INTRODUCTION

The portrayal of people with disabilities in the media started as early as the 19th century when the first fifty second film, The Fake Beggar made it to the silver screen industry. The film, which was produced in 1898 by Thomas Edison, depicted a man who pretended to be visually impaired in order to collect money and was eventually chased off by police (Ivory, 1997). After the first installment of a disability in this movie a trend was established and numerous other movies started to use disabilities as a means to heighten the effect of slapstick comedies, as well as melodramas (Safran, 1998). This led to the development of various themes that were derived over the years through the portrayal of individuals with disabilities within films. In 1904, themes such as, “humor,