

# “Well I’ve Reason to Believe, We All Have Been Deceived”: Proposition 187, Racist Discourse, and Resistance

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This paper analyzes racist discourse resulting from and related to California's Proposition 187. Contrary to the views of politicians and economists, I maintain that 187 is indeed a racist measure designed to prevent the entry of people of color, mostly Latinos, into California. Analyses of racist discourse should be contextualized within issues of power, cultural difference, space, culture, and nationalism. After outlining theories of racism, I use Teun van Dijk's work on racist discourse to analyze some of the discursive strategies employed in relation to Proposition 187. The next section discusses the discourse of resistance in Tucson, Arizona and California. Some attention is given to the symbolic violence against Latinos. I argue that discourse cannot be separated from the material world in which it is practiced.

Keywords: Racism, discourse, ethnicity, resistance, power, difference.

## INTRODUCTION

The evil comes from California  
Don't go  
Don't go to California<sup>1</sup>

As the bass and piano open up this song, you feel the evil element in the descending bass lines. Then Iggy Pop lends a low, sinister voice and utters the words above. Surely, this is how Mexicans and Chicanos and other Latinos<sup>2</sup> felt about Proposition 187 being on the November 8, 1994 ballot in California. Feelings were so strong, that Mexicans and Chicanos reacted by organizing protests and rallies, students walked out of classrooms all over the country, and more recently a boycott of California itself and the goods of those companies that contributed to Governor Pete Wilson's campaign. Before the election, on October 28, 1994, Mexican citizens chose *not* to cross the border to patronize American businesses. Operation Dignity, as this organized protest named itself, was designed to make an economic statement from Tijuana to El Paso: The United States needs immigration. But more importantly the boycott was an anti-racist move protesting 187.

California voters passed Proposition 187 (59% to 41%) which bars public schooling, social services and non-emergency health care to illegal immigrants. In addition, public agencies are required to report those that they suspect to be illegal immigrants to state and/or federal authorities. On November 9, the Los Angeles City Council voted, in a 10 to 3 decision, to direct city employees not to enforce any provisions of the proposition, except for the increased penalties for distribution and possession of fake immigration documents.

Proponents of 187 claim that immigrants are drawn like "magnets" to available health services, free public education, and other social services. However, the most important reason for migration documented by those that study immigration is the availability of jobs. Wayne Cornelius, director of the Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies at U.C. San Diego, dispels false images and reports with his twenty-year research on Mexican migrants. He says he has never encountered a migrant for "whom getting access to some tax-supported service was the principal reason for coming here" (*L.A. Times*, 10/28/94). People migrate to the United States for higher paying jobs and to join their family members who already live here.

I examine Proposition 187 and the discourses that emerge from it on both sides; those who support it and those who resist it. A major concern revolves around the issue of racism: whether or not Proposition 187 is racist. I maintain that it is indeed another racist tactic against Latino and other immigrants. It deflects allegations of racism by employing various wolf-like discourses wrapped in sheep's tongues. Latino discourses appeal to human rights violations and other indignities inherent in this proposition. My analysis derives mainly from reported speech found in Tucson newspapers, the *Los Angeles Times*, and *USA Today*. I also quote televised reports on Proposition 187 and several internet communications. Some attention is later given to discourses from other media and the broader theoretical concerns of subjugating bodies and symbolic violence.

My study relies heavily upon the work of the Dutch linguist, Teun van Dijk. His extensive study of racism in Europe and the United States provides a beginning framework for my analysis of racism against Latino immigrants to the United States. His systematic work on the relationship between discourse and racism is important for understanding the role elites play in promoting, reproducing, and legitimating racism. Van Dijk is interested in the analysis of narrative structures which reveal mental models and the norms, values, and expectations of the storyteller about social episodes (1993:33). Through the discourse of text and talk, one can analyze the narrative structures of speakers or writers and observe racist strategies within them. Discourse, however, is more than just language, speech, and text; it is a set of concepts, images, values, and practices that

define, inform, and justify a set of social relations (Foucault 1971). Whereas discursive structures are rather abstract, discursive effects are real and material because discourse is materially practiced and it produces material effects that are empirically observable (Saunders 1995).

Discourse is adamantly hurled back and forth on Proposition 187: "It's racist"; "It's not racist"; "It's discriminatory"; "It's about economics"; etc. While there have been many discussions about racist overtones, implications, and effects, I have yet to find any articles or discussions in the media regarding the construct of "race" itself. Racism has many everyday meanings "and much of the everyday usage is uncritical" (Miles 1989:1). It is unusual that racism, which has so many meanings that are so negatively charged, has not until recently spurred much reflection and theorizing. The media and those that control it are very much implicated in the reproduction of racism. Despite the coverage of discrimination in the media, "racism is generally denied or mitigated, and anti-racists marginalized" (van Dijk 1993:288). Racism's place and role is intertwined with the construction of American society (Morrison 1992). However, ferreting out what actually constitutes racism in the United States and creating spaces for discussions of race is a difficult task. Without mature and intelligent talk about racism, confusion will continue to expand regarding this human behavior.

Theorists have different elaborations in their analyses of race, but basic to many is the idea of "difference." According to David Goldberg, racism involves discrimination by an in-group against other groups of people, out-groups, because of their "assumed" difference. Robert Miles states that racism works through "attributing meanings to certain phenotypical and/or genetic characteristics of human beings in such a way as to create a system of categorization, and by attributing additional (negatively evaluated) characteristics to the people sorted into those categories" (Miles 1989:3). This signification process then becomes the basis for the legitimization and creation of a hierarchy of groups whereby the dominant groups may deny subordinated groups access to resources and services (Miles 1989). Van Dijk also agrees that a "social construction of ethnic and racial difference" is central to ideas of race and the practice of racism (1993:22). The idea of "difference" is an imagined one; one that historically has been based on physical or biological characteristics, i.e. skin color. Fanon, in the quote above, alludes to this by perceiving his body in a certain way, which becomes irrelevant in social situations because the dominant culture has absorbed his body, "recoloured" it in their conceptions, and perhaps created a "monster." Following Benedict Anderson's concept of nations as "imagined communities" (1991), Miles makes the comparison between "nations" and "races".

Like 'nations,' 'races' too are imagined, in the dual sense that they have no real biological foundation and that all those included by the signification can never know each other, and are imagined as communities in the sense of a common feeling of fellowship. Moreover, they are also imagined as limited in the sense that a boundary is perceived, beyond which lie other 'races' (Miles 1989:89).

The social imaginary of in-groups creating imaginations of out-groups is a critical aspect in the formation of "difference."<sup>3</sup> Race, thus, has no inherent reality. Constructions of race, however, have real effects that influence, often negatively, the ways in which individuals experience self, others, and the concrete world (Frankenberg 1993:11).

The categorization of Other people as belonging to a different group is based on "arbitrary but socially construed and attributed distinctions of origin, appearance, or various aspects of culture" (van Dijk 1993:23). Out-group characteristics are assumed to be inseparable from racial or ethnic identity of the group. Academics describe a shift in racist practices in modern times (Frankenberg 1993, Miles 1989, Van Dijk 1993). Whereas racism is thought to have been derived from the exclusion of others because of "essentialist" characteristics like skin color, racism now also includes the discrimination of others due to their belonging to a different cultural group, a practice termed "ethnicism" (van Dijk 1993). Thus, ethnicism, being a system of group dominance over ethnic groups, can also be included as a specific form of racism. This phenomena attributed to the twentieth century, and sometimes called "neo-racism," "differentialist racism" (Balibar 1991), or "race cognizance" (Frankenberg 1993), illustrates three critical points about racism: 1) the idea of "race" is a fundamentally vacuous category that can be filled with changing stereotypes about subordinate groups over time; 2) essential for racism is a relation of group power; 3) those that create "racism" have the ability to quickly shift it into different discursive and material shapes or guises like a "chameleon."

A public expression of the marginal position of minority groups illustrates the differential in power between those groups and the dominant group. John Leguizamo, actor and comedian, in a theatrical performance entitled "Mambo Mouth" plays an "illegal immigrant" recently arrested. After explaining that "his people," Latinos, were living in the place now called the United States before the "white people" arrived, he then offers a deal to the INS officer. He says: "Look, I'll tell what I'm gonna do, I'll let you stay, if you let me go, okay?" (1992). The example is humorous, but part of its humor derives from the impossibility of this event ever occurring. Latinos in the United States are not in positions of power to enforce those decisions. Racist discourse is a strategy used by those with power to remain in power.<sup>4</sup>

People are racist when they "explicitly or implicitly ascribe racial (biological or social) characteristics of others that they take to differ from their own. They assign racial preferences, and they express desired, intended, or actual inclusions or exclusions, entitlements or restrictions" (Goldberg 1992:295). Racist discourse can also be explicit or implicit. Discourse on othering has moved to more implicit territory in this society. There are special techniques or strategies that people use to index the negative image of Others that may not be recognized by the general public as being racist.

Teun van Dijk states that racism includes more than the "white" supremacist ideologies of race or the powerfully visible, blatantly discriminatory acts, like the all too familiar tactics of the Ku Klux Klan, for instance. Racism is much more; it

also involves the everyday, mundane, negative opinions, attitudes, and ideologies and the seemingly subtle acts and conditions of discrimination against minorities, namely, those social cognitions and social acts, processes, structures, or institutions that directly or indirectly contribute to the dominance of the white group and the subordinate position of minorities (1993:5).

In the United States, I believe that for many Americans (United Statesians) the term "racism" is most closely associated with the abominable treatment of African slaves and African-Americans throughout United States history, a history that affects the United States of the present. The histories of other ethnic groups in the United States are more obscure/hidden than African-American history. Since the 1960s, the United States and Britain have engaged in the development of theories of racism. These theories, however, are so bound up in understanding the colonial history of European expansion "that they are of little value in explaining any other (non-colonial) context" (Miles 1989:68). Perhaps, because of American non-recognition of racism against Latino populations, Americans can sing the lullaby of racism denial. The dominant group does not associate their actions with racism against other ethnic groups, or so they would have the public believe.

However, minority groups are still marginalized within American society. Inferior schooling, housing, medical services, and high unemployment rates all create and are equally created by marginalization; these realities are "the structural features of minority group position" (van Dijk 1993:8). In Europe and the United States, democratic countries with constitutions granting and protecting the civil and human rights of individuals, aggression, prejudice, and discrimination are all too prosperous in the 1990s. The rise of right-wing racist political parties in Europe is cause for global concern. The passage of Proposition 187 like-

wise has created an anxiety in the United States and in Mexico that large right-wing hate parties may find a home there too.

Elites play a critical role in the reproduction of contemporary ethnic and racial inequality. Van Dijk argues that the social mind is formed by public discourse and the public discourse is controlled largely by various elite groups. Elites are able to employ various discursive strategies that allow them to portray the role of an anti-racist while at the same time stereotyping minorities. They are also able to "define the ethnic situation, legitimate elite discrimination, and thus contribute... to the maintenance of white group dominance" (van Dijk 1993:283). Through established cultural hierarchies and access to media, members of elite/dominant groups are able to dominate other groups; cultural dominance is synonymous with racism (ibid.).

#### REPRODUCTION OF RACISM

When I was about nine or ten, I frequently played in the neighborhood with other children, predominantly Chicano boys. One day Scotty, a blond, Anglo<sup>5</sup> boy two years younger than me, and I were talking of what to do, what games to play since we did this often. I suggested, "let's go over to Danny and David's house." They lived next door to Scotty and had a large backyard that we often played in. This particular day, however, Scotty said as he sat in the bed of his father's pickup truck, "I don't want to play with Danny and David. *They're black!*" My main concern at that particular time was contesting Scotty's statement by arguing that they were not, in fact, black; they were brown, i.e. of Mexican descent. Danny and David were Chicanos who had darker skin than I did. When I try to recall racism or racist incidents in the past, that day always comes to mind.

Looking back at that incident, I think I played into Scotty's racist trap, unknowingly, of course. I had yet to grasp the concept of "why blacks are negative." I obviously had some sort of imagining of blacks and Chicanos that I could competently discern the difference between them in my elementary world. Instead of arguing "what is wrong with blacks," I made a case for Danny and David being something other than black. Even at such a young age, the structures of racism were already implanted within us. Racist behavior, like other cognitive structures, is not unique to one individual; it is a shared pattern of behavior based upon shared beliefs. Scotty learned it from somewhere, i.e. parents, friends, television, etc. The pervasive blitz of culture, society, and language that teach one how to place "value" upon things, material or abstract, is impossible to ignore. Socialization reproduces such practices and values<sup>6</sup>.

## ECONOMIC ARGUMENTS AND CRITIQUES

California's Proposition 187 has created more confusion and debate about immigration, both undocumented (illegal) and documented. Proponents argue that the proposition was drafted as a response to the economic crisis in California. Having the country's second weakest economy and four years of exceeding the state budget, California, via the Save Our State committee, has unleashed its wrath upon illegal immigrants from Mexico and Central American countries, as well as those from Asia. The proponents of 187 repeatedly inform the public that immigrants are a "drain" on the state's social services such as public schooling and health care. Initial estimates by the Wilson campaign on the cost of illegal immigrants to the state of California were \$10 billion a year. New studies by the Urban Institute have corrected the amount to \$3.4 billion annually (*San Francisco Chronicle* 4/7/95).

Elizabeth Kadetsky, writing for *The Nation*, investigated the people and organizations behind Save Our State (1994). The supporters come from the motley crew of California: Democrats, Greens, Perotists, New Agers, and Republican leaders. Major financial supporters, however, have personal racist histories or connections with racist organizations. Don Rogers, Palm Springs state senator, donated large amounts of money to S.O.S. He is closely linked and publicly known for his participation in the white supremacist Christian Identity movement. FAIR, Federation for American Immigration Reform, also backs 187. This organization is in turn sponsored in part by the Pioneer Fund which conducts studies on the "inherent" link between race and I.Q. The controversial book, *The Bell Curve* (Herrnstein and Murray 1994) depended on data gathered by the Pioneer Fund. The connection between these fund sponsored studies and organizations that created Proposition 187 has yet to be thoroughly researched. Other contributors include INS officials from the Reagan administration, a right-wing Republican east L.A. state assemblyman, and many others with access to political power (Kadetsky 1994).

Politicians have tapped into public fears about immigrants, "Others," and made their case believable. New studies and reports, however, debunk popular discourses concerning immigrants and their effect on the economy. The United States is not being "overtaken" by immigrants; undocumented immigrants constitute only 1 percent of the United States population. Immigrants likewise do not steal jobs from citizens. On the contrary, according to the 1994 ACLU Immigrants' Rights Project report, they create more positions than they fill (Cole 1994).

The 1994 Urban Institute report states that immigrants pay significantly more in taxes "than they cost in services received" (*ibid.*). The state of California has recognized this. However, most of immigrants' taxes go

directly to the federal government, which has sparked the California government to reimbursement arguments with the federal government. The claims that immigrants refuse to assimilate, and create cultural and political blocks to a national unity are similar to those directed towards other immigrant populations throughout American history. Those past populations have since become producers and revisers of "American culture," and so too shall the present immigrant populations. Raquel Rubio-Goldsmith has discussed how previous immigrants were displaced economically by policies in 19th century Europe similar to the North American Free Trade Agreement (1995). If much the same is occurring in the present, should we not look to the obstacles and successes of previous migrations, and how groups in power treated them? Proponents believe that constitutional rights do not apply to non-citizens (i.e. immigrants). The Bill of Rights, however, protects all people, with citizens having the exclusive right to vote and run for federal office. In 1982 the Texas Supreme Court decision Plyler v. Doe upheld immigrants' children's rights to free public education in the United States (*L.A. Times*, 11/9/94). This decision created the legal precedent for granting immigrants access to public education and other social services. What 187 points out is that "Californians who support 187 do not want more foreigners, and especially those from the South, and hence it is a xenophobic proposition" (van Dijk 1994, internet).

### RACIST DISCOURSE (POLITICIANS, PRESS, CITIZENS)

The word "immigration" belongs to the vocabulary of racist discourse. It is politician-speak, like "street crime" and "welfare fraud," that indexes people of color (Silko 1994:414). Indexicality is the second mode in the Peircian semiotic framework which assumes a relationship between a sign X and its significatum Z. When X is present, it also implies the presence of Z (Ochs 1990:293). For example, the presence of smoke indicates that a fire has started; thus, smoke indexes fire. In the same way, 'immigration' indexes those people whom California politicians seek to restrict from entering the United States, i.e. Mexicans, Central Americans, and Asians. The political and media rhetoric of immigration also indexes a threatening presence. Some people living in southern California speak of the "enemy within." Many of the popular images likened to immigrants coming to the United States are those of water ("floods," "deluge," "flow," and "waves") which "represents the marginal as a threat to the water-tightness of national borders" (Alonso 1994:395). The constant "invasion" or "drowning" of the United States holds immigrants responsible as "threats to the public health" and the socially imagined national body. This results from a flawed conception of self in the United

States that scapegoats Others for problems when those in the "us" category are to blame (Stein 1982).

Illegal immigrants are dehumanized further through the animal imagery ("gobbling up" resources, "scurrying" across the border, etc.) that pervades journalistic reports on the border. By the linguistic property of metonym, in which an attribute of a thing can replace the whole, illegal immigrants are reduced to animals (Hill 1994). To make matters worse, the idea that the social body of the country is being invaded treats immigrants as "diseases"; terrorists who are a "threat" to national security, security being those in power set on keeping themselves there.

Van Dijk outlines many strategies of racist discourse in the political arena. Some of these include positive self-presentation, denial of racism, negative-other presentation, firm but fair, and the numbers game. I have collected the following quotes from newspapers reporting on Proposition 187 in California and Arizona. Some quotes come from political elites; others, however, are from ordinary citizens who reproduce the rhetorical strategies of those in power. I would also like to give attention to other strategies that figure prominently in the texts involving proposition 187, such as "Junk Spanish" and assimilation discourse. In many instances, these strategies intersect one another.

#### POSITIVE SELF-PRESENTATION/DENIAL OF RACISM

After the California elections on November 8, 1994, other states like Arizona, Texas, and Florida have witnessed movements that favor passage of a 187-like law in their states. The passage of a proposition like 187 in Arizona is an inevitability says Don Barrington, the Tucson retiree who formed the Save Our State /Arizona committee. The *Tucson Weekly* refers to him as "the 187 guy." He continues, "And it's not a racial issue. My friends have never heard a racist word out of me. I just don't like wetbacks" (*USA Today*, 11/18/94). Statements of this semantic type are frequent, for example, "I am not a racist but..." or "Some of my best friends are Mexicans, how can I be racist?" This blatant denial of racism is rendered unbelievable when followed by such explicit racist epithet and rhetoric. This strategy, denying race as an issue and/or one's own racist views, carries weight in deflecting allegations of racism.

If Barrington excludes himself from racism and stereotyping of Others, would he say, much less believe the following statement? Barrington says:

But we still have emergency health care available to illegal aliens. Take, for example, a prostitute in Nogales who's pregnant and ready to pop. All she has to do is wander her way from her trash heap, cross the border and step in an emergency room in Arizona and she'll get a free \$2,000 delivery of her baby. That baby, when popped, is just as good as

Chelsea Clinton, an instant U.S. citizen...entitled to more than just health care benefits - now the kid can get welfare! (*Tucson Weekly*, 12/8/94).

Barrington here not only reduces Mexican women to homeless prostitutes, he also projects the imagined idea that Mexicans are "welfare abusers." The *Tucson Weekly*, a politically left-of-center newspaper, offers biting and sarcastic remarks to Barrington's views. The editors relegate Barrington to the realm of the absurd, but they fail to engage him or at least confront his racist views or dispel the stereotypes of Mexicans. This sort of liberal press could also be responsible for the propagation of racist discourse although not intentionally. It behooves liberal editors, and citizens alike, to confront gross racist remarks in the press and offer alternative points of view that may dispel such stereotypes.

#### NEGATIVE OTHER-PRESENTATION

Negative other-presentation of minority groups has shifted historically from explicitly derogatory remarks to more indirect ways in which Others may be racialized. Essential to this strategy is portraying an image of the Other as immoral, violent, unassimilated, and disrespectful of the dominant "values" that supposedly govern society. The following quotes are good examples of negative other-presentation:

We have people flooding across our borders with a very high fertility rate and a very low educational level. We're exporting jobs and importing poverty. And unless something is done, this state has nothing to face but fiscal havoc (Glenn Spencer, *L.A. Times* 11/15/94).

In Bishop, California, an area described as a "predominantly white stronghold of conservatism,"

the residents strongly supported Proposition 187. Chuck Kilpatrick, an insurance agent, voted for the proposition to protect the existing lifestyle of Bishop: "That's why we live here. We don't want gangs and graffiti. We're proud of our town. (*L.A. Times*, 11/10/94).

Peterson's husband had joined her on the shopping trip to avoid driving to work through Los Angeles, fearing the possibility of violent demonstrations by Proposition 187 opponents. 'I don't want him stuck in Los Angeles because of a riot' (*L.A. Times*, 11/10/94).

These people express their fears about ethnic Others by indexing stereotypes of Latinos, i.e. they are stupid and violent and have looser sexuality than those speaking. Nobody has said anything blatantly derogatory about Others. However, "very high fertility rate" falls into that

category of "buzz tactics"; seemingly innocent words that reference racial stereotypes (van Dijk 1993:84). These words need decoding or translation. Spencer, for example, indexes a characteristic of the social imaginary Latino - he/she is hypersexual while Kilpatrick expresses his voluntary segregation from the Mexican population because Mexicans are violent and disrespectful of public and private property.

#### FIRM, BUT FAIR

I work full time for benefits for my family, and I don't feel it is fair for illegals to be coming in and getting health care free (Judy Peterson, nurse, *L.A. Times*, 11/10/94).

The woman here says that she works hard, implying that those immigrants getting free health care do not. She expresses the stereotype of "laziness" and appeals to some unwritten code of equality and fairness in order to exclude this particular group of people. Mortimer Zuckerman, editor-in-chief of the *U.S. News & World Report*, also reproduces this stereotype in a recent editorial: "In modern America, too often, low-skilled newcomers - particularly illegals - are mouths to feed rather than hands to work" (12/12/94). Those not in direct contact or not having any relationship whatsoever with other minority groups reproduce popular myths or stereotypes, also known as the social imagination.<sup>7</sup>

On the other hand, those who do associate with other groups have a different perspective. One non-Latino laborer from Eureka says: "The people we have working here who are questionable immigrants, they're the hardest workers. They bust their asses in the rain all day" (*L.A. Times*, 11/10/94). And to these stereotypes, Tupac Enrique responds: "Nosotros hacemos el trabajo"<sup>8</sup> (*Prensa Hispana*, 11/24/94). The editor of *El Monitor Hispano* has a more emphatic response: "porque nuestra gente no viene a pedir chichi gratis en este país, viene a trabajar no hay necesidad de demostrarlo"<sup>9</sup> (11/17/94). People migrate to the United States to find employment not to ask for handouts. Daniel Gomez, now a legal U.S. resident, and his family, as of yet undocumented, may qualify for welfare or food stamps, but refuses to because applying for such services would bring government attention to his family (*L.A. Times* 11/20/94). And in response to those who complain that 187 will decrease the incentive for immigrants to come to the United States, Juan Tellez remarks "The 187 law does not change immigration or incentive for immigrants. Nobody comes to this country to get their kids into a public school in East L.A.! ... They come to work." (internet, 2/16/95).<sup>10</sup>

Another positive self-presentation that resorts to market arguments is that, "Everyone would like to provide all services to all people, but we just can't afford it" says Ken Lullo, a financial counselor (*USA Today* 11/8/94). This position makes others think that they are anti-racist, when

such is actually not the case. A more insidious example comes from the editor of the *L.A. Times*. The editor stated that the staff of the newspaper "strongly opposed 187," but later he encouraged citizens to comply with the new law if it is upheld by the courts: "It now falls to good people of California to make the best of the new situation, to respond to the requirements of 187 with humanity, with thoughtfulness, with caution" (11/16/94). This argument privileges the law and structure of power above people and their resistance to discrimination.

Those who avoid discussing racism in any instance are afraid to reveal the truth, or are denying its pervasive existence. This technique of "silence" rejects that such actions are racist. In "Shutting the Golden Door," Steven Roberts blames a poor economy in California. He thinks that "economic growth at home and abroad is the only sure cure for America's immigration fever, as it has been in the past" (*U.S. News and World Report*, 10/3/94). The reduction of racist policies to pure economics is intellectually naive and extremely simplistic.

#### THE NUMBERS GAME

The presentation of absolute numbers of immigrants arriving in the United States can be a powerful scare tactic by the media. In California, many of the articles about the immigration debate consistently refer to the "1.7 million immigrants" now living in Los Angeles County alone. Patrick Buchanan, a right-wing Republican uses this strategy to the extreme when he writes, "Latinos, Asians, and Africans will increase their present number of 65 million by at least 100 million in 60 years, a population growth larger than all of Mexico today" (*L.A. Times*, 10/28/94). He continues by saying that the U.S. should halt further immigration temporarily while "we" get to know each other "before we add a hundred million more." His figures include citizens of the United States that are ethnic minorities, not immigrants. Limiting or preventing minority populations from growing attempts to control the body of the Other by keeping Them "on the other side of the fence" and, more importantly, preventing minorities from reproducing. And because of Buchanan's inclusion of minority citizens, his numbers are not only overwhelmingly frightening but also inaccurate. History is abundant with racist attempts to control reproduction and spatial territories of races/ethnicities. However, anthropological studies have not traditionally focused on the politics of space, and more specifically, "how the organization and representation of space is implicated in ethnic formation and inequality, in state strategies of asymmetric incorporation and appropriation" (Alonso 1994:393).

After the passage of 187 in California, Channel 13, KOLD-TV, reported the event and the effects it would have on Arizona. The reporter, Christine Hill, says, "Many people here in Tucson argue the new law will

mean more illegals will cross the border into Arizona instead of California" (11/9/94). After a border patrol agent describes how the El Paso and San Diego border efforts have been successful there, but with the concomitant result of more people crossing the border into Arizona, the following graphic is displayed:

Illegal Immigrants Arrested by US Border Patrol in AZ  
 1993: 92,600  
 1994: 139,473

With still two months remaining in the year, arrests were up "51%" from the year before. And to instill more fear in the public, Christine Hill says that many experts, although she does not say whom, "think that number could double again" because immigrants will leave California.

### "JUNK SPANISH"

In order to make money to support his campaign and spread his racist propaganda, Barrington and company sell buttons and T-shirts that say, "If you're an illegal, head south, Amigo." This is an obvious attack on Latino immigrants, and also an example of what Jane Hill terms "Junk Spanish" (1993). The use of Spanish words in English sentences "will invariably have a "lower" range of meanings than it does in the source language" (Hill 1994:3). The use of "amigo" above "invokes the lower reaches of a semiotic range for "amigo" in Junk Spanish...where "amigo" obviously means anything but "friend"" (Hill 1995:8).

### ASSIMILATION DISCOURSE

"Assimilation" is another guise in which racist discourse resides. William Bennett, a Republican who openly denounced proposition 187 along with Jack Kemp, says that he doesn't have any problems with immigrants but, "failure to advance American culture, beliefs, language, and values. It's assimilation, stupid." (*USA Today*, 11/22/94). According to statements like those, politicians like Bennett and Buchanan are indeed blaming immigrants for the problems of immigration and conflict. Kemp and Bennett advertised their opposition to 187 in the *Wall Street Journal* in October and later reprinted their two page denunciation in the *Los Angeles Times* for the several days that led up to election day. These Republicans attempt to claim an anti-racist position. However, their opposition voices more of a concern for the future of the Republican Party. Kemp and Bennett believe that the immigration issue will be the downfall of the Democratic Party, and eventually lead to a "dominant conservative/Republican governing coalition." It is not until the bottom of the next column that they address the potential for discrimination. They

write: "It is also a mandate for ethnic discrimination. Does anyone seriously doubt that Latino children named Rodriguez would be more likely to appear to be illegal than Anglo children named, say, Jones?" The answer to this rhetorical question is supposed to be 'NO'. This example explicitly demonstrates the dominant categorization and differentiation of minority groups (van Dijk 1993).

### CHICANO/LATINO DISCOURSE

In the mainstream media (television, newspapers, magazines, radio) much of the presentation of 187 and its fallout has been the political rhetoric normally dispersed at election time. Some attention has been given to the effects it has on the daily lives of immigrants and their employers. Latino voices/representations have only sometimes intersected with the mainstream media reports (see Appendix 1). But for the most part, Latinos have not been able to express their voices to the fullest.

Some Chicanos have received special attention in the popular media, like Celia Muñoz, an analyst for the National Council of La Raza. In *USA Today* she was quoted saying: "It's more humane to stop people from coming than chase after them when they get here"" (11/15/94). This gives a very large public audience the impression that she favors blocking off the border like Newt Gingrich and other conservatives would like to do. In the *L.A. Times* a special article was devoted to an elderly Latina woman who supports 187, says it isn't racist, and is herself the daughter of an illegal immigrant (10/27/94). Another *USA Today* story was framed with the story of an elderly Chicano man who was terribly upset not only about immigration but also about the phone books being printed in Spanish (11/16/94). These minorities who say it is not racist or validate 187 get attention because they agree with majority opinions. When these cases are presented in the media, racists argue that they themselves cannot be racists when even the minorities agree with them. However, that argument exemplifies the racist technique intended to "legitimize discrimination against minorities" (van Dijk 1994).

Van Dijk assumes that the media is central to the reproduction of racism "both because of their relation to other elite institutions and because of their structural influence in shaping and changing the social mind" (1993:243). Those that control the media are capable of employing sneaky and insidious strategies, like the one above, to promote racism, sometimes intentionally and other times not. Guillermo Gómez-Peña says one reason for discrimination against Others by those in positions of power is their fear and confusion in a changing world. The dominant groups are "unable to comprehend their place and role in this still incomprehensible cartography, they feel the world and the future are no longer theirs, and they anxiously want them back. They are currently

doing everything they can to control the entry of the 'other'" (Gómez-Peña 1991:22).

#### RESISTANCE: SOUTH TUCSON NEWSPAPERS

In Tucson different discursive strategies emerge from media owned or controlled by ethnic minorities, i.e. Chicano or Mexican. Some of these strategies include invoking historically negative regimes, mobilization, and coming to the defense of the children of immigrants.

Many protesters of 187 have compared the state of California to Nazi Germany. Jesus Romo elaborates this case clearly: "It is a day as black as it was in Nazi Germany, as it was in Italy when it was fascist" (Channel 13, 11/9/94). Fabian Nuñez, leader of Alianza, also employs this technique (see Appendix 1). Nazi signs emerge in Chicano political cartoons relating to 187. A political cartoon from the *L.A. Times* renames the Nazi Decree of 18 October 1936 (in which Jews were excluded from certain businesses, managerial positions, and marrying and having sex with Germans) to the California Penal Code where "immigrants" replace "Jews" in every instance (11/16/94). Teun van Dijk uses this technique more effectively by detailing the similarities of Proposition 187 to Hitler's Germany in his editorial and his rebuttal of Rae Starr's critique of that editorial (van Dijk 1994).

In the small presses of Tucson, Latino discourse has attached the Ku Klux Klan to proposition 187. This seems to be a rhetorical strategy to convince others that 187 is indeed racist, as racist as the KKK is and has been throughout American history. The two have become linked by proximity. In November the KKK came to Tucson looking to establish a branch. Tucson Chicanos protested, and also expressed their disdain for 187 at the same time. The articles from that week's *Prensa Hispana*, 187 stories found people talking about the KKK, and KKK stories involved discourse about 187. Such is the case with Isabel García Romo, a lawyer for the Human Rights Coalition. She "indicó que no se puede estar en contra del KKK y al mismo tiempo apoyar la propuesta 187."<sup>11</sup> She continues by saying that 187 "es un veneno que va a expandirse a lo largo del país, a menos que lo detengamos"<sup>12</sup> (*Prensa Hispana*, 11/17/94). And in a photo accompanying an article about protests of proposition 187 in the *L.A. Times*, a young Latino carries the sign, "Not good for AMERI-KKK-A" for the same rhetorical purpose.

#### VOTING

Importance is placed on registering people to vote. Latinos call for the inscription of their own people who qualify for citizenship. In doing so, they will be able to actively participate in the election process and form a stronger political bloc. Without the right to vote, Latinos are

worth nothing in the United States, says Sergio Cañizo, the editor of *El Monitor Hispano*:

NO LA JODAN!!! SI NO VOTAMOS VAMOS A VALER NADA EN LUCHA Y SI NO SE HACEN CIUDADANOS, SAME SHIT!!!!<sup>13</sup>  
(11/17/94).

He also states that the Latino population is growing faster than the Anglo population, which chooses to have dogs rather than children.

Ellos en vez de crecer están decreciendo arreglando a que en vez de hijos tienen perros, perros que los tratan como si fueran humanos, pero al fin perros y hasta este momento los perros no votan<sup>14</sup> (*El Monitor Hispano*, 12/14/94).

#### CHILDREN ARE BEING ATTACKED

Proposition 187 denies immigrants rights to a free public education and non-emergency health care. Those here in Tucson, in Los Angeles, and in the Catholic Church talk of this as an attack on defenseless children, an attack with violent and lethal repercussions.

No se les puede negar la educación a las nuevas generaciones. Ellos nada saben de papeles. Ellos sólo saben que nacieron aquí y no entienden de otras leyes. Tienen derecho a la educación y muchos otros derechos. Esa es la verdad.<sup>15</sup> (Tupac Enrique, *Prensa Hispana*, 11/24/94).

It's, in fact, Proposition 187 that has broken the Supreme Court, federal law of the land, the state constitution law of the land. *They* are the law-breakers, not the children (Warren Furutani, L.A. School Board, NBC Nightside, 11/9/94).

In seeking to cure social and economic ills, this proposition strikes at the most vulnerable among us - children, the sick and the needy - without addressing the larger social and political causes for the problems, especially at the federal level (U.S. Bishops' statement at the annual conference, *L.A. Times*, 11/19/94)

The passage of 187 has created a climate of hate and especially fear. Silvia Alfaro, a Oaxacan mother, says she will return to Oaxaca with her two children, both of whom are U.S. citizens because she is afraid to take her children to the doctor, to wait for the bus, and even to leave her house (*L.A. Times* 11/20/94). On November 19, 1994 the first casualty of 187 occurred. Julio Cano, a twelve year old Mexican boy living in Anaheim, died of acute leukemia. His parents had delayed seeking medical

treatment "for fear of 187," that hospital officials would report them and their children, although two of them are U.S. citizens, to immigration officials (*L.A. Times* 11/23/94, 11/24/94).

Debate quickly ensued regarding whether earlier treatment would have saved his life. Anti-187 groups claim Cano was a victim of the legislation, while pro-187 groups denied the proposition's responsibility since it has yet to take effect. (The issue is right to treatment.) "The victims of Prop. 187 are preponderantly children, and here it is" says Amin David, chairman of Los Amigos of Orange County which focuses on Latino community issues. Ruth Coffey, a pro-187 organizer denies any link between the ballot measure and the boy's death: "I don't care what language they speak, everybody knows this is not in effect yet" (*L.A. Times* 11/23/94).

The reality is that fear is in effect; and Proposition 187 will claim more lives in the long run. Segments of the California population, in favor of 187, have appointed themselves responsible, in essence deputized themselves, to report illegal immigrants. As a result of uncertainty in the Latino communities about the passage and blockage of 187, clinical visits and appointments have dropped dramatically from a steady 10% to 20% in a non-profit clinic that treats illegal immigrants to up to 40% in some areas (*L.A. Times* 11/26/94). Failure to administer preventative treatment will eventually result in more deaths in California, all in the name of 187.

### SYMBOLIC VIOLENCE

187 IS MORE THAN VIOLENCE, IT IS MURDER.

With all the attention to the social and political climate in California, news stories emerge everyday all along the border to Florida. Some are particularly illustrative of the materiality that discursive practices produce. Such is the case with a man who got stuck under the border. Several weeks after passage of 187, *Telemundo* ran a short segment about a Mexican man who tried to cross the border into San Diego. He could not jump the wall, as he was a somewhat large man, and of course he could not go around it, so he attempted to go under it. Unfortunately, he got stuck under the border fence. It took four firemen two hours to dig him out safely, whereupon border patrol agents apprehended him.

Why do segments like this make the national news? It made the news, not tabloid television. In one sense, I think it could play into the stereotype held by Anglos that Mexicans are none too bright, and "naturally" lower on the so-called "bell curve." But this footage was in Spanish on a Spanish station, intended for a Latino audience. This incident demonstrates the material effects of racist discourse on the Other's body: it cuts him in two and pins him to the ground like a dead animal. As academics, we understand that it is the body that is the locus of

power. Michel Foucault (1978) pays immense attention to ways in which the state and its apparatuses "regulate" and "control" bodies.

Some politicians and scholars believe that 'ideology' floats around in the stratosphere and has no material existence. "Rather," Nugent says, "it is constrained by, expressed through, and linked with the material it organizes and the historical context in which the configurations of meaning (which often have to do with power) it renders coherent are recognizable to social actors" (1993:36). Racism like ideology, thus, does have "a concrete life embodied in 'ideological state apparatuses,'" and it does concern "practical conduct and the bodily existence of human beings" (Wetherell and Potter 1992:28-29). Racist ideology and discourse become material in their organization around the body and their effects upon the body. Immigration discourse results in higher fences, more dogs, or denial of essential public services. It functions to dismember the objects of that discourse and establishes a logic wherein those in power may exercise control on the bodies of Others. I would argue that Latinos are all too aware of racist actions and that they understand the *discursive-turned-material* violence done to them.

Racist discourse intersects other discourses "notably although not only those of class, gender, and (lately) nation- to determine the subjectivity of agents at a given time and place. What begins to emerge from this racial subjectivizing is a subjection to *violence*" (Goldberg 1992:311, emphasis added). Racist expression has the discriminatory power "between and over the excluded and included, naturalizing and normalizing the violence of dismissal, dispersal, indeed, all too often, disappearance" (Goldberg 1993:54).

Consider Patrick Buchanan's editorial. He writes that "we" need to assimilate the millions of immigrants already here before we admit more. "And we need soon to bring down the curtain on this idea of hyphenated Americanism" (*L.A. Times* 10/28/94). He wants to "erase" ethnicity and "color" and make people in this country more like his "idea" of what people should be like, "white." As Carlos Fuentes asks, who wants "to fade away into anonymity in the name of the after-all nonexistent "melting pot"?" (Fuentes 1992:410). Gómez-Peña calls for replacing the "melting pot" with the more relevant notion of menudo chowder (1992).

An illustration of the normalization of violence can be seen in a La Cucaracha political cartoon. In this particular cartoon, a young conservative "Hispanic" man expresses his thoughts on illegal immigration, saying, "There's too many damned illegals here! It's time to act!!" When he stops to think about what life would be like now if something had been done to curtail immigration in the past, the result is an instant "POOF!" in the last frame as the man disappears. Alcaraz here critiques those Latinos siding with the conservative racist proposition 187. He also displays the violence directed toward Latinos by the dominant groups through

the "disappearance" of an ethnic body. Other discourses confront the materiality of discursive practices and resist them. As Pedro Ruiz says: "No hay ley que pueda deternos. No hay ninguna ley que pueda echarnos de nuestra tierra. Ya es tiempo de que los ataques de políticos paren"<sup>16</sup> (*Prensa Hispana*, 11/24/94). The first disappearance of the Other was a boy named Julio Cano; his death was a violent dispersal of life that reflects the prevailing attitudes towards minority groups by dominant law-making groups.

Another cartoon by the same artist, Lalo Alcaraz, exemplifies the conscious awareness of proposition 187 on the body. Here Alcaraz plays on the "discovery" myth-image. Two Anglos have planted their 187 flag in the explorer motif on the Latino "body." The fist rises and throws the two people into the air. The fist is doubly "Latino Activism" and the "Latino body" itself. Alcaraz advocates not violence, but resistance to the discursive practices that are imposed upon Latino bodies from without.

I would argue that a far more sinister violence has occurred in California. I believe that Californians have "187" embedded in their consciousness. Anyone in California, minorities, those in power, citizens, could probably tell you that "187" is the number in the California Penal Code designating murder. Its pervasiveness results from increasing homicides in the state of California, the prevalence of shows about real police like "Cops," and the importance of the movie industry in California. I must add that Rap videos and musicians also use this code, especially those based in Los Angeles like Dr. Dre, Snoop Doggy Dogg, and the now defunct N.W.A. Detectives are portrayed investigating a scene and calling in a "187:" homicide. Thus, 187 is California Police code for homicide and 187 is the proposition denying illegal immigrants basic social services

Can this be a coincidence or is it a conscious, political manipulation of symbols to get a vote to go their way? I do not know how this proposition came to be slotted with the number "187." That may be unimportant. There may have been an unconscious or possibly conscious awareness of the dual signification for Californians. If this was the case, an iconic homicide occurred on November 8, 1994 of such large scale, that it is reminiscent of various attempts at genocide throughout world history. The effects and signification of propositions like 187 "become the discursive policy instruments for 'civilized' forms of 'ethnic cleansing,'" (van Dijk 1994, internet) a term for extremely violent behavior that is hardly clean at all.

How can people participate in this structure of violence daily? Perhaps, people still divorce discourse from action, discourse from material. Or perhaps it is the misrecognition of racism which makes violence tolerable (Balibar 1991). In a society that condemns violence, the continual violent discursive attacks upon people of color would seem hypocritical:

Those in power foster the actions which they publicly condemn. This proposition, therefore is an abuse of the power by the majority to continue to exclude Others from 'legitimately' participating in American society (van Dijk 1994, internet).

### CONCLUSION

I have tried to show that Proposition 187 is indeed a racist measure designed to prevent the entry of illegal immigrants, mostly Latinos, into California. Because racism is tightly woven into the national tapestry, analyses of racism should not rely on discourse alone. Issues of power, nationalism, class, gender, space, culture, and cultural difference are extremely important in studies of racism. Gupta and Ferguson make a case for the relevance of these issues in anthropological studies; "if it is acknowledged that cultural difference is produced and maintained in a field of power relations in a world always already spatially interconnected, then the restriction of immigration becomes visible as one of the main means through which the disempowered are kept that way" (1992:17).

Many Chicanos and Mexicans believe that the Southwestern United States (California, Arizona, New Mexico) was once Aztlán, the mythical origin land from whence the Aztecs migrated. These same people think that one day they will return to their ancestral lands; and some believe it is happening today as Los Angeles has the second largest Latino population in the world. The structure of power in the United States and those that control it prevent, or at least attempt to prevent, Mexicans and other Latinos from migrating north. The irony here is that the descendants of the Aztecs in Mexico are no longer permitted to live in a place that once belonged to their ancestors. Because of this, El Vez, a Chicano Elvis impersonator from Los Angeles sings "Well I've reason to believe, we all have been deceived/ There still is Aztlán" (see Appendix 2). And with all the "anti-racist" posturing by those in power, the public and especially minority groups have been deceived by disguised political racist discourse. Many Americans become uncomfortable or offended when Others tell them that the United States is a racist society. Perhaps Americans believe that their liberal democracy cannot support such discrimination. However, liberalism and modernity are very much implicated in the "normalizing and naturalizing [of] racial dynamics and racist exclusions" (Goldberg 1993:1). The construction of a white Americanness, as literary analysis exemplifies, depended upon a real or imaginary Africanist presence (Morrison 1992).

Racism is alive and well in the "free" United States. As a concept, it is little understood in theoretical terms by the general public. However, I do not want to homogenize racism as a practice because it can be found

throughout the world. We should speak of *racisms* that reveal themselves in different forms because of different historical formations in which particular racisms were formed in different configurations in their "relations to other structures and processes" or effects (Hall 1986:23). I feel it is imperative for academics like anthropologists to seize other media for the dissemination of knowledge and education of those in this society. Minority groups have been challenging racism in its many forms for many years. And yet the social imagination of Latinos becomes more imaginary and imaginative through segregation of minorities (Hill, class notes). That we still need to fight in the 1990's is a testament to the character of racism: It is deceptive and slippery.

Subordinate bodies can be easily controlled, and bodies cut in half and skewered by laws of hate and discrimination are that much easier to manipulate. This paper has not dealt with the Border Patrol's increased discrimination and torture tactics in the name of 187. These crimes have been committed against non-citizens and citizens alike because of the color of their skin or the language they speak. In order to prevent such atrocities we must regain control of our bodies and release ourselves from the discursive chains that prevent us from being human. Xenophobia, racism, and the abuse of power converge in political agendas of those in power. Proposition 187 is just one example among many gross displays of forced exclusions of certain minority groups. These efforts contribute to the vulgar "gaze of a whitened subject upon a colored object" which affect the project of knowledge (Hill 1994:16). And this project of achieving knowledge, one that is reciprocal and collaborative, will always remain incomplete as long as racist discourses and abuses of power prevent the availability of empowerment to all people (ibid). A re-imagining is in order.

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#### ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> *Evil California (These Blues)* from the *Short Cuts* soundtrack, performed by Annie Ross and the Low Note Quintet with Iggy Pop, Imago Recording Company, 1993.
- <sup>2</sup> I define 'Mexicans' as Mexican nationals, and, for the purposes of this paper; this includes the many indigenous groups that live in and are subjected to the Mexican state. Mexicans who have migrated I term immigrants, and those without documents, I term undocumented or illegal immigrants. I define 'Chicanos' as those people of Mexican descent who are citizens of the United States, and also those people of mutual Mexican and American descent. I define 'Latinos' as the broader group of people that descend from Latin American countries; 'Latino' may include United States citizens that have another ethnic identity like 'Mexican', 'Chicano', 'Puerto Rican', 'Cuban', etc. These identities, however, are contested by those within these groups and are not homogeneous. 'Chicano', for example, is preferred by some segments of this

category while others prefer, 'Mexican-American', 'Hispanic', 'Mexican', 'Tejano', etc. The Mexican question of identity is even more problematic because of the diversity of indigenous populations and regional mestizo populations with their own histories that do not necessarily coincide with the recent project of state formation by the Institutionalized Revolutionary Party (PRI).

- <sup>3</sup> But these imaginations, of course, can and do break down. For example, it is not uncommon for people to remark, upon learning my ethnicity, "but your skin is so light." I am an anomaly in the prevailing social imaginary of Chicanos.
- <sup>4</sup> Minority groups and immigrant populations also exhibit racist behaviors and discourse, like prejudices and stereotyping against other ethnic groups; however, because of their marginal position within the existing power structure they are unable to practice significant exclusions. This important area of minority groups' imagining of other subordinated groups is a phenomena that warrants further research.
- <sup>5</sup> I associate Anglo with "whiteness," a specific segment of the American population that has descended from primarily Christian European immigrants. In describing *Moby Dick*, Melville writes, "But not yet have we solved the incantation of this whiteness, and learned why it appeals with such power to the soul" (1967 [1851]: 169). "Whiteness" still remains shadowed by those who stand in contrast to it. Academics recently have begun the project of understanding and critiquing "whiteness." For some recent studies see Frankenberg (1993), Hill (1995, 1994, 1993), and Morrison (1992).
- <sup>6</sup> Stuart Hall (1986) emphasizes the relevance of studying the role "civil society" plays in the reproduction of racism as well as that of the state.
- <sup>7</sup> Critiques of stereotyping by members of those groups stereotyped are not new. José Limón discusses how Chicanos fought against Chicano and Mexican stereotypes at the turn of the century (1992). The stereotypes, however, still remain, perhaps because dominant groups that "imagine" them have the power and means to continue to replicate such images. Subordinate groups may contest them but they have a Herculean task ahead of them. As seen with "Junk Spanish" and images of Mexicans in the Southwest, cases become more abundant in every medium, expanding from cinema to greeting cards to language itself (Hill 1994).
- <sup>8</sup> Translation: "We do the work."
- <sup>9</sup> Translation: "because our people do not come to this country to ask for free food, they come to work, there is no need to prove it."
- <sup>10</sup> UCLA sociologist, David Hayes-Bautista, in an effort to counter widespread misconceptions, i.e. stereotypes, about Latinos, researched Latino immigrant populations in Los Angeles County. He state that while being very poor and having low education levels, Latinos "boast tightly knit families, a strong work ethic and low use of public services, all qualities not usually associated with the inner-city poor" (*L.A. Times* 10/21/94). Hayes-Bautista assailed the stereotype that Latino immigrants are "welfare abusers." Compared to other segments of the population in Los Angeles County, poor Latino adult immigrants received much less public assistance. In 1990, 16.9% of poor Latino immigrants received public assistance while 64.6% of poor Blacks, 50.4% of poor

U.S.-born Latinos, 48.8% of poor Asians, and 41.7% of the non-Latino, white population of Los Angeles County received public assistance. As this report dismisses the Latino stereotype, it inadvertently points the finger at other minority groups. The Alta California Policy Research Center in Los Angeles supported this study.

- <sup>11</sup> Translation: She "indicated that one cannot be against the KKK and at the same time support Proposition 187."
- <sup>12</sup> Translation: 187 "is a venom that will extend to the whole country, unless we stop it."
- <sup>13</sup> Translation: "STOP FUCKING AROUND!!! IF WE DON'T VOTE WE WILL BE WORTH NOTHING IN THE STRUGGLE AND IF WE DO NOT BECOME CITIZENS, SAME SHIT!!!!"
- <sup>14</sup> Translation: "Instead of growing (in number), they are decreasing; instead of children they choose to have dogs, dogs which they treat as if they were human, but they are dogs, and at this moment dogs still cannot vote."
- <sup>15</sup> Translation: "They (politicians) cannot deny education to the next generations. They (children) don't know anything about papers. They only know that they were born here and they do not understand another's laws. They have the right to an education and many other rights also. That is the truth."
- <sup>16</sup> Translation: "There is no law that can stop us. There is no law that can throw us out of our land. Now is the time that the politicians' attacks stop."

## APPENDIX 1

### NBC NIGHTSIDE (11/9/94)

Kim Hendrew: Alianza maintains that this is a racist measure. Those who support 187 say its about the "dwindling pie," you just can't give everybody everything. How do you see it?

Fabian Nuñez: Well, obviously, those are lies. The reality is what proposition 187 has done to California is that it has disjointed this country, and that the very fabric of the society is now having to pay the consequences of racial antagonisms and divisions in our community. And its really dividing up the state of California. When you find scapegoats to the ills of the state of California and you pinpoint a particular ethnic group, then you cause sort of an anti-immigrant climate. This climate has transformed itself into an anti-immigrant hysteria. And if you look at the effects its already having in our community, I think they are very profound. In the years to come we will suffer greatly from Proposition 187.

Obviously, its a proposition that will turn back the clock on time. It's retrogressive, uh, it's a Draconian measure. It's mean spirited, and it goes against all the values on which this country was built on: life. liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and everything else that stands for

America. We think that Proposition 187 is not only the beginning of an institutionalization of the system of Apartheid in South Africa, here in California, but it has a lot of similarities to the beginning of Nazi Germany of the 1940s.

KH: The mood on the streets? What is it right now?

FN: Obviously, there's a lot of tension right now on the streets of California. People are beginning to assimilate the effects of this proposition and even though it will not go into effect until January, the climate that has been created as a result has fostered a lot of racism, a lot of antagonism in the community. And we're very concerned about the state of California in terms of what's going to happen in the next few days, and we hope that everything remains under control. However, I think that if anything does happen, if any outbursts break out, I think ultimately the responsibility will be in the hands of governor, the governor of California, Pete Wilson. He's the one that has launched the war against immigrants, and it is because of Pete Wilson and other unscrupulous politicians such as him that have perpetuated the politics of hate and brought it down to the mainstream, uh, that have built a civil rights movement that we are beginning to see from all these demonstrations that are taking place.

But I think one very important factor needs to be pointed out is the fact that, you know, when the community, the Latino and immigrant community has taken the struggle of civil rights to the streets, we have seen that this has been one that has been done with respect and dignity.

## APPENDIX 2

### AZTLÁN

(SUNG BY EL VEZ, TO THE MUSIC OF PAUL SIMÓN'S GRACELAND)

The river Río Grande is carving like a national scar  
 I am following the river making wetbacks  
 Where my parents crossed to be now where they are  
 I'm going to Aztlán, where I wanna be,  
 I'm going to Aztlán  
 Homeboys, Chicanos, Latinas and we are going to Aztlán  
 My traveling companions, La Virgen, Miss Liberty,  
 A map and my MEChA books  
 Well I've reason to believe, we all have been deceived  
 There still is Aztlán  
 Miss Liberty tells me Aztlan's gone,

as if I didn't know that  
 As if I didn't know my own backyard, as if I didn't know  
 To get in you need a card  
 And she said losing home is like a bullet in your heart  
 I am looking for a place, a myth of my people  
 That won't get torn apart  
 I'm going to Aztlán, Aztlán  
 Where I want to be, I'm going to Aztlán  
 Homeboys, Latinos with green cards  
 and we are going to Aztlán.  
 With my traveling companions  
 Thru Califas, Arizona on the way to Texas  
 But I've reason to believe,  
 We all will be received, in Aztlán  
 There is a girl in San Antonio who calls herself  
 the human mortar, eleven generations she's lived there  
 It's just the land and name that's changed its borders  
 She is the cement that is Aztlán  
 And I say who has ever ever seen this place  
 I am looking for a land that belonged to Mexico  
 But now holds no time or space  
 in Aztlán, Aztlán, I'm going to Aztlán  
 For reasons I have explained I'm not part of Spain,  
 I'm part of Aztlán,  
 and I'm trying to get back to a place I've  
 never been, I'm trying to cross over,  
 Well I've reason to believe, We all have been deceived  
 There is an Aztlán

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