that these results are broadly representative of the characteristics, experiences and attitudes of SAG's Latino members.

Survey respondents reflected the diversity of Latino members of SAG. Although the majority resided in the nation's entertainment centers of Los Angeles, New York and Miami, a significant number lived in other parts of the

Table 1.1
Respondent Profile

<u>Gender</u>		%
	Male	56.3
	Female	43.7
<u>Nativity</u>		
	US born	75.1
	Foreign born	24.9
<u>Ethnicity</u>		
	Mexican American	33.2
	Puerto Rican	15.3
	Cuban	8.3
	Spanish	4.0
	Mixed Latino Heritage	23.1
	Other Latin American	3.6
<u>Age</u>		
	Under 21 years	8.4
	21-24 years	7.3
	25-40 years	53
	41+ years	31.3
	Length of SAG Membership (ave.)	9.2 years

Table 1.2
National-Origin or Ancestry of Survey Respondents and Country of Birth Among Foreign-Born Respondents

<u>All Respondents</u>	%
Mexican American	33.2
Puerto Rican	15.3
Cuban	8.3
Spanish	4.0
Mixed heritage within Latin America	23.1
Other Latin American	16.0
<u>Foreign-Born Respondents</u>	%
Mexico	27.7
Cuba	13.7
Argentina	7.7
Puerto Rico	7.0
Colombia	5.7
Dominican Republic	4.0
El Salvador	4.0
Peru	4.0
Other/not provided	22.2

nation. California was home to the largest number of survey respondents, approximately 62 percent. The next largest concentration was New York/New Jersey, with about 21 percent. Other areas of the country with significant numbers of survey responses included Florida (6 percent), Texas (2 percent) and Illinois (1 percent).

The average respondent was a male between the ages of 25 and 40 who was born in the United States (see Table 1.1). Slightly more than half of the survey participants were male (56 percent). In terms of age, 53 percent of respondents fell between the ages of 25 through 40 years of age. Respondents aged 41 years or older made up the second highest response group at approximately 31 percent. As for the younger age groups, respondents under age 21 made up 8 percent, and respondents age 21 through 24 made up 7 percent. Approximately three-quarters of respondents were U.S. born; one-quarter were foreign-born, a higher rate of U.S.-born than the Latino population as a whole.

Like the U.S. Latino population, SAG member survey respondents included individuals of various Latino national origin backgrounds (see Table 1.2). The most frequent Latino national identity among survey respondents was Mexican-American (about 33 percent). Interestingly and somewhat unexpectedly, the second most common Latino national identity was Latinos of mixed heritages (approximately 23 percent). Puerto Ricans made up 15 percent, while Cubans registered 8 percent of the

respondents. Those with Latin American origins or ancestries other than Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban or mixed Latino ancestry made up approximately 16 percent of respondents. Compared to the Latino population nationally, the respondent pool was less likely to be of Mexican origin or ancestry and more likely to trace its roots to South America.

Among the foreign-born Latino SAG members, the largest group (28 percent) were born in Mexico. After Mexico, the most frequently mentioned nations of birth were Cuba (14 percent), Argentina (8 percent), Puerto Rico⁴ (7 percent), Colombia (6 percent) and the Dominican Republic, El Salvador and Peru (4 percent each).

Overall, respondents to the survey were more educated than the U.S. Latino population as a whole—nearly three quarters of respondents had studied beyond the high school level. Approximately one-third of all respondents reported having attended, but had not graduated from, college; another 29 percent were college graduates. Finally, 14 percent of survey respondents had studied at the graduate level.

Respondents to the survey also indicated that Latino actors bring a wealth of training and experience to the industry *prior* to joining the Screen Actors Guild (see Table 1.3). A significant share of respondents had worked in the entertainment industry prior to joining SAG: 75 percent performed in a television or movie production, 70 percent performed in a commercial, and 62 percent performed as an “extra” in a SAG production.⁵ Nearly two-thirds had

acted in high school or in community productions. Additionally, more than 30 percent of respondents had completed a college or professional degree in either performance or directing prior to joining SAG.

In addition to these professional and educational experiences, many were actors who had worked under the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA) contracts when they joined SAG. In addition to acting and voice work, respondents reported other specializations prior to joining SAG, including performance in music (18 percent), dance (15 percent), broadcasting (10 percent) and modeling (7 percent).

Latino members of SAG who responded to the TRPI survey were not only extensively trained, they had also developed wide professional experience through involvement in other entertainment industry unions. Fully 60 percent of the survey pool also belonged to other unions. The most common of these other affiliations were AFTRA and Actor's Equity. Most Latino SAG respondents were also members of AFTRA (85 percent).

Despite the breadth of experience and training, the income levels of survey respondents from SAG productions were quite low. Nearly two-thirds of

respondents reported that they earned \$5,000 or less from SAG productions in the 12 months prior to the survey.⁶ Approximately 18 percent reported earning between \$5,000 and \$10,000, and just 4 percent reported earning \$45,000 or more in the last 12 months on SAG productions.

While these reported earnings might seem unrealistically low, it should be noted that the average respondent reported having worked just 10 days in the previous 12 months on SAG contract productions. This average is somewhat depressed by the fact that nearly one-third of respondents reported having worked on *no* SAG productions in the previous year. If their experiences are excluded, the average number of days worked for the remaining two-thirds increased to 14.1 days in the previous 12 months.

Income is highly correlated with number of days worked. Of the respondents who reported earning \$5,000 or

Table 1.3
Respondents' Professional Experiences and Training at the Time of Joining SAG

	Percent with experience/training
Performed for pay in television movie or production	75.3
Performed for pay in a commercial	69.5
Performed in high school theatrical productions	62.9
Performed as an extra in a SAG-contract production	62.2
Performed in community theatrical productions	61.8
Taken courses in musical performance	50.3
Performed for pay in a stage production	47.2
Completed a college or professional degree in performance	29.5
Performed in Latin America or the Caribbean	19.6
Completed a college or professional degree in directing	4.8

less in the previous 12 months, more than 88 percent reported working between zero and nine days. At the other end of the spectrum, nearly three-quarters of respondents earning \$45,000 or more had worked 30 or more days in the previous year.

This finding of a correlation between days worked and earnings are reinforced by another survey finding: low earnings were not, for the most part, the result of actors being paid below scale⁷ for SAG production work. Nearly two-thirds of respondents reported that they had worked at scale. Another 11 percent reported that they worked at rates above scale wages. Disturbingly, however, nearly 22 percent reported working at below industry scale standard. This highlights the need for further comparative studies with the general SAG membership.

Notes

- 1 We use the terms Latino and Hispanic interchangeably to identify residents of the United States who trace their origin or ancestry to the Spanish-speaking nations of Latin America and the Caribbean.
- 2 The Tomás Rivera Policy Institute conducted its preliminary survey of Latino executives in U.S. television networks and film studios to establish a baseline of executive employment to fill a gap in government statistical record keeping. From 1969-1999, the Federal Communications Commission used a reporting form with broad job categories that did not correspond to the industry itself, making it an unreliable source of information, especially with respect to decision-making positions. As of this year, the FCC no longer collects such employment data; the

U.S. Court of Appeals overturned its equal employment opportunity rule in April 1999.


The survey was conducted in late summer 1999 and, of necessity, limited itself to identifying Spanish-surnames within the top executive ranks: president, vice president and division heads. Given the complexities of today's cross-ownership and media conglomeration, TRPI focused on network entertainment divisions and motion picture studios—that is, on the major content-producing entities for each medium. In television, those entities included ABC, CBS, NBC, Fox Broadcasting, the United Paramount Network (UPN), The WB Television Network and PBS. In motion pictures, the entities included Columbia, DreamWorks SKG, MGM/UA, Miramax, New Line Cinema, Paramount, Twentieth Century Fox, Universal, Walt Disney and Warner Bros.

- 3 In an effort to measure Latino experiences working in the entertainment industry, the Tomás Rivera Policy Institute undertook a national study of Latino SAG members. The TRPI study sought to measure Latino SAG members' interactions with the entertainment industry in terms of job-hunting, role acquisition and work environment. TRPI also attempted to assess Latino SAG members' evaluations of opportunities and barriers faced by Latinos in the entertainment industry, as well as the role intermediaries such as agents play in the employment process. Finally, TRPI hoped to measure opportunities in and evaluations of the Spanish- and English-language entertainment industries.

In order to collect data on these questions, TRPI mailed a nine-page survey to 4,800 SAG members who had self-identified as Latino. The guild provided a mailing list of these members and the addresses that were most currently available to SAG. TRPI used a commercial mailing facility to mail the surveys the week of July 19, 1999.

The survey included an endorsement from SAG's past-president Richard Masur. The goals of the survey were also promoted in a Hollywood call sheet, the SAG newsletter, and through Latino/a actors group, etc.

Data collection occurred from July to September 1999. In order to encourage survey response, TRPI conducted a contest



for all respondents who returned their questionnaires by mid-September 1999. Survey participants were entered in a random drawing to win a DVD player. Additionally, TRPI called approximately 150 randomly chosen Latino SAG members in August 1999 to spur survey mail-in responses. Approximately 25 percent of Latino SAG members answered the questionnaire. TRPI then created a database for all survey responses.

- 4 Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens by birth. For the purposes of analysis here, we treat Puerto Ricans born in Puerto Rico as “foreign” born.
- 5 Eligibility for membership in SAG is based upon fulfilling the following conditions: 1) providing proof of SAG employment either as a principal performer or as a background player, or 2) having employment under an affiliated performer’s union.
- 6 Approximately 5 percent of respondents refused to answer this question about earnings. This is a low rate of non-response on a question about earnings for a mail survey.
- 7 “Scale” refers to the minimum union wage scale paid to actors. The basic scale fee for a principal performer is \$596 per day or \$2,070 per week.

