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Song of the Scapegoat: How Silence Augments Kenneth Burke's Notion of the Scapegoat in Political Rhetoric

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SONG OF THE SCAPEGOAT: HOW SILENCE AUGMENTS KENNETH BURKE'S
NOTION OF THE SCAPEGOAT IN POLITICAL RHETORIC

by

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DEDICATION

To my father, James T. Smith III. Your life was too short, and you didn't live to see this work complete, but everything I do is because of you. Thank you for being my guide. Thank you for being there until you simply couldn't anymore.

ABSTRACT

President Donald Trump ascended to the US's highest hall of power through rhetoric that scapegoated marginalized groups, such as Muslims, Hispanics, immigrants, foreigners, and others. This work considers the executive order President Donald Trump released January 27, 2017, and its revision released March 06, 2017, for how it exemplifies Kenneth Burke's notion of the scapegoat, specifically as outlined in *A Grammar of Motives* and *A Rhetoric of Motives*. These executive orders have come to be known as the "Muslim Ban" due to the way they implicate Muslims in charges of terrorism, harm, and danger and affect the lives and movement of innocent people and groups. Since the rhetorical work of these EOs occurs in a veiled, concealed, or silent way, the argument is supplemented by Cheryl Glenn's "rhetoric of silence" as outlined in *Unspoken: A Rhetoric of Silence.* Framing the EOs in context of Trump's candidacy and first 100 days in office exemplifies how silence augments rhetoric that evokes the scapegoat to shape America's political and social destiny and reveals the machinations of power behind the use and imposition of the scapegoat on others.

PREFACE

"The Dramatistic screen involves a methodic tracking down of the implications in the idea of symbolic action, and of man as the being that is particularly distinguished by an aptitude for such action. […] If *action* is to be our key term, then *drama*; for drama is the culminative form of action […]. But if *drama,* then *conflict.* And if *conflict*, then *victimage.* Dramatism is always on the edge of this vexing problem, that comes to a culmination in tragedy, the song of the scapegoat."

Kenneth Burke, *Language as Symbolic Action* 54-55

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AGoM ....*A Grammar of Motives*

ARoM ....*A Rhetoric of Motives*

EO .... Executive Order

HtDTwW ....*How to Do Things with Words*

LaSA ....*Language as Symbolic Action*

TtS .... *Talking to Strangers: Anxieties of Citizenship since Brown v. Board of Education*

Unspoken.. *Unspoken: A Rhetoric of Silence*

CHAPTER 1: The Silenced Scapegoat

On January 27, 2017 President Donald Trump released an executive order titled "Protecting the Nation From Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States" that implicates Muslims and other groups of charges of aiding, enabling, fostering, and participating in terrorism. Hence, it has become known as the "Muslim Ban". It bans travel from seven predominately Muslim countries for 90 days, refugees for 120 days, and Syrian refugees indefinitely. Its implementation caused havoc, and, in practice, those affected most weren't the terrorists and criminals it purportedly condemned. Even immigrants with official documentation were detained at airports, and innocent individuals found their movement restricted and lives disrupted, as many were unable to see family and friends, or to pursue their education and career goals in the US. Refugees, many of whom had already fled political and violent upheaval in their former nations, found the US to be no sanctuary. The EO turned out to be one of many orders Trump released during his first 100 days in office, each serving to fulfill his isolationist, nationalistic, anti-foreigner, and anti-immigrant campaign promises. As is the case with most executive actions, these represented a radical reconstitution of America's image and identity, a vision Trump's 2016 campaign epitomized: "Make America Great Again". Underlying this positive affirmation of America as something *to be* great, however, is America as something that is *not* yet great. America is in a state of becoming, and must achieve the greatness it once possessed in the past. Electing Trump is the key to attaining this pinnacle once again. Ostensibly, the "Muslim Ban" is a step to attain this vision, but

it requires sacrifice. America's speckled history of racial violence, discrimination, and segregation means that to attain this vision of America's past greatness, immigrants, foreigners, and non-white others must be purged. Trump courted an electorate majorly comprised of white Christians, mobilizing their negative sentiment against marginalized groups, such as Muslims, Hispanics, foreigners, immigrants, and etc.. Thus, belying his proclamation to make America great is the call to reconfigure America as white and Christian, just as it was in the past.

The "Muslim Ban" sets the conditions by which these groups are to be scapegoated and sacrificed. In chapter 2, I will consider more thoroughly how these conditions are set in the EO. For now, the important take-away is that scapegoating in political rhetoric is imbued with power. Scapegoating is a tool of redirection, channeling negative affect at the victimized groups and diverting attention away from the perpetrator of scapegoating, and it's one of many kinds of misdirection used by Trump to ascend into the US's highest hall of power.

The EO's purpose is to revise the visa-issuance process, which "plays a crucial role in detecting individuals with terrorist ties and stopping them from entering the United States. Perhaps in no instance was that more apparent than the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, when State Department policy prevented consular officers from properly scrutinizing the visa applications of several of the 19 foreign nationals who went on to murder nearly 3,000 Americans. And while the visa-issuance process was reviewed and amended after the September 11 attacks to better detect would-be terrorists from receiving visas, these measures did not stop attacks by foreign nationals who were admitted to the United States". 9/11 exemplifies the danger of not taking measures to

tighten the visa process, justifying the EO's urgency and necessity. Even though the countries affected by the EO are yoked to 9/11 and post-9/11 terrorist activities, the EO doesn't include countries "from which radicalized Muslims have actually killed Americans in the U.S. since Sept. 11, 2001" (Myre). It also notes that the "deteriorating conditions in certain countries due to war, strife, disaster, and civil unrest increase the likelihood that terrorists will use any means possible to enter the United States", which further justifies changing the "visa-issuance process to ensure that those approved for admission do not intend to harm Americans and that they have no ties to terrorism." At least in the original version of the EO, these "deteriorating conditions" are unclear, specified only in general terms. What is clearer is the way these negative attributes as varied as "war, strife, disaster, and civil unrest" are linked directly to immigrants having "ties to terrorism." In practice, "ties to terrorism" and "terrorist" is coded as Muslim, although its language never goes so far as to name any groups. Rather, the EO uses terms and evokes stereotypes, images, concepts, and events loaded with negative sentiment and heavily associated with Muslims. At one point, it demands data on information regarding "honor killings". This would be an odd order, if not for its association with Islam. Neither does the EO explicitly reveal any preference for Christians, nor bias against Muslims. However, it states that it will "prioritize refugee claims made by individuals on the basis of religious-based persecution, provided that the religion of the individual is a minority religion in the individual's country of nationality." In practice, since all seven affected countries are predominately Muslim, then Christians are inevitably prioritized.

Examining the EO allows for me to carefully attend to the components of scapegoating, and, thus, follow these traces back to the perpetrator. This will reveal: (a)

What the scapegoat intends to misdirect attention and affect away from, and (b) How the scapegoat misdirects and deploys power. Particularly, I will consider how silence plays a role in political rhetoric that scapegoats. In what follows, I introduce the "Muslim Ban" EO and its context while laying the theoretical groundwork of scapegoating and silence in US democratic rhetoric. In chapter 2, I examine the "Muslim Ban" more thoroughly in context of President Trump's candidacy and the first 100 days of his administration. Lastly, in chapter 3, I will illustrate the sociopolitical and rhetorical implications of scapegoating in conjunction with silence by discussing the present and possible future ramifications of Trump's scapegoating on Muslims and other groups.

I frame my analysis with Kenneth Burke's notion of the scapegoat, specifically as it is described in *LaSA* and *AGoM*. However, Burke does not go so far as to discuss the role of silence and absence in relation to the scapegoat, and so I will put his work alongside Cheryl Glenn's rhetoric of silence as outlined in *Unpsoken*. In order to uncover how silence and scapegoating have rhetorical effect, I will bring in some discussion of symbols and symbol systems based on Burke's work in *LaSA*. Political rhetoric is possible because of man's use of symbol systems, such as language, and much of my argument hinges upon the fact that silence is capable of being symbolic and imbued with the dynamics of power. Thus, it's an important, if overlooked, part of rhetorical processes such as scapegoating. I will borrow from some of James Mcleod's work on symbol-making and nation-building in modern US politics, which will illuminate how symbols circulate and function within democratic politics and discourse. This will explain the dynamics of power involved in Trump's scapegoating of others, and how scapegoating is a form of symbol-making. I will also bring in the work of Danielle Allen in order to

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understand the racial dynamics involved in modern US democratic symbol-making, especially in relation to America's speckled history with race, and how the "Muslim Ban" serves as a continuation of this history.

My work will address both the scapegoat, a noun, and scapegoating, a verb. The distinction between the scapegoat and scapegoating is irrelevant to the argument I make here. Burke describes it variously as a symbolic figure capable of being a conduit for emotion and affect, and as a process whereby the victim is transformed into the scapegoat. This ambiguity may lie in how scapegoating, the process, is inextricably tied to the scapegoat, the product. As a verb, scapegoating transforms the apparent image of groups and individuals that are scapegoated, but, as a noun, the scapegoat is an image, a projection, a sacrificial victim, a chosen vessel, an ideal villain, to use some of Burke's terms.

From his campaign onward, Trump continuously displays a pattern of mobilizing fear, anger, and resentment against less powerful, marginalized groups (Muslims, Hispanics, immigrants, foreigners, etc.) while courting a constituency mostly comprised of white Christians. Through the EO's silence regarding Muslims, Trump deploys his power by playing off the unspoken ideas and images his audience already holds of the enemy, of terrorists and terror, of foreign aliens harming America and its values, of "honor killings" and other stereotypes attached to Islam and the Middle East. Silence allows him to be indirect, to evade making plain his biases, and to scapegoat in a way more sinister, and more powerful, than some of his more obvious, direct quotes suggest. He doesn't need to be explicit. The EO is not officially called the "Muslim ban" or "Protecting the Nation From Foreign *Muslim* Entry into the United States" because it can

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achieve the same, or greater, effect by more insidious means. In this concealed, veiled, and silent way, the EO scapegoats Muslims.

Scapegoating is a powerful rhetorical tool, and it's made more powerful, more insidious, and more effective when augmented by silence. Scapegoating is alive and well, and it draws power not only from explicit language, but also from silence and absence. To use a pithy, but relevant, cliché: what is *not* said can be as meaningful as what *is* said. Or, what is *not* said is as capable and effective of achieving rhetorical effect as what *is* said.

According to Burke, the scapegoat is a projection, a substitute, a "chosen vessel, [from which the perpetrator] would ritualistically cleanse themselves by loading the burden of their own inequities upon it" (*AGoM* 406). The image of the scapegoat embodies the dark reflection of the perpetrator's undesirable qualities, and the scapegoat must be transformed into an enemy to justify its sacrifice, and to allow it to serve as a conduit for negative affect, feeling, and sentiment. Burke refers to the "song of scapegoat", the culminative process by which the victimage and sacrifice of the scapegoat seems to follow naturally, even necessarily, to bring about some sort of change that brings one closer toward perfection, or the ideal. Burke states there "is a kind of 'terministic compulsion' to carry out the implications of one's terminology" (*LaSA* 19). The "terministic compulsion" is in how perpetrators rely on and construct vocabularies and conditions by which the scapegoating process occurs. The scapegoat's sacrifice is made to seem as a natural, inevitable, and necessary final step for purity, following from qualities inherent in the scapegoat itself rather than the "scapegoat mechanism" that created it in the first place. This conceals the perpetrator, the agent, and brings the

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scapegoat, the object, into harsh focus. This means the scapegoat is an effective tool for perpetrators to distract from their role in the victimization of these groups. By channeling their own iniquities into the scapegoat, the perpetrators mask the unfair or unjust systems, institutions, and practices from which they benefit. Instead, the focus shifts to the victims of this iniquity, obscuring victimage behind the scapegoat's twisted image.

Scapegoating is a form of transformation, as it transforms the image of the victim into that of the scapegoat. In *AGoM*, Burke's defines the "dialectic" as "the possibilities of linguistic transformation […] Or […] the study of such possibilities" (406). When imposed upon others, the image of the scapegoat distorts the apparent image of the groups it covers, twisting them. He defines the three points of dialectic as: "1.) Merger and division; 2.) The Three Major Pairs: action-passion, mind-body, being-nothing; 3.) Transcendence. Transcendence "may be either a state or a development" (403). The scapegoat clearly exemplifies these principles by:

> "(1) an original state of merger, in that the iniquities are shared by both
> the iniquitous and their chosen vessel; (2) a principle of division, in that the
> elements shared in common are being ritualistically alienated; (3) a new principle
> of merger, this time in the unification of those whose purified identity is defined
> in dialectical opposition to the sacrificial offering" (406).

When Trump's campaign slogan calls for America to be made great, it evokes the image, or vision, of America as an unfulfilled ideal. America is in a state of development, and to be great, it must become a white nation absent of others. This symbolic state transcends the brief words of the slogan. This is how the implicit message is understood, even if its intentions are not wholly laid bare.

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By being the "'essence' of evil" the scapegoat is "the *principle* of discord felt by those [the perpetrators] who are to be purified by the sacrifice" (407). For the scapegoat to have cathartic effect (aGoM 406) and to be fulfilled as a scapegoat, there must be "*drama,* then *conflict.* And if *conflict,* then *victimage*" (*LaSA* 55). If *conflict* is the discord the scapegoat represents, then cleansing oneself of the scapegoat is supposed to bring about unification, as the scapegoat is characterized as the only thing standing in the way of unification, the discordant element that must be cut. Its victimage is necessary. Burke refers to this "unification by a foe shared". That this foe is fabricated or constructed doesn't matter so long as the scapegoat is successfully framed as the divisive element hindering unity. Its cleansing promises unity, but only through the scapegoat's tragic sacrifice.

Cleansing implies dirtiness, dirt that besmirches that which should be made clean, and yet around its corners is the positive image of purity, a state of no dirt. There is an antithetical relationship between "dirt" and "purity", in that one always implies the other In Burke's own terms, the hortatory of "thou shalt not kill" has about its edges the positive image of killing, of murder (*LaSA* 10). The relationship between the negative and positive not only limit one another, but also define each other. Similarly, the nature of the scapegoat's dialectical transformation is "reducible purely to the antithetical nature of 'dialectical' terms, like 'freedom,' 'perfection,' or the terms for social movements, that derive their significance from their relation to opposite terms." Not only does the scapegoat gain significance by its antithetical nature, but it gains power, as well. US democratic politics offer many other antithetical relationships that gain power and significance by reflecting each other: lawlessness/lawfulness, democrat/republican,

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terrorist/patriot, American/unAmerican, citizen/foreigner, safety/danger, security/de-

stability, and etc. The positive entail the negative, and vice versa. These antithetical

relationships not only become evident during the process of scapegoating, but also appear

and reappear in political rhetoric, including the Trump administration's.

The antithesis, as it turns out, is a useful tool, able to justify policy by pointing

toward the negative. For instance:

> "One may find himself hard put to define a policy purely in its own terms,
> but one can advocate it persuasively by an urgent assurance that it is decidedly
> *against* such-and-such other policy with which people may be disgruntled. For
> this reason also, the use of antithesis helps deflect embarrassing criticism (as
> when rulers silence domestic controversy by turning public attention to animosity
> against some foreign country's policies). And in this way, of course, antithesis
> helps reinforce unification by the scapegoat" (*LaSA* 19).

The antithetical relationship of lawfulness, lawlessness explains why "criminals

either actual or imaginary may thus serve as scapegoats in a society that 'purifies itself'

by 'moral indignation' in condemning them, though the ritualistic elements operating

here are not usually recognized by the indignant. When the attacker chooses for himself

the object of attack, it is usually a blood brother; the debunker is much closer to the

debunked than others are" (*AGoM* 406-407). A criminal is a citizen, albeit a lawless, as

opposed to lawful, citizen. As a blood brother, the scapegoat is *chosen* for its closeness

and proximity to the perpetrator, as something must be attached before it can be excised.

According to Burke's third point of the dialectical, unification occurs when the

scapegoat's identity is cast as antithetical even though the process renders the scapegoat

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as more of a brother by its reflecting the perpetrator's flaws, vices, shame, and guilt. However, scapegoating rhetoric must maintain the illusion of separated-ness, which is usually done by emphasizing geographical, cultural, and political difference, to cast these similarities as undesirable. As I will demonstrate further in chapter 2, this is how Trump is able to connect immigrants and Muslims with harm, danger, and criminality.

Burke distinguishes man as a "symbol-using, symbol-making, and symbol-misusing animal" (LaSa 6). Language, itself, is a symbol system, among many others, and words are "a link between us and the nonverbal, words are by the same token a screen separating us from the nonverbal—though the statement gets tangled in its own traces, since so much of the 'we' that is separated from the nonverbal by the verbal would not even exist were it not for the verbal (or for our symbolicity in general, since the same applies to the symbol systems of dance, painting, music, and the like)" (5). Of note is Burke's recognition that identity, referred to as 'we', is symbolically-constructed. Just as love necessitates symbolic acts of love to flourish and persist, then so too do nations require symbolic acts of nation-building, such as constitutions, laws, official institutions, leaders, governments, and etc., to be more than an anarchic mass of disparate group and to become a unified identity.

The scapegoat relies on the defining permeable boundaries between "us" and "them". The construction of in-groups ("us", "we", those associated with myself, those like myself) and out-groups ("them", "others", those not associated with myself, those unlike myself) is the root of the scapegoat, although what and whom is included is fluid because scapegoating is a form of substitution. The boundaries between us/them are fluid because substitution "sets the condition for 'transcendence,' since there is a technical

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sense in which the name for a thing can be said to 'transcend' the thing named" (*LaSA* 8), and so the scapegoat transcends the groups it victimizes, allowing for the scapegoat to encompass a diverse array of out-groups.

Symbols have the power to affect the world, to build nations, to move bodies, sometimes forcibly, as is so in the case of the draft, eviction, exile, or incarceration, and sometimes in other ways, such as when a body is inspired or influenced to go to war or to the voting booth. We don't only make and use symbols, but misuse symbols, suggesting that the terministic screens by which we filter reality don't perfectly, or even necessarily, coincide with reality. As the symbol-using animal, we "tinker with various kinds of substitution as we encounter in men's modes of penance, expiation, compensation, paying of fines in lieu of bodily punishment, and the cult of the scapegoat" (*LaSA* 8). This is true even for the "Muslim Ban" that charges groups of terrorism, as exemplified by 9/11, without these countries actually being involved in terrorist attacks during and since 9/11. Instead, the justification lies in the possibility that these groups may be terrorists, setting one of the conditions by which the EO scapegoats Muslims.

The scapegoat flourishes in the US political system because it is inherently divisive, ritualistic, and imbued with a symbol system that allows for in-groups and out-groups to be starkly defined along partisan, racial, ethnic, national, gendered, and sociopolitical lines. Political rhetoric must include the "in-group symbolically and exclude the out-group symbolically, and they provide political justification for elite behavior (Simmel 1955)" (Mcleod 5). In a discussion of Kenneth Burke's notion of the consubstantiation that occurs when individuals align and identify with one another, Cheryl Glenn states that "every bit as important to Burke's notions of coming together, of

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cohering, is the psychic and emotional importance of leaving some one, or some coherent group, *out*: the scapegoat. Nothing brings people together, helps them identify, makes them consubstantial faster than a common enemy…" (*Unspoken* 50).

In the context of politics, deciding who is "in" and who is "out" is part of the shared project of symbolic nation building. A nation, or at least its ideal, is constructed from symbols. Political rhetoric draws from a pool of myths and symbols to construct the nation in a symbolic form, and this symbolic form shapes the creation of in-groups and out-groups, which influences the form the scapegoat takes. Rituals, including the ritual of the scapegoat, are how citizens are initiated into "the symbol world, ideals, and political structure of their community", making symbols fundamental to democracy (Allen 27). They are ever-present in democratic discourse, as "the creation of political mythology is the business of the political rhetorician" (McLeod 364). In the US democratic system, symbols tend to be bipartisan, encouraging loyalty and devotion to the Party. Just as "'hope,' 'change,' and 'the economy' all became elements of the Clinton political myth" (McLeod 363), so too did they become elements of democrat Barack Obama's rhetoric and political myth. In the same way, Trump inherits Republican symbols and mythology that set the conditions of scapegoating and the shape and form the scapegoat assumes.

Democracy is a "world of strangers, where large-scale events are supposed to arise out of one's own consent and yet never really do" (*Tts* 27). Therefore, symbols, and the act of symbol-making, negotiate the immense divide between citizens and public policy. After all, "…it is much easier to fashion […] symbols of the state we desire than that state itself. If democratic citizens rule themselves, they do so fully, in reality, only in

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their symbol worlds. The manipulation of ideal symbols, however, gives a democratic citizen psychological access to political power" (22).

Symbolic nation-building is plainest during US national presidential elections, when it is "used to construct competitive rhetorical sociodramas between the candidates. This makes the process of electing the president a national ritual of integration and revitalization" (McLeod 370). The election which acts "as a means for the introduction of new values and symbolic elements in American civil religion (Bellah 1974; Bennett 1980; McLeod l991a). Values are rearranged, reexamined, redeveloped, and reintegrated into a new synthesis (Herzog 1987). Presidential rhetoric provides the symbolic means through which these values are tested, examined, and claimed by the electorate (Bailey 1981). From this perspective, presidential elections are the modern political rituals that provide the mythical charters for the expression of economic and social relationships" (Mcleod 4). The ritual of scapegoating parallels the political rituals already in place in the US. Like the integration and revitalization of the election, Burke's third point of the dialectic is also a reconfiguration, albeit specifically in opposition to the scapegoat. Defining what an American *is,* requires we consider what an American is *not,* and what is *not* is vulnerable to scapegoating.

Imagine the spaces and images tied to democratic symbol-making and -using. A common image, ubiquitous during elections, is the political arena in the form of a solitary rhetor on a stage, delivering speeches to the public on issues of policy. It is a stage mostly absent of others where the powerful political figure more often than not exemplifies Washington's white majority. On a stage like this, Bush drummed up support for a war in Iraq by mobilizing post-9/11 America's fear of an insidious other, and Iraq and Islam

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were referred to in terms of the "war on terror" despite tenuous evidence justifying the invasion. On a similar stage Donald Trump resurrected a phantom from Ronald Raegan's 1980 campaign: the slogan "Make America Great Again." He tapped into conservative consciousness to invoke fear of a silent Other, of the "them" that doesn't share our (Christian, American) values, by projecting the decline of the white working class onto foreign and alien others, often in hyperbolic but nonspecific terms. The other is absent and appears silent as a white rich man extols to a largely white voter base the virtues of building a wall between the US and Mexico to keep "them"—the others, the immigrants, the illegal criminal aliens, and etc.—out.

Images of pontificating and speech-giving politicians make symbolic nation-building seem noisy, but accompanying the noise is silence. Silence is ever-present, and exists even amidst noise. It punctuates every conversation as the lulls and spaces between words, and that "because one cannot say everything, speech consists above all in silences." (7). Speech and silence are rarely separate as "[speech] and silence depend upon each other; behind all speech is silence, and silence surrounds all speech" (Unspoken 7). In *Unspoken,* Cheryl Glenn, first and foremost, considers silence as a rhetoric, "as a constellation of symbolic strategies that (like spoken language) serves many functions." She categorizes silence as "an absence with a function, and a rhetorical one at that" (4). Similar to my description of democratic symbol-making as noisy, Glenn also characterizes Western rhetorical tradition as noise-focused, concentrating on the verbal to the detriment of the nonverbal. Glenn claims that "language has long represented the specifically human way of transcending biology and achieving humanity, culture" (Glenn 3), and that Western rhetorical tradition has long emphasized the verbal,

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highlighting the nonverbal only in relation to spoken and written word. This means silence is rarely explicitly recognized. Glenn uncovers, or "opens", the silence that is so often concealed, overlooked, or ignored, using an "interpretive framework that shapes language and silence as reciprocal rather than as opposites" to figure "silence as a rhetoric" (155). Although not all silence is equally or even at all significant, significant silence, or what is left unspoken, is overlooked because it simply isn't being listened to and understood. Silence is not emptiness and is imbued with meaning that requires attention.

Silence, in and of itself, may be imbued with meaning: gendered, racialized, imbued with power, and tied to power dynamics. Oppression and subjugation may appear as silence, although it's not always recognized as such. Depending on the situation, silence can deploy or defer to power (15), which means it can be variously wielded, enforced, imposed, or assumed by choice. It also determines how silence is interpreted, as "like speech, the meaning of silence depends on a power differential that exists in every rhetorical situation: who can speak, who must remain silent, who listens, and what those listeners do" (9). The question of "what those listeners do" explains why silence is often mischaracterized or ignored, as silence is often misinterpreted or ignored by dominant groups. Power changes the nature of silence, determining the form it takes as either silence or silencing. The difference is in the former being an assumed stance, and the latter being an imposition.

Silence, absence, and omission are often the conditions for the scapegoat's birth and sacrifice. The scapegoat must be silenced, or at least appear silent, for the scapegoat to be made into a suitable screen upon which the perpetrator can project their own

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iniquities. Comorbid with silence is absence, as silence is a form of absence. The absent, silent scapegoat creates a space for the projection of negative emotions, sentiments, and affects. It belies the systems already in place: the politics of speaking out and silence, of the spoken and unspoken, the political and cultural institutions that determine who is the perfect scapegoat. Silence figures heavily in Glenn's case study of the scapegoating of Lani Guinier by Bill Clinton and the US media. On April 29, 1993, Clinton nominated Guinier "to head the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division, as assistant Attorney General under Janet Reno" (64). However, public opinion turned against Guinier turned when the media willfully misinterpreted her scholarship on voting rights and race as un-American and un-democratic. Guinier "had to remain silent and […] no one was asking her questions; no one was listening to her. The White House was saying very little, thereby exerting its masculinist power through silence. Resisting her professional training as a speaker, writer, and arguer, Lani Guinier was saying nothing, thereby inhabiting a traditionally feminine im/position of silence. Clinton, on the other and, used his silence to deliver his power" (69).

The public and media filtered Guinier's silence through several layers of assumptions and preconceptions regarding race and gender to distort her image into the scapegoat, and so "the bigger her silenced image became, 'the more I served as a blank screen for projected threats, insecurities, and frustrations'" (66). Guinier's image was a form of absence; an absence of her credibility, education, accomplishments, and the high recommendation she had previously received for the position. Her image was a "fabrication" (66). She *wasn't* truly a threat to America. She was an advocate for equal voting rights. She wrote "thoughtfully engaging civil rights legislation with voting

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practices", and she "discovered how easily a nonwhite—or white—candidate could be elected by a majority (even by a majority of a minority population) without ever being responsive to the needs of that minority population. But by the time this footnote (or an interpretation thereof) from her scholarly writing gained circulation in the popular press, it had morphed into a *New York Times* editorial newsbite: Guinier 'questions whether [Douglass Wilder of Virginia] is an 'authentic' figure for blacks—because he owes his job to white voters as well.' (qtd. in Gigot). This interpretation of her opinions did not reflect what she had ever said, let alone written." (66). The racial tribalism is clear in how the media scapegoated Guinier, twisting her call for equality into a false image. To prevent the disruption her policies represented in an unequal system from which whites benefit, Guinier had to be silenced and scapegoated. The media twisted her cries for equality into racial tribalism, reflecting the systemic inequality that separated races. Guinier's image had nothing to do with Guinier, but it did have everything to do with those who silenced her, and the kind of enemy and sacrificial victim they desired to hide their blame and quell their guilt.

Not only is the scapegoat imposed on marginalized others, but it also reaffirms the status of marginalization. It not only flattens the image of the marginalized through "common sense" stereotypes and generalizations, but also silences these groups. The scapegoat rarely speaks, as the scapegoat is but a distorted image. Especially in democratic politics, where "to speak" is thought to be a symbol of power and authority, the scapegoat's silencing is disempowerment. Marginalized groups always inhabit silence by virtue of existing on the edges of mainstream political rhetoric, and oppression often appears as silence. The politics of silence and silencing empower the scapegoat by

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hampering marginalized groups' ability to speak out or to be heard. Glenn's

consideration of the relationships between silence and Native groups in the US is an

example of how the imposition of flat images distort and silence marginalized groups:

"The [image of the] Real Indian is the 'white man's Indian'—a deliberate

fabrication of the *unreal* that paradoxically satisfies the American imagination's

demand for the real […] The white conception of The Indian (a pan-Indian

identity that flattened out the thousands of distinct native societies) has evolved

throughout the centuries, to be sure, but always in concert with white psychic

needs (dominance, curiousity, contempt, greed).

[…]

[The] hyperreal simulations of the Real Indian have long supplanted any

actual person or tribal remembrance, for they define the Indians in terms of what

they are *not,* namely white European Americans. As an authentic fabrication,

then, the Real Indian memorializes rather than perpetuates any tribal presence"

(108-109).

The Real Indian covers the real experiences of Native people, hampering them

from articulating their experience in anything but terms that reaffirm its imposed image.

Even when these experiences are articulated, dominant groups may still choose not to

listen. However, although silenced, Native people also inhabit silence as a choice. Just as

there are various ways for silence to deploy power, so, too, are there various ways to

inhabit silence. Although it may seem to defer to power, this image of deference may

conceal dissent and rebellion. Further, a silenced individual can, at the same time, choose

to inhabit silence as an assumed stance. The delineation between being silent and silenced

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is rarely clear. It's important to recognize these contrary and different experiences. If silencing requires "covering over" real bodies with the singular image of the scapegoat, then breaking this image requires recognizing and attending to this difference by realizing that "many individuals can tell recognizable or wildly divergent versions of the same stories, the same truth. It all depends on the individual" (147). Glenn's interviews with Native people on their experiences with silence, reveals this ambiguity, uncovering various, often conflicting, experiences with silence. Many of the interviewees describe silence as a cultural practice, such as when one man says that Navajos are "taught to listen and watch what's around us"(119), the silence involved in courtship and mourning (125;134); another interviewee calls it a form of "meditation" (119); for some it's a personal habit (120). Others point toward silence as a misunderstanding that occurs when Indians enter white spaces, moving from their home culture and "going into a completely different culture. A lot of it has to do, too, with Indian people, especially in the Southwest, when they speak their languages it's difficult to make that transition from their own tribal language as opposed to English" (121). Silence may also be a form of protection, "self-protection, nourishment, and respect" (145). Glenn states that "Not surprisingly, I did not receive many responses specific to curing ceremonies—nor should I. After all, as Laguna-affiliated Paula Gunn Allen reminds us, Native people, 'particularly Pueblos,' are 'protective toward their traditions' ("Problems" 56)" (137).

Danielle Allen's *Talking to Strangers* further evidences the complexities of silence and silencing, specifically in regard to the sociopolitical realities of the US. Allen opens with the example of Elizabeth Eckford, one of the few black students chosen to attend the white Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, when it was first

desegregated in 1957. When Eckford finds herself under assault in a public space for exercising her legal and political rights, Allen describes her suffering as "intense, contained, and quiet" (3). Her silence contrasts with the intensity of the raucous, belligerent white mob, creating a stark image of America's unequal forms of citizenship. Eckford's silence was both enforced and assumed. As a marginalized citizen, Eckford inhabited silence, knowing her words would not be listened to, misinterpreted, or ignored. She did not have the privilege to speak. However, the silence also served as protection, a buffer between herself and the mob. Further, Allen suggests that her silent walk into the school belies a black culture of sacrifice where parents like Eckford's sent their children to school knowing the hatred they'd face, but encountering that form of hatred serves as a right-of-passage in an America that subordinates blackness. Eckford's silence, then, can be read as recognition of what she faces. However, this is not to suggest that Eckford's silence was only about acquiescence or obedience. Too often the silence of marginalized groups is "read as simple passivity in situations where it has actually taken on an expressive power and has, in fact, transformed the rhetorical situation itself" (Glenn 155). Her silence can be seen as a form of protest. The photo of Eckford's silent walk circulated widely in the press of the day, inciting the nation's sympathy in her favor, and made the white mob look uncivilized by comparison. It rendered the ugliness of segregation so overtly that it could no longer be ignored or concealed.

Neither the example of Glenn's Native interviewees nor Allen's description of Eckford contain outright scapegoating, but they do exemplify the conditions that allow for the scapegoat to manifest. After all, the scapegoat must be silent or, at least, its image must appear silent for it to serve as a suitable screen for projection. The scapegoat may

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appear silent when it is truly silenced, the silenced scapegoat. The US political system, as tribal and divisive as it is, magnifies the scapegoat's image, allowing for its perpetrators to gain power and authority from the ostracization, severance, and destruction of marginalized people. In the following chapter, I will consider how Trump's presidential candidacy and first 100 days in office was made possible by his evoking the scapegoat, exploiting marginalized groups by inciting unjust sentiment against them. In particular, I will look at the scapegoating of Muslims, specifically in context of the "Muslim Ban" EO. However, due to the permeable boundaries of the scapegoat, I will also need to focus on how other marginalized groups become scapegoats. Trump constructs a scapegoat in terms of terrorism, criminality, danger, and what is *not* American. But, the scapegoat is so much more than just the antithesis of American-ness, safety, and unity. It reflects that which must be purged, the "dirt" of bigotry and racial division in the US. The political scapegoat embodies the US's speckled history of inequality, oppression, and marginalization, sacrificed in an attempt to prevent changing the status quo of dominant groups hold on power. It must be carefully disentangled to reveal the dark reflection of America it represents.

CHAPTER 2: The "Muslim Ban"

Isolationism, jingoist patriotism, resentment, and fear of the "other" precede the "Muslim Ban's" conception. Trump's 2016 presidential campaign set the conditions and vocabulary by which scapegoating occurs and starkly delineated the in-groups and out-groups involved. He evokes the scapegoat on political stages and in areas where the voices of the marginalized are notably absent, or silent, and the dominant voices of predominately white, wealthy politicians are magnified. He built his platform on the basis of anti-Muslim and anti-Other sentiment, and his campaign centered around the slogan to "Make America Great Again" aimed at evangelical Christians and the white working class fearful and resentful of their perceived abandonment by the government and a changing U.S. culture that no longer seemed to serve their interests.

Relying heavily on Republican political mythology steeped in Christian and conservative appeals inherited from Ronald Raegan, George W. Bush, and others, Trump spoke on the level of distrust, fear, and wariness of "others". He established "the American people" as an in-group, and although he rarely states whom this group consists of, but as he used it during his campaign it stands for white Christians with concerns about their job prospects and financial security. In opposition are the scapegoats of globalism in the form of American manufacturing jobs overseas being sent overseas to China, the fear of terror and terrorism, and anxieties regarding the perceived marginalization of Christian values. He freely promised to build a wall on the US-Mexican border to keep out undocumented immigrants, or illegal aliens, blamed for

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various societal ills, including occupying the jobs that would otherwise go to underemployed American citizens. He also promised to return industry and manufacturing to America, encouraging companies to "buy American and hire American," evoking America as an ideal.

Trump's identification with the in-group, the "American people", is evident in his speech at the National Prayer Breakfast shortly after his inauguration. He brushes off the obvious socioeconomic differences between himself and his voter base, stating "so easily we forget this, that the quality of our lives is not defined by our material success, but by our spiritual success" (Beckwith). Trump becomes one of "the American people" by spirituality defined as belief in the Christian God. He professes to being "blessed to be raised in a churched home" (Beckwith). Of course, Trump doesn't outright profess to be Christian, although he makes moves to align himself with the religious. He does this despite the silent corollary that he's blessed to be rich and blessed to profit from gambling and entertainment industries that are arguably opposite of Christian values. However, any difference goes unspoken, recognized only briefly in his admission that he's "somebody that has had material success and knows tremendous numbers of people with great material success," but then says, "Many of those people [with material success] are very, very miserable, unhappy people" (Beckwith). Trump subordinates himself as an agent in his rhetoric to minimize the distance between himself as a rich, pampered man and his audience. He is a "somebody," not an I, and collapses his agency into the pronouns "we" and "our," which imply his inclusion, rather than exclusion, from the audience. He describes that the "The people in this room come from many, many backgrounds. You represent so many religions and so many views. But we are all united

by our faith, in our creator and our firm knowledge that we are all equal in His eyes. We are not just flesh and bone and blood, we are human beings with souls." Although the people come from "many, many backgrounds," their diversity is specific, as it's not a diversity of religious belief, but diversity within the narrow category of Christian faith. (Beckwith). This diversity covers over the difference of the marginalized while exalting the dominant, Christian group. Trump goes on to connect this in-group's faith to the government, saying "our republic was formed on the basis that freedom is not a gift from government, but that freedom is a gift from God." As part of symbolic nation-building, he constructs an America that is Christian, that is great and exceptional, and is white. A vision of the ideal *America* is not complete without the ideal *American*. Couched in rhetoric about ideal America are clues as to who is, and who is not, an American (criminal illegal aliens, non-whites, non-hetero-normative, non-Christian, illegal immigrants, immigrants, refugees, etc.) and who is out.

Trump emphasized the need to "Make America Great Again", meaning that, if America hadn't been great in the past, then it will become great again., and Trump would be the catalyst to that greatness. His rhetoric evokes "America", albeit a uniform, non-immigrant, white, Christian America. His invocation of America as great is interchangeable with America as perfect, and this positive, affirmative vision of America requires a scapegoat, a negative, disruptive other, a symbol able to channel negative sentiment, affect, and emotion. Burke's "principle of perfection" reveals itself "most perfectly in our tendency to conceive of a 'perfect enemy' (*LaSA* 18). Then, this perfect enemy must be charged with negativity and be ritually cut away to purify the country. Around the edges of the slogan to make America great *again* is the negative, antithetical

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image of an America that is *not* great in the present. America must be made perfect, and implicit in "making America great" is the hortatory "vote for Trump". In this way, Trump set the conditions for scapegoating, albeit a form that benefits him.

Of course, in creating an out-group, Trump must align himself with his electorate, creating an in-group, and maintain the boundary between the in-group and the scapegoated out-group. Recently inaugurated, Trump's "Muslim Ban" EO—one of many he released in quick succession—had to fulfill his anti-"other" promise with demonstrable action while also transforming his rhetoric into something more palpable, or at least not so overtly obvious in its intent that it could be outright contested. Further, it worked to normalize bigoted sentiment, justifying Muslims status as a scapegoated group. Scapegoating tends to refer back to itself, as the process of scapegoating begets an implicit and explicit vocabulary and string of associations by which groups are yoked to the dirt that must be cleansed. Much of the rhetorical work of scapegoating Muslims and others precede the "Muslim Ban". EO is but a culmination of this work, taking advantage of years of conservative rhetoric that already set the conditions for the scapegoating. Trump calls this the song of the scapegoat.

The countries affected by the "Muslim Ban" are not named in the language of the EO. Rather, the list is available on a separate fact sheet. The seven countries affected are identical to former President Obama's restrictions to the visa waiver program, and are "countries that were designated by Congress and the Obama Administration as posing national security risks" (Fact Sheet). The Fact Sheet goes on to state that the "United States has the world's most generous immigration system, yet it has been repeatedly exploited by terrorists and other malicious actors who seek to do us harm." *Most*

generous is contestable, but, more important is the explicit way that these groups, through implications of terrorism, are linked to "harm" or "danger." This is made clearer by Rudy Giuliani, Trump's former campaign surrogate. On Fox News, Jeanine Pirro, a former judge, asks Giuliani's opinion on Judge Ann Donnelly issuing a temporary restraining order on the deportation of a few hundred people affected by the "Muslim Ban" EO. Giuliani replies, "I think it's absolutely a terrific explanation of what's been wrong with this country for 20, 30 years…I couldn't get the immigration services to deport the criminals that were coming out of jail…It's totally absurd. What Donald Trump wants to do…focus on criminal illegal aliens and get them out of the United States. Who *possibly* could object to that?"

Pirro emphatically agrees, adding that in "the executive action that Trump just signed, he talked about limiting visas from those countries that refused to accept criminals back to these countries. These countries that say, 'Oh no. He's too dangerous for us to take back.' Well here's the deal now we're gonna pull you by the short-hairs. You can't come here."

Below is my transcription of another part of the exchange where Giuliani explicitly admits the intent of and motivation for the ban:

"Pirro: I want to ask you about this ban. I want to ask you about this ban and the protest. Does the ban have anything to do with religion? How did the president decide the seven countries? […]

Giuliani: I'll tell you the whole history of it. When he first announced it, he said 'Muslim Ban'. He called me up and said, 'Put a commission together. Show me the right way to do it legally.' I put a commission together […] a whole

group of very expert lawyers on this, and what we did, what we focused on, instead of religion, was danger. Areas of the world that create danger for us, which is a factual basis, not a religious basis. Perfectly legal, perfectly sensible, and that's what the ban is based on."

Pirro easily links those affected by the EO to criminality without explicitly stating how and why she makes such a connection, as if the link is self-evident. At best the link is tenuous, save for how EO reaffirms the conditions by which these groups can be scapegoated, removing the rhetorical work for Pirro and Giuliani. From the start, the relationship that the "Muslim Ban" recognizes most explicitly is immigrants' link to lawlessness and danger, and so it's no accident that Giuliani, Pirro, Trump, and their ilk, evoke criminality. Criminality is behavior that is *not* lawful within a society, defined by the negative, which helps to "radically define the elements to be victimized" (*LaSA* 18). In the case of the EO, the negative (terrorists, danger, immigrants, lawlessness, unAmerican), serves as justification for its existence. Without these negatives, it wouldn't have anything to oppose, and wouldn't be able to exist. The positive vision of America (freedom, justice, safety, lawfulness, whiteness, Christian majority, security) exists only in contrast to what America is not (terrorism, danger, harm, criminals, lawlessness, non-Christian, non-white). Danger becomes immediate, urgent, and powerful when it's attached to an aggressor, a source, making it an effective substitution. Since scapegoating is a form of substitution, and substitution "sets the condition for 'transcendence,'" (*LaSA* 8), the EO is able to substitute Muslim (Trump's initial "Muslim Ban") for danger. Danger is substituted for terrorist, which is substituted, again, for Muslim (albeit in a concealed, insidious, indirect, and silent way; Muslim is coded). The terms, such as

danger, terrorist, criminal, etc., used to channel iniquity on the scapegoat transcend any of the diverse groups it victimizes. Muslims, refugees, legal and illegal immigrants, and etc. all *appear* as one. The scapegoat covers them in the image of the "perfect villain" that is justified, and necessary, to sacrifice.

The revised version of the EO, released March 06 2017 in response to SCOTUS allowing for parts of it to remain intact, makes exceptions for certain "bona fide" ties and relationships to the US, such as close family members (but not extended family), education, employment offers, and etc.. The revision makes explicit relationships and ties to the US that always existed, of which the initial EO did not, by accident or design, recognize. However, even though the revised EO recognizes these relationships, still gains its power by the fabricated narrative that crystalizes the relationship between the scapegoat, criminality, danger, harm, and terrorism.

To paraphrase Giuliani, a terrorist ban is, or at least *appears*, perfectly legal, perfectly sensible. For example, the initial draft of EO evokes "common sense" Muslim stereotypes that are explicitly characterized at odds with what is American (the constitution, America's founding principles, etc.), although it still performs the trick of not explicitly naming Muslims because its language is coded as Muslim. Though the explicit name is absent, this absence is still clearly understood as symbolic:

> "In order to protect Americans, the United States must ensure that those
> admitted to this country do not bear hostile attitudes toward it and its founding
> principles. The United States cannot, and should not, admit those who do not
> support the Constitution, or those who would place violent ideologies over
> American law. In addition, the United States should not admit those *who engage*

in acts of bigotry or hatred (including "honor" killings, other forms of violence

against women, or the persecution of those who practice religions different from

their own) or those who would oppress Americans of any race, gender, or sexual

orientation."

[…]

Sec. 10. Transparency and Data Collection. (a) To be more transparent

with the American people, and to more effectively implement policies and

practices that serve the national interest, the Secretary of Homeland Security, in

consultation with the Attorney General, shall, consistent with applicable law and

national security, collect and make publicly available within 180 days, and every

180 days thereafter:

[…]

"(iii) information regarding *the number and types of acts of gender-based*

violence against women, including honor killings, in the United States by foreign

nationals, since the date of this order or the last reporting period, whichever is

later; […]" (Exec. Ord. 13769; emphasis added).

The revised version omits some (but not all) of the more overt mentions of

religion (a notable absence and silence), a move that buries, but does not negate, the

prejudice underlying the EO. It is worth noting that at each stage— from its alleged

conception as a "Muslim Ban", to the initial version of EO 13769, to the revised version

of EO 13780—the scapegoating is made less apparent, concealed and couched in

language that appears more acceptable and less overtly prejudiced while, in practice, still

retaining prejudice. This is most evident in some of the holdover language in the revision.

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EO 13780 still contains section 10, subsection iii requiring the reporting of "acts of gender-based violence against women, including honor killings, in the United States by foreign nationals". Are "honor killings" so common, so remarkable, so much of a pressing issue in the US that the government must categorically classify the offender based on religion in every way but name? Have marginalized groups not spoken out about hate crimes based on gender, race, and sexual orientation, discrimination, sexual assault, police brutality, and the socio-economic consequences of systemic inequity and prejudice? Yet, these are neatly ignored, silenced, and covered over. The charge of "honor killings" is "common sense" and "sensible" only in the sense that the conditions for scapegoating Muslims already been set in place by yoking them to danger, difference, and harm. It is "common sense" in the pool of conservative rhetoric that Trump generously draws from. As Cheryl Glenn says, "one party [the marginalized party] simply cannot voice his or her complaints or point because the other party insists on speaking within a different language game or genre of discourse" (*Unspoken* 6). Trump, and the US, has a traumatic history concerning racism, sexism, and bigotry. Mobilizing bigotry and negative sentiment worked to get Trump into office, but, as I stated before, Trump's rhetoric as a candidate had to superficially transform to be not outright contestable. Whenever overt bigotry won't due, bigotry coded in legal terms will. That this bigotry is projected onto the scapegoat is a consequence of the cleansing process.

Trump's voice seems the loudest of all, his power magnifying his speech and silence to the detriment of others. His face, his family, his words crowded traditional and social media and is the focus of public discourse to the point that everything not Trump appears silent, at least according to a media focused on the bombast and sensationalism

of presidential politics. Trump's rhetoric, his scapegoating of others, his very presence, silences marginalized groups. But, as it turns out, this silence conceals roaring dissent. Following Trump's election—and in light of his sexist sentiments, actions, and words—protestors gathered for the women's march on Washington, bringing dissent and noise into a political space that is too often silent or evasive on such issues. The march represented an intrusion into a space of power where the marginalized are too often silent. Part of "speaking out" often requires a reversal of power when the silenced speak in spaces where their voices are an intrusion. As I described in chapter 1, Eckford's silent walk contrasts with the raucous mob, revealing the dynamics of power, of silence and silencing, in the US. The voices of the women at the march reveal the nature of silencing: what once appears silent reveals itself as not being silent at all, forcing the media and public to notice the shift.

As outlined in the first chapter, the boundaries of the scapegoat are permeable. Hence, it's difficult to discuss Trump's scapegoating of Muslims without recognizing the ways other groups are scapegoated and silenced. Even when the distinction is made between "immigrants" and "illegal immigrants", the line is still blurry, especially since "illegal immigrant" or "alien immigrant" is a racialized category associated heavily with Hispanic and Mexican immigrants, and so all groups even loosely associated suffer because of conventions and conditions set up by conservative political rhetoric. Hispanic individuals—immigrant or not, legal or not—find themselves victimized by the specter of the scapegoat, their difference erased behind the scapegoat's image. The "Muslim Ban" blurs this further, as it even affects those going through the official, legal immigration

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process. The message is clear: even legal immigration is illegal. All immigration is dangerous to America.

On a separate occasion, when discussing the creation of a special office "to serve American victims" of the crimes of illegal immigrants, Trump says it will provide "a voice to those who have been ignored by our media, and silenced by special interests" (Kopan). The office is called Victims Of Immigration Crime Engagement, or VOICE, created as a consequence of the executive order released January 25th, 2017 (EO 13768). On July 28th, 2017, Trump hosted the families of victims of crimes perpetuated by illegal immigrants. Directly addressing the families, he states, "You lost the people that you love because our government refused to enforce our nation's immigration laws and that's including the existing immigration laws. For years the pundits, journalists, politicians in Washington refused to hear your voices, but on Election Day 2016 your voices were heard all across the entire world. No one died in vain, I can tell you that" (Kopan).

If the scapegoat is, indeed, a "blood brother", then Trump's emphasis on silence, silencing, voice, and speaking out aligns Trump's voter base (native-born Americans, white Americans, &etc.) with marginalized "blood brothers" (immigrants, etc.). This is a form of silencing, co-opting these groups' experiences of inhabiting silence and being silenced, rendering them to silence once again. The possibility of crimes perpetuated *against* immigrants (illegal or otherwise) isn't even brought up and, if it is, would be explained away as another example of how the media silences white Americans, protecting the status quo from the disruptive voices of the marginalized. At least symbolically, this positions dominant groups in the place of the oppressed, the antithetical relationship reversed. Of course, this isn't to say that the power dynamic

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between the dominant and marginalized groups truly changes. The marginalized are still marginalized; the dominant still dominate. As stated earlier, the reversal ultimately serves a different purpose. Rather than disrupting the status quo, it maintains the power of dominant groups. Here, other antithetical relationships become clear: disruption/maintenance and marginalization/dominance.

Relevant to these questions is a quote taken from a CNN news report regarding Trump's focus on criminal illegal aliens, demonstrating the power of the scapegoat as a fabrication:

"Advocates of Trump's approach say that the actual rate of crime among immigrants is irrelevant.

'The point is that every crime that is committed by someone who is here illegally is a crime that would not occur if they weren't in the country,' said Hans von Spakovsky, a legal expert at the conservative Heritage Foundation, which has been influential in advising the Trump administration.

Von Spakovsky said the provisions are merited for the sake of data.

'I think that's a very important piece of transparency,' von Spakovsky said. 'That is something that those in favor of illegal immigration have long tried to ignore and cover up. They don't want the public to know about the Kate Steinles of the world who have been killed by illegal aliens, who were released by sanctuary cities instead of being given to the feds to deport'" (Kopan).

By now, the reversal is obvious. The maintenance of existing power dynamics is concealed as an act of "speaking out" from silence when truly it allows the same individuals to keep speaking in a register only they have access to. The language reflects

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the scapegoating process that now should be familiar. The charge that "they don't want the public to know about the Kate Steinles of the world" establishes an out-group as "they". Although the exact shape that "they" assumes is unclear, it serves as a symbolic (albeit, perhaps, constructed) oppressor to make the dominant appear oppressed, and the oppressed appear as "perfect villains", or alternatively, "perfect victims", deserving of hatred, justified by the capitalization of tragedy ("this murder, *any* murder at all like it, *justifies* and *validates any* and *all* policy *against any* immigrants").

CHAPTER 3: The Eerie Mirror

According to Burke, the scapegoat is culmination, a song that builds up over time until it reaches its final note in the form of cleansing (*LaSA* 54-55). As the "Muslim Ban" suggests, scapegoating conceals the victimage of those it victimizes, but the process is not always overt or explicit. Often, scapegoating is coded in indirection and silence, relying on preconditions that ultimately define the form the scapegoat will take. Burke calls the scapegoat "the concentration of power, hence [it] may possess the ambiguities of power, which may be for either good or evil" (*aGoM* 407). Discussion of the scapegoat must always consider the power differentials involved. Scapegoating serves a purpose. In the case of Trump's administration, scapegoating conceals the victimage of marginalized groups while affirming, and normalizing, the systems and institutions that contribute to their victimhood. The scapegoat silences by removing the means through which the marginalized "speak out" and are heard. Instead, it substitutes their experience with a reversed narrative of victimization that displaces marginalized groups by positioning dominant groups in their place, preventing the status quo of power from being disrupted, changed, or altered. The scapegoat channels the guilt and complicity dominant groups play in the US's history of systemic injustice and iniquity into something that can be ostracized or sacrificed.

Scapegoating inflicts suffering on its victims and alters the course of America's future to be one that is hostile to difference, in which the marginalized must continue to inhabit silence, and of which the dominant still, and will continue to, benefit.

Scapegoating is a form of symbol-making imbued with power, and it makes the lives of its victims appreciably worse. Here is an excerpt pulled from an article describing how while pursuing his PHD in economics at Harvard, Stephens-Davidowitz:

"became obsessed with Google Trends, a tool that tracks how frequently searches are made in a given area over a given time period.

He spent five years combing through this data. The idea was that you could get far better real-time information about what people are thinking by looking at Google Trends data than you could through polls or some other survey device.

[…]

As a barometer of our national consciousness, Google is as accurate (and predictive) as it gets. In 2016, when the Republican primaries were just beginning, most pundits and pollsters did not believe Trump could win. After all, he had insulted veterans, women, minorities, and countless other constituencies.

But Stephens-Davidowitz saw clues in his Google research that suggested Trump was far more serious than many supposed. Searches containing racist epithets and jokes were spiking across the country during Trump's primary run, and not merely in the South but in upstate New York, Western Pennsylvania, Eastern Ohio, rural Illinois, West Virginia, and industrial Michigan.

Stephens-Davidowitz saw in the Google Trends data a racially polarized electorate, and one primed to respond to the ethno-nationalist rhetoric of Trump.

There were earlier signs, too. On Obama's 2008 election night, Stephens-Davidowitz found that "one in every hundred Google searches that included the

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word 'Obama' also included 'KKK'" or the n-word. Searches for racist websites like Stormfront also spiked.

'There was a darkness and hatred that was hidden from traditional sources,' Stephens-Davidowitz says. 'Those searches are hard to reconcile with a society in which racism is a small factor.' (Illing)

What Stephens-Davidowitz's data suggests is that the conditions for scapegoating were already in place, and that Trump only capitalized on already existent negative sentiment, mobilizing it to ascend to power on the backs of the powerless. Rhetorically, the scapegoat serves to justify and legitimize the victimization of others.

To say the least, this trend is unsettling. Despite the scapegoat's concealment of the prejudiced nature of its mechanism, the impact of it and rhetoric like it is immediate, observable, and even obvious, if only one knows what to look for. A quote from Senator Marco Rubio made "before suspending his own presidential campaign" is "a final plea for the public to reject Trump. 'This is what happens when a leading presidential candidate goes around feeding into a narrative of anger and bitterness and frustration," he said. "If this continues, I think this country will continue to be ripped apart at the seams... you can't say whatever you want. It has real-life consequences for people in this country and for people all over the world'" (Beutler).

We must not allow for the marginalized, whether citizens of America or otherwise, to be made into scapegoat, nor for the conditions and precedents to ever culminate into the sad song that leads to excision, ostracization, and sacrifice. Rather, we should look to the dominate forces and ask what 'dirt' they must cleanse so urgently, and consider the twisted, eerie reflection of power the scapegoat reflects. If America is ever to

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match the constitutional ideal of equality and liberty, then the scapegoat can't be allowed to mask the barriers impeding, even damaging, the possibility of this ideal ever coming to fruition.

Scapegoating is an eerie mirror. Dissecting it reveals what scapegoating attempts to redirect or conceal. In conjunction with Glenn's work with the rhetoric of silence, Burke's notion of scapegoating may be used to methodically analyzed for the rhetorical strategies of both silence and the spoken that lend it influence and power. Considering its recent use by Trump is important, but we must go further, as the use of the scapegoat in modern US politics will only continue and intensify as time goes on. Thus, we should attend to scapegoating by developing a vocabulary capable of encompassing its varied usage and effects, a task I've only just begun in my analysis of the power dynamics of silence, silencing, and absence and how these figure into Burke's scapegoat.

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