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Census Data May Get Media More Interested In Hispanics

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March 23, 2001 | By Achy Obejas, Tribune staff reporter.



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The 58 percent increase in the Hispanic population documented by the 2000 U.S. Census -- from 22.4 million to 35.3 million -- will have a dramatic impact on congressional redistricting and the allocation of government money. But perhaps its most immediate influence might be subtler: in the arts and pop culture, where Latinos are already a growing force.

"Right now, Hispanics are underrepresented across the board in movies, television and most of popular culture," said George San Jose, president of San Jose & Associates, a marketing and advertising company in Chicago that specializes in the Latino community. "What the new census numbers will do is bring credibility to the argument for increasing Hispanics in Hollywood and on TV, in museums and radio and across the board."

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What makes Latinos attractive as a marketing segment for movies, television, music and even book sales is that more than half of all Hispanics are between 18 and 49 years old -- advertisers' most coveted demographics.

"Most Hispanics are at the peak of their consuming years," said San Jose.

George L. San Jose, president & chief creative officer of The San Jose Group, a multicultural advertising agency.

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