

THE CASE FOR HISPANIC RECOGNITION  
(The Case Against a Single Center  
For Independent Television)

Presented to  
Rockefeller Foundation's  
Seminar Conference on Independent  
Television Makers and Public  
Communications Policy  
June 6, 7, and 8, 1979

by

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As an independent producer of Hispanic descent, I've encounter some different barriers in addition to those faced by-most independent producers, not only in the commercial broadcast industry, but the public broadcast service sector as well.

I do not feel that my artistry as an individual has received the respect necessary to foster the creative, innovative and quality of purpose so idealized. I have program ideas that I think do serve the public needs, although that public may not necessarily have the resources.

But if public funds are to support public broadcasting stations, then I think the burden of compliance should be placed upon those stations that seek public funds for general, programming or other use. Just as I must submit a proposal stating purpose, approach and proposed expenditures and audience served; so should public television stations state purpose, approach and proposed expenditures of requested funds in meeting their community's interest and needs (as indicated by their community ascertainment and annual EEO employment report).

Unfortunately cultural and racial barriers exist within the public broadcasting system as well as among the independent producers group, as I have been too often invited solely for the use of my surname rather than to be an active participant to certain meetings and conferences, or else limited to comment on the Hispanic minority- This in itself wouldn't be so bad except that Hispanic programming needs never evolve beyond discussion into production.

With only a week's notice to attend this conference, I've only had time to consider the following;

"THE CASE AGAINST A SINGLE CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT TELEVISION"

The future of public broadcasting and the role of independent producers are of great concern to those of us here today. In reviewing the topics to be discussed at this Seminar Conference hosted by the Rockefeller Foundation, I paused at the title "The Case For a Center for Independent Television^" and took thought.

I find that I cannot support the concept of a single Center for Independent Producers, because as past experience has revealed, it can never adequately service the needs of the Hispanic community.

Since I am an independent producer of Mexican ancestry, I am made aware that we all have different priorities, needs, ideologies/ and concerns. Independent producers are not a collective mind or body.

Past practices has taught Hispanics that a center that tries to encompass everyone's needs means that Hispanics receive little or no input or funding. For example, the WNET/TV Lab Independent Documentary Fund in its second year has failed to fund one Hispanic project; CPB's revolving Documentary Fund has failed to fund one Hispanic project," and Programs similar to Arden House [seminars for independent producers) has little to no involvement of Hispanics either as invited participants or exhibitors. This lack of consideration amongst these public-funded activities leads me to conclude that Hispanics must form their own center, utilizing their own management and creative forces in order not to come up once again on the short end of the stick. It would be ideal if a number of minority, anglo and special interest groups were funded

equally so each might have their own center for independent producers. Hispanics have taken another step in that direction. This week in Los Angeles a group of Hispanics involved in video and film met with community leaders and educators to form the Hispanic Film Institute. The purpose of H.F.I, is to provide a center for the training and advancement of Hispanic Film/Video makers with its own unique style and to provide a research library to house archival information and preserve the Hispanic heritage.

If the concept of Centers for Independent Producers is to be pursued, organizations such as H.F.I, and the Chicano Cinema Coalition, which has similar goals and objectives should be contacted and encouraged to work together with other independent producers to create these centers for the independent producers.

Since the Hispanics were not given the opportunity to present or contribute a position paper for this Conference, I suggest that the Rockefeller Foundation support such for inclusion in the published summary of this Conference.

Possible topics for address from the Hispanic point of view:

1. The accountability of local station management.
2. Propose application and review process for funds as to compliance.
3. Composition of Board of Directors of proposed Public Telecommunications Trust.
4. EEOC implementation and affirmative action.
5. Suggest possibility of multi-lingual and multicultural program alternatives with new technologies
6. Primetime access for minorities.