THESIS

TRUMP'S "TRAVEL BAN": HOW THE DISCOURSE OF TWO EXECUTIVE ORDERS

CONCEALS ANIMUS AGAINST MUSLIMS

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ABSTRACT

TRUMP'S "TRAVEL BAN": HOW THE DISCOURSE OF TWO EXECUTIVE ORDERS

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The implementation, although temporary, of the Trump administration's "travel ban" executive orders sparked public criticism. Many criticized these orders for restricting travel based on religious profiling, an inimical sentiment seemingly contradicting the "core American values" of acceptance, tolerance, and equality. While many criticized these orders thus, few have closely analyzed the discourse of the source material itself, nor considered how these orders compliment and contradict previous presidential rhetoric on immigration. Consequently, this research positions the Trump administration's executive orders within the context of previous presidential administrations, considers why the Trump administration might attempt to conceal animus against Muslims within the context of a democratic, liberal system, and, by the method of critical discourse analysis, outlines three discursive features the administration used to obfuscate prejudice against Muslims. The research reaches the conclusion that the Trump administration did, in fact, discursively conceal animus against Muslims throughout its "travel ban" executive orders and their surrounding discourse, subsequently highlighting not only the Trump administration's concealed discrimination, but the manipulative and coercive ability of presidential rhetoric.

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INTRODUCTION

On a January morning, Donald Trump became the 45th president of the United States,

assuming office amidst a deeply divided country that both celebrated his election and strongly

opposed it, some circulating the hashtag "notmypresident" on social media. The speech Donald

Trump gave on that inauguration day mirrored much of his campaign rhetoric emphasizing that

Americans had been left behind by a government that promoted the needs of others first, an idea

demonstrated by the Trump campaign's popular slogans, "America First" and "Make America

Great Again." The following text from his inauguration speech repeats these sentiments:

> The oath of office I take today is an oath of allegiance to all Americans. For many
> decades, we've enriched foreign industry at the expense of American industry, subsidized
> the armies of other countries while allowing for the very sad depletion of our military;
> we've defended other nation's borders while refusing to defend our own . . . but that is
> the past. And now we look to the future . . . From this moment on, it's going to be
> America first . . .We will make America safe again. And, yes, together, we will make
> America great again.

Many reacting to the speech argued it evoked fear and resentment by emphasizing

undefended American borders and the threat of predominately Islamic terrorism. For instance,

Sardoc, in his post-election article focusing on the ever-changing nature of the "American

Dream," claims, "[In Trump's inaugural address,] the narrative of the American Dream is

directed against all outsiders—Mexicans, undocumented folks, Blacks, women, Muslims—and

functions by casting aspersions and tapping into existing prejudice and disaffection" (38). The

success of this appeal to fear and disaffection of the "outsider" is contextualized earlier in the

anthology: Hauhart asserts that "white working-class resentment" catapulted Donald Trump to

the presidency (16). Writing in the same anthology, Isenberg seconds this analysis of not only

Donald Trump's inaugural address, but his body of campaign rhetoric, as appealing to the fear of

the "outsider" and the neglect some Americans felt. He notes that the "inclusionary" rhetoric of the Obama administration and other democrats caused a segment of the American population, specifically "white, rural, religious Americans, to see themselves as ignored, even threatened" (xiv). Sardoc, Hauhort, and Isenberg's assessment of how Trump's inaugural address built upon the fear and resentment of the "outsider" contextualizes his administration's controversial executive orders restricting travel from several Muslim-majority countries; this list of countries includes Iran, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Somalia, and Sudan.

The National Reaction to the "Travel Ban" Executive Orders

Following the publication of the Trump administration's first executive order in January 2017, both national and international protests indicate the audience's realization that *something* was amiss—many protestors criticized the order's "anti-American" quality, arguing that America was a country built by immigrants, for immigrants. To demonstrate this critique of the executive orders, protestors gathered nation-wide, some holding up signs reading "refugees are not terrorists," "proud to be an immigrant," "freedom of religion," "no bans on people," and, reiterating the popular hashtag, "not my president." In addition to protests, news outlets, including *NPR*, *The New York Times*, and *The Washington Post*, published articles criticizing the order and questioning its legality. For instance, *The New York Times* published an article following the release of the second executive order in March 2017, reading "Donald Trump's angry, often xenophobic rallying cries during the campaign—which were so effective in helping to get him elected—have become legal and political liabilities now that he is in the Oval Office" (Shear).

Additionally, *The Washington Post* published a colorful article regarding the first executive order, describing a "Pinocchio rating" to indicate how "untrue" the justifications the

administration provided for this executive order were—the article gave the executive legislation "three-out-of-three Pinocchio's" (Kessler). In contrast to these negative appraisals of the orders, some praised the administration's actions ensuring the safety of the country. *McClatchy* printed an article arguing that the Trump administration's executive orders followed the same legal path that other presidents had successfully followed, writing "Trump cited the law when issuing his executive order last month that froze refugee admission and temporarily blocked people from seven Muslim-majority countries" (Kumar).

  This acutely conflicted national reaction—the administration's order violated the law and spirit of Americanism *or* the administration's order established necessary protection against terrorism—represents the deep divisions splitting public opinion during the first year of the Trump presidency. Notably, very little of the criticism or support of the executive orders turned to closely examining both texts and their surrounding discourse; criticism and support has also neglected to consider how this discourse fits within the wide body of presidential rhetoric on immigration policy, but this research endeavors to do just that.

Overview of Organization

  This research traces the following path: first, an overview of the importance of presidential discourse, how presidents have addressed immigration, and how immigration is connected to right-wing rhetorics illuminate how the Trump administration's executive orders historically correspond and contradict presidential rhetoric on immigration. Second, a discussion of theoretical grounding provides a framework by which to understand the larger rhetorical conversation that both executive orders fit into. Third, the methodology by which the data set will be analyzed is explained. Fourth, critical discourse analysis is used to detail how several discursive features function to conceal animus against Muslims.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section introduces the power of presidential rhetoric followed by an overview of how presidents have historically constituted immigration. This section concludes by considering how immigration is discussed in right-wing rhetoric.

The President's Ability to Shape Public Opinion

Presidential rhetoric has been the topic of a great body of scholarship, from texts outlining its history to those adopting a more critical lens to examine how presidential discourse functions and why it can be so powerful. Campbell and Jamieson assert that when the president speaks, however informally, that discourse assumes a power by the very institutional role conferred to the "president" (4). Cohen agrees, stating that the president "stands above all others in the public arena . . . monopolizing the public space" (96). And, as platforms for public presidential discourse grow with technology, Campbell and Jamieson argue, the power of presidential discourse is amplified (3).[1] Subsequently, if technology is directly correlated with amplifying presidential discourse, then presidents of the digital age have *even* greater power than those preceding them in office.

This power, as Beasley notes, can manifest in multiple ways—one such way, which Beasley argues is perhaps most powerful, is the president's ability to define and shape national identity (47). Beasley writes, "presidents have the opportunity to persuade us to conceive of ourselves in ways compatible with their view of government and the world . . . chief executives [use] rhetoric to instruct the American people about collective wishes" (10; 21). Campbell and Jamieson explain that "[presidents] engage in a process of transforming those who hear them into

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[1] Public presidential discourse includes speeches, tweets, executive orders, press releases, interviews, etc.

the audience they desire" (4). From these definitions, presidential rhetoric positions the chief

executive's discourse, and by extension discourse composed by his administration stamped with

his name, as a highly persuasive, ideational discourse that can greatly inform how Americans

understand what it means "to be American." Taking the conference of power to the president a

step further, Novak jokingly calls the presidency the "elected kingship," reiterating Woodrow

Wilson's observation that by "electing a president, we elect the chief symbol maker of the land

and empower him in the kingdom of our imaginations" (24).

Some may argue, however, that the role of president as "chief symbol maker" depends on

his popularity, potentially noting that American history is full of presidents lacking popularity

and thereby seemingly unsuccessful in shaping public opinion and controlling the national

agenda. However, Cohen challenges the notion that only popular presidents can successfully

shape public opinion, contending that, "[it has been argued] only popular presidents can get the

public to support a policy direction . . . [but] the public may respond less discriminatingly when

presidents, [no matter their popularity], identify a problem as something that the government

should take action on" (88). Cohen outlines two ways, then, that presidents can shape public

opinion: by attaining a high-level of popularity that encourages the public's agreement on policy,

or by sufficiently arguing that the government ought to act. And, as democratic systems of

government ideally confer power to elected officials from the people, presidents must

consistently negotiate how to shape discourse that effectively influences the public—either by

relying on their popularity or by shaping a persuasive text that emphasizes the exigency of

government action. In fact, Cohen argues that in spite of an individual president's popularity,

"any presidential mention of a policy [or problem] will increase the public concern and

awareness of it" (102).

This argument connects back to a president's overarching power. By merely mentioning a problem, like a threat to national security, a president can increase public concern and awareness, thereby shaping the public's opinions and understanding of the state of the nation. Relating this power of the presidency to both of the Trump administration's executive orders, when Donald Trump and his administration focus policy on immigration and therefore direct the public's attention to the threat of the immigrant, this discourse effectively sets the national conversation; this setting of the national conversation is evident from the sheer amount of public attention the orders received, especially on national news outlets that centered entire programs on debating radical Islamic terrorism and the national threat posed by Muslim immigrants.

Presidential Actions: The Executive Order

As Cohen argues, presidential power partially derives from the president's ability to stress the exigency of an issue and to therefore argue that the government must act immediately. One way that the executive branch can implement immediate legislative action is by issuing an executive order. Notably, the power to implement an executive order is not explicitly outlined in the constitution—however, the statement, "take care that the laws be faithfully executed" in Article II, Section I of the constitution has been interpreted to give this power to presidents (Newbold 76).

Despite this vague affordance of power, every president has issued a wide array of executive orders. [2] As *Insights on Law and Society* summarizes, executive orders are "one of the most common 'presidential' documents . . . every American president has issued at least one . . . [and executive orders] seem to be 'instant law,' and, at time, steeped in controversy." Due to the extensive implementation and vague constitutional affordance of executive orders, many

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[2] Franklin D. Roosevelt holds the record of most executive orders published with 3,721. Granted, he was in office for twelve years (*The American Presidency Project*).

have argued that they violate limitations of the executive branch's power. Theses critiques are summarized well through the lens of the "unitary executive theory," which came to prominence during the George W. Bush presidency and generally holds that presidents have the constitutional right to wide-reaching executive power, however vaguely conferred (Crouch et. al. 561). During the Bush administration, this theory framed the emergence of a strong executive branch seemingly empowered by the threat of radical Islamic terrorism post 9/11, an executive capable of implementing legislative change, in the form of an executive order, without the consent of Congress (Crouch et. al. 561 – 562).

So, the controversy surrounding the implementation of the executive order connects with basic civics: it challenges the "checks and balances" system essential to American government, thus leading to questions of executive power and what crosses the line. Critics of this theory argue that it endangers "governmental openness and transparency . . . . [which] can be harmful to the republic by keeping the public, and even Congress and the judiciary, in the dark" (Crouch et. al. 565 – 566). Crouch et. al continue, noting that "the mindset of a unitary executive include habits of secrecy and hoarding information; the jealous assertion of the exclusive right to decide; and the refusal to share or cooperate with other branches" (566). These critiques complicate the hallmarks of democratic American governance.

The controversy surrounding executive orders and the president's ability to legislate has affected many presidents, some of whom faced lawsuits challenging their executive orders' constitutionality. Donald Trump has similarly been panned for exemplifying the unitary executive theory and overstepping presidential authority with the publication of both "travel ban" executive orders. Crouch et. al. emphasize Donald Trump's potential abuse of executive power in these orders, claiming,

the travel ban executive order is a classic example of the unitary executive mindset. Not only did the Trump administration claim superiority in the realm of national security, but it also argued that the court did not have the ability to even review the constitutionality of the president's action. Such broad claims of executive powers are dangerous to the American system of checks and balances. (570)

Consequently, before even endeavoring to analyze how both "travel ban" executive orders conceal animus against Muslims, both orders are initially contextualized as problematic insofar as the genre itself is critiqued for extending executive power too far.

Presidential Discourse and Immigration

How presidents have historically shaped discourse on immigration presents an underlying tension: America characterizes itself as a "melting pot" of cultures while simultaneously speaking about immigrants as "dangerous" or "undesirable." Many presidents have in fact hinged entire speeches on the premise that the racial and religious differences among Americans contributes to national strength. Jimmy Carter, for example, delivered a speech in 1977, declaring, "I look on our country as a beautiful mosaic, with different kinds of people involved in freedom, individuality, pride, cooperation, understanding, searching for answers to difficult questions in their own way" (*The American Presidency Project*). This sentiment resonates with a speech given years earlier by John F. Kennedy, who emphasized that discrimination against immigrants must end, stating that "this nation was built by immigrants" (Beasley 85). In contrast, Bill Clinton's 1995 state of the union address, includes the following indictment of immigrants, "all Americans are rightly disturbed by the large numbers of illegal aliens entering our country . . . that's why our administration has moved aggressively to secure our borders" (*The American Presidency Project*).

Beasley comments on this historical tension between praise and disdain for the immigrant, observing, "in spite of its centrality to US history, immigrants have always

engendered prejudice among the American people" (90). Beasley explains this tension,

suggesting that the unhappiness of Americans can be redirected from the government's policies

and blamed on foreigners (77 – 78). So, while presidential rhetoric might highlight the value of

immigration and its foundational place in American history, it might also disparage immigrants

in order to provide an outlet for a frustrated citizenry.

This tension over immigration policy dates back to the founding fathers, who, in the late

18th century, bickered over immigration legislation limiting the acceptance of French citizens

(Smith 39). John Adams, who was president at the time, remarked in his 1797 inaugural address,

"the only means of preserving our Constitution from its natural enemies [is to protect it] from the

profligacy of corruption, and the pestilence of foreign influence, which is the angel of

destruction" (Smith 41). Adams, thus, delivered a speech evoking an anti-immigrant stance

familiar to contemporary American audiences. Following Adam's inaugural address, the

immigration policy toward France became more muddied, and the American public's fear was

inflamed by the confusion of what and where the "immigrant enemy" was (Smith 43).

Following this national apprehension instilled by political narratives foregrounding the threat of

the "outsider," congress passed what is considered the first immigration policy, The Alien and

Sedition Acts in 1798 (Smith 45). [3] The text of this legislation is summarized below:

> *Naturalization Act*: No alien shall be admitted to citizenship unless he has resided within
> the United States for at least fourteen years. No native, citizen, subject, or resident of a
> country with which the United States is at war shall be admitted to citizenship.
> *Alien Act*: The president may order all such aliens as he shall judge dangerous to the
> Peace and safety of the United States to depart. (Smith 45 – 46)

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[3] The Alien and Sedition Acts also included a heavy penalty for newspapers that published anything "conspiring
with the intent to oppose any measures of the government of the United States" (Smith 46).

The contradiction this legislation posed to a new country founded on an egalitarian value system was heavily debated in the 1800 election (Smith 46). Those opposing the legislation challenged its legality, citing its contradiction of the constitution (Smith 47). Therefore, some Americans, recognizing the ideological tensions embedded in the Alien and Sedition Acts, demanded their repeal. Once Jefferson was elected to the presidency in 1800, the acts were officially repealed (Smith 54). In his inaugural address, Jefferson emphasized that America was not a place of exclusion, warning, "let us reflect that, having banished from our land that religious intolerance under which mankind so long bled and suffered, we have yet gained little if we countenance a political intolerance as despotic, as wicked, and capable of a bitter and bloody persecution" (Smith 55). This immigration debate during the Adam's administration and election of 1800 set the tone for centuries of political discourse that villainized the "outsider." And, while the profile of that "outsider" has changed, the inherent messages and tensions have not.

As the Adam's administration introduced the Alien and Sedition Acts in response to deteriorating international relations with France, recently the international crisis of radical Islamic terrorism has led the presidential administrations of the 21st century to focus immigration law on those from the Middle East. Notably, while all immigration law seemingly includes some element of racial profiling, immigration policy following the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 increased the role of racial profiling (Ghoshray 348). As Goshray observes,

> The 9/11 attacks changed America in many ways. As the Government responded with a vengeance, hundreds of thousands of legal resident non-citizens became subject to the full fury of the U.S. Justice Department. By focusing suspicion on groups of individuals based on religion and national origin alone . . . [and] what most Americans do not recognize is that their way of life is endangered, and these new policies and practices strike at the heart of what democracy is all about. (349 – 350)

Despite this recent tendency to target all those appearing Middle Eastern as threats and the increased public fear of radical Islamic terrorists, Beasley contests that the American public has actually become increasingly intolerant of discourse expressing prejudice against an outgroup (84 - 85). As a result, Beasley argues that recent presidential discourse expressing disdain for immigrants has become less tolerable by the American public, who have seemingly become increasingly sensitive to the contradiction of exclusionary rhetoric and "American values" (85). Demonstrating this increased intolerance of exclusion, in 1965, during the Johnson presidency, Congress passed the Immigration and Nationality Act, which officially legislated that no person could be "discriminated against in the issuance of an immigrant visa because of the person's race, sex, nationality, place of birth or place of residence" ("Immigration and Nationality Act").

The difficulty of navigating this discrepancy, especially post-1965 after which discrimination against immigrants became not only ideologically discouraged, but also illegal, has seemingly led presidents to encode anti-immigrant sentiment in order to avoid directly expressing racially essentialist arguments (Beasley 85). Gastil seconds Beasley's argument, assigning this process of encoding statements generally deemed "unacceptable" by the public as implicature (480). Implicature is a common theory in communication studies and relies on Grice's theory of conversational cooperation (Johnstone 234). This theory describes several maxims forwarding the notion that individuals are implicitly expected to cooperate in conversation by, as one maxim outlines, voicing only true statements (Johnstone 234). Implicature, then, is how "the elements of an utterance's meaning are determined with reference to these [maxims]" (Johnston 235). So, for instance, if a rhetor violates Grice's truth maxim, the audience will seek to reconcile this transgression by deriving an implicature, or providing

reasons for the violating statement, not necessarily explicit in the discourse itself, to repair the communicative breach (Gastil 480).

Returning to implicature in the context of political discourse, Gastil explains why politicians might take advantage of implicature, writing, "why would political speakers choose to use implicature instead of speaking directly? Implicature is an invaluable tool for making relatively tenuous arguments and placing the world within a preferred ideological frame" (481). Connecting Gastil's argument to the "travel ban" executive orders, if its statements violate one of Grice's maxims, like the truth maxim, the audience may seek reasons such a statement might be true, possibly resulting in the audience placing the reality established by the orders within the administration's "preferred ideological frame": immigrants from Muslim-majority countries pose a terrorist threat to the United States. Encoding anti-immigrant sentiment through language and subsequently recasting a political message "within a preferred ideological frame" significantly challenges the transparency of communication between the public and their elected officials, challenges that will be addressed below.

Immigration and Right-Wing Ideology

Nationalism

Anti-immigration sentiment, although present in the rhetoric of most American presidents regardless of political party, strongly aligns with right-wing ideology. Peters highlights this alignment, explaining that right-wing nationalism is often associated with xenophobia, ethnocentrism, and an anti-immigration stance (38). More specifically, nationalist discourse often connects to racist discourse that destructively emphasizes the threat of the "other," highlighting one race as superior (Kellas 1). Kaplan further explicates this connotation of

nationalism, arguing that nationalist theories often bound individuals to a racial group in which those individuals therefore become trapped (18); he writes,

> the [concepts] of descent and ancestry takes us into the realm of racial nationalism . . . [which] destroys the idea that citizenship is voluntary . . . [this concept of nationalism] says that people are immutably bound to the group into which they are accidently born. (18)

The nationalism Kaplan describes contradicts American narratives of society as a "melting pot," and America as a place where, irrespective of your origins, individuals can create a better life—a ideal popularly known as the "American Dream." The problematic nationalism Kaplan describes, a nationalistic ideology that "fixes" an individual within the boundaries of their birthplace, is commonly classified as ethnic nationalism.

Kellas, for example, outlines two predominant types of nationalism, ethnic nationalism and official nationalism (51 – 52). Ethnic nationalism applies to those who "define their nation in exclusive terms" based on the happenstance of their birth (Kellas 51). Official nationalism, in contrast, includes, "those legally entitled to be citizens, irrespective of their ethnicity, national identity, and culture . . . most [of these] states are multiethnic and multinational" (Kellas 52).

As noted above, ethnic nationalism clearly contradicts liberalism, and therefore "American ideals" by proposing the exclusion of individuals based upon their nationality, ethnicity, or religion. This type of nationalism can often lead to race as the basis for "belonging"; Cole explains, "when a community is policed by race, members who share this criteria will be subjected to racism" (11). Cole further highlights the tension between ethnic nationalism and liberalism, explaining that liberal political theory hinges on the "commitment to the moral equality of persons. . . [and] practices of membership [cannot] contradict the principle of equality" (3-5). Additionally, ethnic nationalism has been explicitly connected to xenophobia. For instance, Sundstrom notes that, "[ethnic nationalism] is conceptually dependent on

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xenophobia and indicates a positive political project to actively exclude or expel those judged to be too foreign to belong, or to hoard the community's resources and keep them from being exploited by foreigners" (72). By explicitly connection ethnic nationalism with xenophobia, the potential for nationalism to support ideologies of exclusion based on fear or disdain of an outgroup is significant. However, as Beasley contests, prejudicial discourse is generally unaccepted by the American public, noting that "Americans throughout history have rhetorically been constituted as those that control petty urges of racism and nationalism to cultivate more noble ideas" (62). Consequently, politicians may obfuscate appeals to ethnic nationalism, an ideological "sleight of hand" that the Trump administration's "travel ban" executive orders seemingly practice.

The second type of nationalism presented by Kellas, official nationalism, is arguably more closely aligned with liberalism and by extension "American values." Foundational to official nationalism is the belief that entry into a country should not be racially based. Instead, membership ought to hinge on a legal process. Notably, the executive orders seemingly attempt to present the basis for exclusion as a legal question, arguing that immigrants from these Muslim-majority countries pose a significant safety risk. So, to texture this argument further, it seems the administration has presented an argument for official nationalism while concealing a practice of ethnic nationalism. The Trump administration's obfuscated appeal to ethnic nationalism further connects to conversations surrounding right-wing populism and fear mongering politics.

Populism

In keeping with the core ideologies of nationalism, populism idealizes a homogenous population and relies on the villainization of an outgroup to mobilize political efforts (Wodak

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10). Wodak explains, "right-wing populist parties successfully create fear and legitimize their policy proposal with an appeal to the necessities of security . . . a quasi-homogenous demos is regarded as salient for such movements" (5). Legitimizing policy with "an appeal to the necessities of security" echoes presidential rhetoric on immigration, including the Trump administration's "travel ban" executive orders. The populist appeal seemingly present in Donald Trump's immigration rhetoric suggests that both executive orders dwell within the framework of ethnic nationalism and fear-mongering, populist politics—politics seeking to legitimize state action by convincing the public that they are in imminent danger if action is not taken. Wodak notes, in tandem with the scholars presented above, that appeals to ethnic nationalism and populist fears of a "threatening outgroup" are frequently concealed in presidential discourse because such exclusionary sentiment contradicts liberalism. She writes,

> ideological values of tolerance are widespread in contemporary capitalist societies, so the explicit promulgation of exclusionary politics conflicts with the generally accepted values of liberalism. Hence, discriminatory utterances tend to be 'coded' in official rhetoric so as to avoid sanctions. (50)

To further emphasize this point, Rydgren argues that nationalist and populist argumentative frames often "strive to remain inside the semantic space of democracies by accepting procedural democracy . . . [however] they actually endorse ethnocracy as their ideal imaginary, which in many ways contradicts the pluralistic values of all liberal democracies" (qtd. in Wodak 26). As noted above, the essential problem of discriminatory discourse that presents itself as something else—prejudice obfuscated as security measures—seemingly manipulates audiences by denying its essence and encouraging the audience to do the same.

Attempts by the executive branch to obscure prejudice against an outgroup seemingly indicate an effort to make nativist ideologies superficially adhere to "American ideals." However, policy that promotes ethnic nationalism and an exclusionary agenda erodes liberal

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systems of thought, which are foundational to those "American ideals." As a result, presidential discourse on immigration—an especially pressing topic in this historical moment with the anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim tenor of the Trump administration's "travel ban" executive orders—challenges the American public to probe the following questions: how are narratives of American acceptance being undermined by the executive branch? How do presidents seek to legitimize their policy, and how can the public remain actively engaged when those legitimizing statements threaten the very foundation of "core American beliefs"?

THEORETICAL GROUNDING AND METHODOLOGY

This section details the main concepts foundational to this research. The concept map below (Figure 1) provides an overview of how each concept connects and "funnels into" one another: animus, for example, is the overarching concept into which the others are nested.

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│  If, in a liberal political context, a rhetor │
│  holds animus against a group of people  │
│  based on religion, nationality, or race │
└─────────────────────────────────────────┘
                 │
              ┌──────┐
              │ Then │
              └──────┘
                 │
┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│  Animus may be concealed linguistically  │
└─────────────────────────────────────────┘
                 │
        ┌────────────────────┐
        │ This can be done by │
        └────────────────────┘
                 │
┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Characterizing a text as extra-rhetorical and thereby appealing to │
│ objectivity, which positions a proposition as reporting reality as it is. │
└─────────────────────────────────────────┘
                 │
        ┌──────────────────────────┐
        │ This is problematic because │
        └──────────────────────────┘
                 │
┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Concealing animus manipulates the audience and undermines liberalism, │
│ the foundational theory of "American values," including acceptance, │
│ tolerance, and equality. │
└─────────────────────────────────────────┘
```
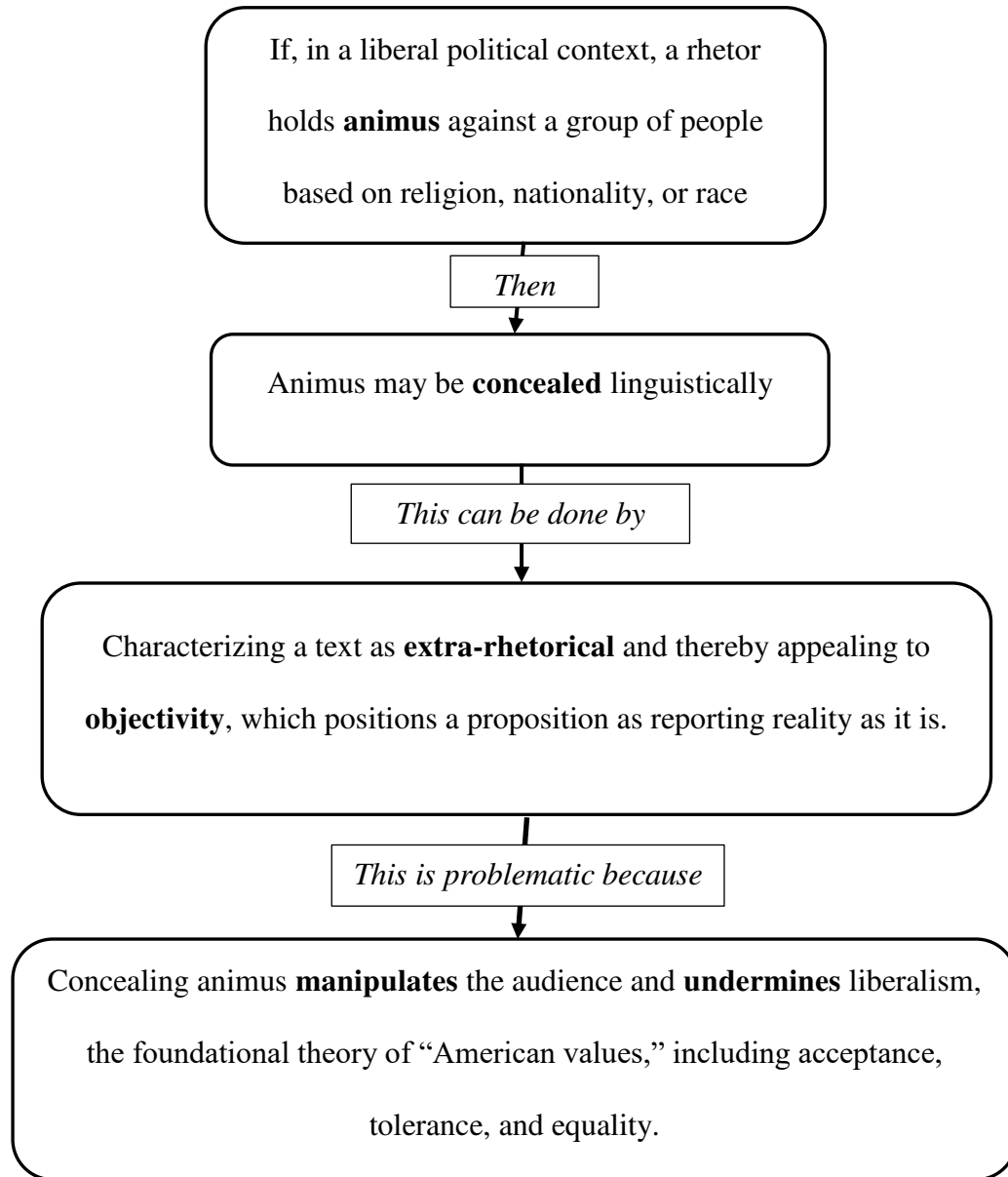
Figure 1 - Theoretical Grounding Concept Map

Accordingly, this section explains each of the bolded concepts, "un-nesting" each concept embedded in the previous one. Specifically, this section introduces the overarching concept of animus or prejudice, explaining why rhetors might obfuscate animus when writing or speaking in a liberal political context. Next, this section outlines why concealing animus discursively is problematic. Finally, this section describes how animus might be concealed linguistically by characterizing discourse as extra-rhetorical, a characterization that implies a discourse is objectively representing reality.

Animus: Prejudice against an Outgroup

Ideology that others a group of people and subsequently seeks to exclude them is commonly referred to as prejudice. Prejudice is a complex term defined variously and can refer to a large group of discriminatory behaviors, like sexism, racism, nationalism, and classism. Gardner defines this broad, overarching term in *The Psychology of Prejudice*. He writes, "prejudice [can be understood] as an attitude toward members of some outgroup. . . in which the evaluative tendencies are predominately negative" (2). Gardner further explains that prejudicial views can be inversely described as "ingroup favoritism" that "unfairly" and hastily prejudges an outgroup, forwarding bias based on insubstantial grounds such as physical appearance (2 – 3).

Expanding Gardner's description of prejudice, which mostly attends to prejudice as an internally-focused belief, Jowett encourages a broader understanding of prejudice, highlighting how such an internally-originating belief may manifest itself externally and have "real world" impacts. Specifically, in his article considering how homophobic discourse is concealed, Jowett writes, "discursive psychologists have sought to move away from viewing prejudice as the underlying attitudes of individuals. . . [these attitudes instead] can be seen as stances taken within matters of controversy. When people offer an opinion, they are positioning themselves on some

issue of debate" (283). Understanding prejudice as a subject's conscious positioning in a social conversation suggests that those taking a prejudicial stance are aware that they are forwarding a biased-worldview, even if they believe this position to be ethically acceptable. This conscious positioning further suggests that prejudicial texts are not always the product of individuals blindly reproducing naturalized societal norms and thereby unconsciously repeating prejudicial viewpoints.

If such a statement is true, then those producing prejudicial texts can be implicated more fully as social agents consciously circulating a coercive worldview that excludes an outgroup based on gender, race, or nationality. Connecting back to the overview of presidential rhetoric on immigration above, concealing prejudice or animus against an outgroup seemingly indicates an awareness by the president and his administration that they are assuming a prejudicial stance. And, as Jowett argues, if this stance is consciously taken, then the rhetor is, or should be, answerable to critiques questioning his or her circulation of an exclusionary and antipathic worldview.

Despite the more common use of prejudice in everyday conversations about bias, this research uses animus to define discriminatory and exclusionary rhetoric. While these terms are essentially synonymous, this research uses animus because, originating in legal discourse, it points to prejudicial sentiment expressed in "official" capacities, like legal or political discourse. And, because this research focuses on political discourse, animus is subsequently a more apt fit.

Martha Chamallas explores the use of animus in legal discourse throughout her article establishing a legal basis for understanding bias. In the context of legal discourse, Chamallas connects animus to hostility and intent, writing, "the practice of law enforcement to consider as bias crimes only those acts motivated exclusively by personal animus or hate [is common]"

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(800). Notably, Chamallas's observation of animus as motivated intent further forwards, as

Gardner does, that animus toward an outgroup is not only conscious, but also premeditated:

animus is not always the product of unknowing cultural inculcation and can rather be a

worldview knowingly formed and acted upon by the subject. [4] Again, understanding the subject

as agentive in circulating inimical ideologies suggests culpability.

Other scholarship incorporating the term animus similarly uses it to define an

antagonistic relationship between social actors, often racial antagonism. For example, a recent

article discussing the racism demonstrated during the August 2017 marches in Charlottesville,

describes this event as "a continuation of racial animus and violence that America has never

confronted" (Alexander 2). This research associates animus similarly with antipathy and

exclusion of a specific group of people, often prompted by enmity for that people's race,

religion, or nationality. Also, by using this term, this research grounds prejudicial sentiment in a

political context—the President and his administration seemingly embed anti-Islamic ideology in

the text of its "travel ban" executive orders.

Why Rhetors Perform a "Linguistic Sleight of Hand"

Directly expressing animus against an outgroup, like Muslims, is discouraged in a liberal

model of politics, and by extension democratic nations such as the United States. So, those

producing discourse in liberal contexts, who are aware of this contextual constraint and want to

appeal to the widest range of American citizens, may attempt to conceal animus, and this

research hinges on the proposition that language is a prime tool for rendering animus invisible.

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[4] In *The Caldron of Consciousness*, Ellis and Newton argue that motivation is a predominately "conscious" activity
or emotion (xv). If motivation is conscious, it follows that to be motivated is to have a degree of self-awareness and
therefore intent.

This subsection delves into the question of why rhetors might seek to conceal animus and the problems arising from this obfuscation.

Cole, in his text *Philosophies of Exclusion: Liberal Political Theory and Immigration*, proposes that exclusionary ideology circulated in nations founded on liberal political theory, or liberalism, challenges the core tenets of this philosophy. This tension establishes why animus against an outgroup might be concealed in a liberal society: directly expressing animus against a group of people based on their religion, nationality, and gender, to name a few, contradicts the very ideological underpinnings of a liberal system of thought—a system of thought foundational to the "American values" of equality and acceptance; Cole accentuates, "our [American] political community holds a philosophy which is itself liberal and democratic, and therefore holds the principle of equality at its core" (81). Consequently, a rhetor communicating in such a context may likely attempt to conceal animus, against an outgroup in order to present a more widely persuasive text that maintains an egalitarian appeal.

Van der Bom, in her article describing how certain argumentative structures can make homophobia implicit, seconds the likeliness of rhetors to conceal animus in a Western nation that emphasizes liberal political theory. She states that, "overtly [prejudice] language which directly positions [an outgroup] as inferior is now largely 'frowned upon' in Western Culture" (111). Both Van der Bom and Cole, then, position political rhetors within a Western, and, more specifically, an American, context would likely attempt to obfuscate prejudice

Maintaining an egalitarian appeal would logically be a primary effort of American presidents, who are charged with adhering to and preserving "core American beliefs." However, as noted in the previous chapter, presidents and their administrations are not always keen on opening up borders and opportunities for "outsiders." Despite these exclusionary tendencies

tracing back through presidential history, presidential rhetoric that directly positions an outgroup as inferior and undesirable has increasingly met with public opposition (Beasley 89). As Beasley explains,

> no longer can presidents publicly disparage immigrants' characters . . . In the absence of the ability to openly label the 'other' as inferior, nativist rhetoric must work harder at the opposite end of the spectrum: labeling the collectivity and its beliefs as increasingly superior *and* somehow unattainable to all but a noteworthy few . . . such talk can incorporate now unspoken but still salient prejudice of the past into more subtle recognitions of the rhetorical boundaries remaining between 'us' and 'them.' (89)

While Beasley doesn't provide an explanation for the increasing obfuscation of prejudice and animus in presidential discourse, she does establish a key feature of this discourse—its ever-growing attempt to hide animus against an outgroup likely indicates the rhetor's awareness that liberalism discourages exclusion based on nationality or religion, among other group characteristics. So, as both Cole and Beasley argue, animus directly expressed belies "the nation's official philosophy of egalitarianism and tolerance" (Beasley 72).

Specific argumentative moves have been tied to the act of concealing animus. For example, Cloud argues that the dissociation of concepts, a theory explored in *The New Rhetoric*, "has the ability to remove incompatibilities" in communication, thereby functioning to hide discrimination (158). In *The New Rhetoric*, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca define dissociation as a discursive method of reconciling ideological discordance (166). For instance, if the prospect of climate change and a conservative political ideology are in tension with one another, a rhetor seeking to convince a conservative audience that climate change is reality might dissociate the two concepts to avoid incompatibilities.

Cloud specifically demonstrates how arguments against same-sex marriage use dissociation to maintain an appeal to equality and tolerance, while in reality forwarding arguments that contradict these values. Further, Cloud connects the function of dissociation to

"concealing social animus" (158), noting how discourse that conceals social animus has the ability to disguise the tension between a rhetor's values and actions (166). For example, in his case study, those arguing anti-gay platforms were able to sidestep this argument's tension with certain values and ethics by "concealing social animus" through dissociation (166 – 168). Cloud's discussion of obfuscating discrimination through dissociation as relieving ideological tensions informs presidential rhetoric considerably: in order to maintain an egalitarian appeal, presidents speaking about exclusionary measures against an outgroup may conceal animus in an attempt to disguise the ideological tensions embedded in these measures.

Implications of Concealing Animus: Audience Manipulation

The impetus to conceal animus in a liberal and democratic context connects to a rhetor's attempt to "save face" and to produce a more persuasive argument that appears to maintain "core American beliefs" of equality and acceptance. In addition to contradicting liberalism, concealing animus complicates the rhetor-audience relationship: by masking discrimination, the rhetor can manipulate the audience.

Van Dijk, who researches manipulative relationships between rhetors and their audience, explains the application of this term in linguistic studies. He argues that discursive manipulation often involves an "abuse of power" through "communicative or symbolic forms of interaction, such as politicians or the media manipulating voters or readers, that is, through some kind of discursive influence" (360); he continues, narrowing down the notion of manipulation, writing, "manipulation [is essentially] a communicative and interactional practice, in which a manipulator exercises control over other people, usually against their will or against their best interests" (360). Of course, "will" and "best interests" are contextually dependent and may vary in definition. However, Van Dijk's essential argument that discursive manipulation involves

misleading an audience and eroding their ability to knowledgeably engage suggests that an

audience's will or agency has been stripped away, a problematic coercion in any context, that is

even more so in the democratic context of presidential rhetoric.

Oddo specifically applies Van Dijk's criteria for manipulation to presidential discourse,

arguing that presidents have historically used manipulative discourse to persuade the American

public of a necessary action. In his case study, Oddo applies Van Dijk's criteria to the speeches

of Franklin D. Roosevelt and George W. Bush, both of whom spoke on the necessity that United

States enter into war. Oddo summarizes the manipulative capacity of both presidents' rhetorics,

writing,

> both speakers deployed resources to develop semantic categories of Us and Them and
> contributed to the kind of ideological polarization that makes the unpleasant realities of
> war seem necessary. In addition, both speakers mischaracterized disputed assertions as
> categorically true, and presented fabricated intelligence as maximally warrantable. In
> doing so, they (mis)represented both past and future events to legitimate immediate
> violence in the here and now. (308)

Oddo's description of manipulative discourse as that which misrepresents the possibility of

future events and mischaracterizes assertions as uncontested fact seems a common legitimation

strategy in presidential discourse. Both Van Dijk and Oddo argue that manipulative discourse

poses significant danger to the deliberative practices valued in liberal, democratic systems. Cole

highlights this challenge, explaining that any liberal nation that practices "veil-drawing" cannot

count itself as a free and democratic system, emphasizing the "free exchange" of ideas (116).

The necessity of the free-exchange of ideas in democratic deliberation is advanced by

Habermas's work on what constitutes a democratic public sphere. The democratic public sphere,

Habermas argues, connects the public with political concerns, ensuring that through conversation

the public can influence policy decisions (Fairclough, *Analysing Discourse* 44-45*).* So,

Habermas hinges a democracy's effective function on the public's ability to exchange ideas,

calling this exchange "rational-critical debate" (Calhoun 3). Habermas explains that "rational-critical debate" defines a "procedural rationality" from which judgements are based on reasons (Calhoun 2). Subsequently, "rational-critical debate" relies on access and transparency: the public needs not only access to, but a clear understanding of government policy in order to effectively participate in the national dialogue (Fairclough *Analysing Discourse* 44-45). This access and transparency is problematized by discourse that conceals animus—the manipulative capacity of language to obscure discrimination renders quality discourse unlikely, which in turn challenges the democratic and liberal ideals that a government's policies enact the people's will. Consequently, the practice of discursively obscuring animus corrodes democratic values, and therefore poses significant questions of "anti-liberal," "anti-democratic," and by extension "anti-American" activity, questions sharpened by the prospect that such coercion stems from the presidency itself.

Characterizing Discourse as Extra-Rhetorical

Animus can be concealed discursively in many ways; this research explores one such way: how characterizing discourse as extra-rhetorical conceals animus. Extra-rhetorical discourse, which is variously named, synonymous with terms like a-rhetorical discourse, occurs, although less frequently than other rhetorical concepts, throughout rhetorical and linguistic scholarship tracing back to the theories of Aristotle. Before detailing this history, it is necessary to acknowledge the contradiction of the term extra-rhetorical: most discourse is rhetorical in as much as rhetoric conveys a linguistic act that persuades or somehow affects the audience through compositional techniques. Aristotle, who was one of the first to define rhetoric, explains that the rhetorical process is a method of persuasion in which the rhetor utilizes the "available means of persuasion" ("Aristotle's Rhetoric"). Subsequently, Aristotle points to rhetoric as a deeply

human endeavor embedded with the rhetor's perception and understanding of the world. So, while most language is usually rhetorical, rhetors can attempt to characterize discourse as extra-rhetorical by endeavoring to produce discourse that appears to be a 1:1 representation of reality.

In a sense, Aristotle is one the first rhetoricians to explore extra-rhetorical discourse, specifically by delineating between artistic and inartistic proofs, placing artistic proofs within the rhetorical realm and inartistic proofs outside it. Artistic proofs, for Aristotle, necessitate a rhetor engage in the process of invention, which he considered to be a agent-centered, subjective process. In contrast, inartistic proofs have a more objective quality, referring to mathematical proofs, universally accepted facts, or statistics. Writing on Aristotle's distinction between inartistic and artistic proofs, Gunderson clarifies that, "this is the distinction between proofs which the orator himself devices and proofs which are already present as material" (81). So, the delineation between artistic and inartistic proofs draws the boundary between reporting descriptive, objective reality and creative, subjective reality.

In contemporary rhetorical theory, Charland uses the term extra-rhetorical in his article describing how protestive documents in Quebec sought to legitimize the freedom-from-Canada movement by positioning the threats and abuses of the Canadian government as extra-rhetorical. In this work, Charland defines the term as follows:

> the ideological 'trick' of [extra-rhetorical discourse] is that it presents that which is most rhetorical . . . as extra-rhetorical . . . Thus, this rhetorical paradoxically constitutes [reality] as it simultaneously presumes it to be pre-given and natural, existing outside the rhetoric and forming the basis for a rhetorical address. (137)

From this description, Charland provides a comprehensive definition of extra-rhetorical discourse—discourse that appears to objectively describe reality, while actually working to actively create it. In other words, by attempting to give discourse the appearance of being extra-

rhetorical, a rhetor seemingly seeks to obfuscate the process of perception and creation, replacing it with a sense of observation and reporting.

Fairclough also describes the function of extra-rhetorical discourse. Fairclough calls extra-rhetorical discourse a "hortatory report," which he defines as discourse that brings into being that which it merely purports to describe, writing, "hortatory reports are texts which are apparently oriented to a knowledge-exchange but are actually oriented to an activity-exchange" (*Analysing Discourse* 81). Fairclough defines knowledge and activity exchange in line with the descriptions above of objective and subjective discourse: knowledge-exchange focused discourse represents that which is universally knowable, while activity-exchange focused discourse is a persuasive text shaped by the rhetor's goals (*Analysing Discourse* 81). Fairclough demonstrates the function of a "hortatory report," focusing on a segment of text from a "consultative document" from the British Government—notably, Fairclough states that most "hortatory report" genres are political documents (*Analysing Discourse* 96); the examples reads, "We are in a new age—the age of information and global competition. Familiar certainties and old ways of doing things are disappearing" (*Analysing Discourse* 94). Analyzing this text, Fairclough argues it functions as a "hortatory report" because it appears to simply describe the coming "new age," while actually having a covert prescriptive intent: by naturalizing the inevitability of a technologically-centered "new age," the discourse backgrounds its construction of this future, ultimately arguing that British citizens have no choice but to accept technology and educate themselves accordingly (*Analysing Discourse* 94-95).

Similarly, Bourdieu engages with the concept of extra-rhetorical discourse as that which appears objective, when, in fact, it embeds subject-oriented observations and prescriptions about reality; he refers to such statements as "legal discourse" (42). (The term "legal discourse" differs

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from what is understood by this term today: writing in a legal context.) Bourdieu defines "legal discourse" as "covertly" creative speech, expounding that, "language, by virtue of its infinite generative capacity, which it derives from its power to produce existence by producing the collectively recognized and thus realized representation of existence, is no doubt the principal support of the dream of absolute power" (42). In this quote, Bourdieu connects the effective implementation of discursively masking animus to power: a rhetor's ability to obfuscate the act of textual creation—creating a view of reality while appearing to merely report it—signifies that rhetor's attainment of "absolute power." Subsequently, Bourdieu cautions audiences to carefully approach discourse in the political sphere in order to remain vigilant against destructive social powers that normalize coercive ideology. As applied to this research, Bourdieu suggests, in keeping with the popular phrase "absolute power corrupts absolutely," that the public must approach political texts with the understanding they may be a manipulative, objectively presenting that which is subjective in nature.

Bourdieu's caution to the public is further explored by Karon, who sharpens the concept of extra-rhetorical discourse by analyzing the relationship between the text and the audience. Karon argues that by establishing consensus among the audience, the rhetor can situate a text as objectively describing reality: if a discursive proposition is confirmed by a wide array of the audience, that proposition assumes objectivity. Karon specifically writes that once "[a statement] is confirmed strongly enough by the assent of others, it may pass as cognition of things as they actually are" (103). So, in keeping with Bourdieu's charge of public vigilance, Karon challenges readers to consider what propositions are conceded to by the masses to such an extent that they become objective.

The effort to characterize discourse as objective observation is even further substantiated by Bevilacqua, who writes in the *Modern Humanities Research Journal*, "extra-rhetorical operations [are considered] to be independent of the *art* of rhetoric, resulting primarily from the direct examination of the subject itself" (564). Bevilacqua connects the extra-rhetorical to a pursuit of logic, arguing that one who characterizes discourse as extra-rhetorical creates a text that appears to pursue logic, and by extension, presents his or her writing as accurately and objectively describing the world (565). While this research frequently refers to extra-rhetorical discourse, it is with the acknowledgement that this term describes an attempt by the rhetor to characterize his or her discourse as extra-rhetorical.

Appealing to Objectivity

Throughout this research, the function of extra-rhetorical discourse is frequently connected with objectivity. Notably, the simplified binary presented by the delineation between objective and subjective is challenged by postmodern arguments claiming that objectivity is impossible. While the debate sparked by the postmodern movement is beyond the scope of this research, generally speaking, postmodernists deny the position that objective, universal truths exist, contending that "far-reaching claims [about] truth and rationality are [in fact] always socially and discursively constructed and their validity and applicability are necessarily limited to their particular contexts or situations (Mohanty xi). While the postmodern critique of objectivity is valid, the definition of objectivity as representing a truth outside of perception establishes an essential understanding of how discourse can characterize propositions as having a high-truth value and can therefore conceal discriminatory sentiment (Mulder). So, as objectivity is represented in this research, it is always with the implicit addition of "an appeal to."

Objectivity as conferring a high-truth value is substantiated in the *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, which states, "objectivity is typically associated with ideas such as reality, truth and reliability. The perceiving subject can either perceive accurately or seem to perceive features of the object that are not in the object . . . Hence, the term 'subjective' typically indicates the possibility of error" (Mulder). An objective statement, therefore, is one which seemingly describes reality as it *is*, removing the possible fallibility of subjective statements. Notably, Karon situates the function of objective discourse within the realm of extra-rhetorical discourse, writing:

> Knowledge [is] a human phenomenon, from which error, imprecision, and unwarranted generalizations are never entirely absent. . . impressions are fallible. Appearances are deceptive. Opinions are sometimes false. Therefore, our perceptions and judgements can only yield uncertainty. (100)

Karon subsequently connects the desire a rhetor to avoid positioning his or her text as potentially fallible or imprecise to a rhetor's attempt to make his or her discourse appear objective or extra-rhetorical.

Further, because objective statements obfuscate fallibility, such statements often render the rhetor, or perceiver, invisible. If the rhetor's presence in a statement is concealed, then the fallibility of his or her perception is also concealed. That is, if subjective fallibility is removed, then the rhetor can present his or her statement as an objective description of the world. And, if the statement appears objective and thereby extra-rhetorical, questions animus—subjective positions—can be effectively circumvented. Vivian calls this function of extra-rhetorical discourse "an appeal to objectivity" often inherent in any description of an "extra-rhetorical reality" (53). Notably, the underlying reasoning present not only in this section, but this research as a whole relies on the notion that discrimination or animus derives from subjective assessment, or personal beliefs, rather than universal, seemingly objective observations of reality. Landy

reinforces the connection between subjectivity and discrimination, specifically writing in the context of law and politics. He argues that "race discrimination claims . . . often focus on subjectivity . . . [with] the implication that excessive subjectivity allows racism to influence [one's worldview]" (213). Consequently, if a rhetor can "appeal to objectivity," he or she may successfully obscure discrimination.

The following example from Wetherell and Porter further demonstrates the function of objective statements in positioning a statement extra-rhetorically and therefore concealing animus. In their work, Wetherell and Porter interview several native New Zealanders to analyze their discourse concerning the minority Maori population. One interviewee states, "the majority of rapes are committed by Islanders or Maoris" (96). Wetherell and Porter subsequently observe that the interviewee formulates a statement that seemingly attempts to avoid a racist position by characterizing the rape accusation as factual (97). In contrast, the interviewee could have stated, "I imagine that most rapes are committed by Islanders or Maoris." However, this statement presents a subjective observation culpable to questions of its fallibility and therefore revealing of the animus embedded in such a position. While the first statement may very well also create questions of animus, it still seemingly attempts to establish the Maoris' crimes as an objective, extra-rhetorical description of, not how the interviewee sees the world, but how the world *actually* is. Subsequently, the interviewee positions himself as detailing the actual state of the world in order to remove any implication animus against an outgroup.

Summarizing how extra-rhetorical discourse conceals animus

Extra-rhetorical discourse can conceal animus primarily based on its ability to position the rhetor as simply describing the state of the world: if a rhetor is merely reporting reality, he or she seemingly removes questions of subjectivity and therefore animus. Wetherell and Potter

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emphasize how extra-rhetorical discourse can effectively render animus invisible in their book *Mapping the Language of Racism*, which explores how racism becomes normalized through language. They explain that racist texts often "confuse the social with the natural," thereby seeking to position racist ideologies as descriptions of the "natural world," as opposed to subjective prescriptions an ingroup advances about an outgroup (32). Wetherell and Potter specifically describe how categorization, a common convention of racist language, can often be confused as descriptive, writing that, "[categorization can appear to] simply describe someone's essence instead of [acting] ontologically" (41). So, as Wetherell, Potter, and Charland argue, if a rhetor can position his or her text as objective and, by extension, as extra-rhetorical, he or she can conceal racist observations and thereby veil animus against an outgroup

Conclusion

Language is the primary social tool used by individuals to communicate—communication is a vastly complicated interaction in which speakers can produce and reproduce certain ideologies. Ideology can become destructive when its circulation normalizes problematic social relation—animus against an outgroup.

Because animus against an outgroup is frowned upon in Western societies, especially those societies, like the United States, which espouse liberal values, rhetors may seeks to obscure animus against an outgroup, thereby attempting to normalize a coercive ideology. Such obfuscation problematizes the rhetor-audience relationship, potentially implicating the rhetor for manipulating his or her audience as manipulation, especially in the context of democratic, liberal systems of governance, poses significant concerns about the ability of the public to clearly communicate with their elected officials.

To avoid these implications, rhetors might attempt to veil discrimination through extra-rhetorical discourse. This discourse can effectively position the rhetor as objectively describing the world, as opposed to subjectively creating it. By appealing to objectivity, extra-rhetorical discourse can conceal animus: if a rhetor appears to describe the reality of dangers posed by African Americans, for instance, that rhetor seemingly seeks to hide animus against this population.

While discursively concealing animus in a liberal context is problematic when undertaken by anyone, such an attempt becomes especially problematic when the President of the United States and his administration obfuscated discrimination against any outgroup. In response to this problematic discursive move, this research specifically focuses on the first few months of Donald Trump's presidency, arguing that both "travel ban" executive orders attempted to conceal animus against Muslims through discursive features that can be classified as extra-rhetorical.

Methodology: Critical Discourse Analysis

To consider how these concepts outlined above are instantiated in the language of the Trump administration—specifically Executive Order 13769, 13780, and their surrounding discourse—critical discourse analysis provides a prime heuristic. Critical discourse analysis was largely pioneered by Fairclough, a prominent voice in the field of sociolinguistics. He observed that "texts are elements of social events that have causal relationships" changing knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes, shaping identities and the very reality that subjects inhabit (*Analysing Discourse* 8). The capability of language to shape and create reality positions it as a powerful social tool. In this way, critical discourse analysis sharpens the analytic lens to examine how power is invisibly produced, is circulated, and is reproduced through discourse. Fairclough's

focus on the concealing capability of language provides a useful toolkit in addition to the broader framework of discourse analysis.

To more completely understand this methodology, it is beneficial to define discourse itself. Fairclough defines discourse as "[the use] of language seen as a form of social practice" (*Critical Discourse Analysis* 7). Because discourse is inherently social, constantly disrupting and reifying certain ideologies, analyzing discourse can be used to answer a wide-range of questions about human experience (Johnstone 7). Analyzing discourse using this methodology involves "examining aspects of the structure and function of language in use" (Johnstone 4). Fairclough aptly phrases this goal as "[analyzing] how texts work within sociocultural practice" (*Critical Discourse Analysis* 7). The overarching goal of this method, then, is to connect the function of language to society. To this end, Johnstone presents several questions outlining possible questions this methodology asks. To name a few, how is discourse shaped by the world, and how does discourse shape the world? How is discourse shaped by participants, and how does discourse shape participants? How is discourse shaped by purpose, and how does discourse shape purpose?

To consider these questions purposefully, Fairclough outlines three primary concepts through which language is enacted socially. He identifies genre as a way of interacting through speaking and writing; discourse as a way of representing certain worldviews, and style as a way of inculcating language with one's "way of being" or personality (*Analysing Discourse* 17). By evaluating the function of language in these ways, the connection between language and the social, both critical to discourse analysis, becomes clearer. After presenting these foundational concepts, Fairclough argues that the first step of discourse analysis is a careful attention to textual features like "textual form, structure, and organization at all levels; [phonology, grammar,

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and lexicon], structures of argumentation, [and more]" (*Critical Discourse Analysis* 7). The

application of critical discourse analysis in this research focuses specifically on how discourse

represents, or, notably, seeks to hide a representation of a certain worldview through a close

analysis of syntax and lexicon.

ANALYSIS

The executive orders and their surrounding discourse conceal animus by establishing the threat of immigrants from several Muslim-majority countries as extra-rhetorical, positioning the administration as responding to an objectively present threat. Notably, one may question how it can be safely conjectured that the "travel ban" executive orders are, in fact, veiling animus against Muslims. This argument traces the following reasoning: because no individual from any of the countries outlined in the executive orders has been convicted for committing an act of terrorism, the executive orders are not responding to an imminent threat ("Countering Violent Extremism").

Consequently, there are two conceivable options explaining why the Trump administration sought to implement this legislation. First, the Trump administration lacked the necessary information concerning terrorist threats to make an informed decision. Second, the Trump administration was fulfilling a campaign promise to "shutdown" Muslims entering the United States. The inimical tone of Donald Trump's campaign rhetoric regarding Muslims is demonstrated in a 2015 statement posted to the then presidential candidate's website; the statement reads, "Donald J. Trump is calling for a total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States until our representative can figure out what is going on. According to the Pew Research, among others, there is great hatred towards Americans by large segments of the Muslim population." The post was removed following the publication of the first executive order in January 2017, and press secretary Sean Spicer denied any knowledge of this statement during a January press conference ("Trump Website Take Down . . .").

This hastily deleted anti-Muslim campaign declaration along with the probability that the executive branch *does* have adequate access to the facts of who commits acts of terrorism and from where suggests that the executive orders instantiate enmity toward Muslims. [5] And, as this section details, the Trump administration seemingly seeks to conceal that animus through three discursive features all clustered under the overarching concept of extra-rhetorical discourse. These discursive features include structuring sentences with "to be" as the primary verb, using passive voice constructions, and both appealing to and pursuing collective assent.

"To Be" as the Primary Verb

Both linguists and rhetoricians assign various names to the syntactic structure featuring "to be" as the main verb. Despite these variations, many theorists agree as to the possible function of this syntactic structure. Halliday, for instance, refers to this sentence structure as relational, explaining that relational sentence structures function as existential process types: they function to give the appearance of objective existence (171). For example, the sentence "the car is blue" presents the blueness of the car as objectively existing.

These sentence types can also elide agency by eliminating the actor or perceiver. For example, the sentence "I see those men stealing the money" indicates perception and therefore highlights the agent doing the seeing. The audience may question the perceivers ability to see correctly and accurately report this event. However, the sentence, "those men are stealing money" eliminates the agent and therefore the perception of theft, making the theft appear an accurate account of the event. This sentence structure, then, eliminates the possible fallibility of

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[5] According to a report issued in April 2017 from the United States Government Accountability Office, individuals from domestic, white-supremacist groups committed the majority of terrorist-related offenses since 2001 ("Countering Violent Extremism").

perception, instead presenting, in the case of the Trump administration's executive orders, the threat of immigrants as objectively, and accurately describing reality.[6]

Schiappa further speaks to the function of "to be" as the primary verb, analyzing how speakers define the material world through language. He explains that, "real definitions [statements reporting the world exactly] are dysfunctional to the extent that they direct attention to 'is' claims and away from 'ought' claims. What is needed is a recognition that definitions are human-made, not found; not constructed, not discovered" (412 – 413). Schiappa's argument that "to be" statements are necessarily human-constructions, as no definition or report of the world is entirely "found" or "discovered" but is rather subjective observation, deepens an understanding of how "to be" as the main verb can covertly convey an objective perspective.

Finally, sentence structures featuring "to be" as the main verb connect to the concept of modality, a concept regularly attended to by linguists. Modality defines the degree to which rhetors commit to the truth and/or necessity of what they are saying (Fairclough, *Analysing Discourse* 164 – 165). Low-modality statements indicate a rhetor's insecurity as to a statement's truth or necessity; low-modality is marked by terms such as "may," "could," "perhaps," or "should." In contrast, high-modality statements impart the confidence a rhetor conveys in the truth or necessity of a statement. Hodge and Kress note that modality is established beyond basic hedging phrases; they argue that the type of verb and the transformative processes sentences undergo also communicate modality (122 - 123). So, Hodge and Kress suggest that syntax featuring "to be" as the main verb can convey a proposition's high-modality or truth

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[6] One may question if the elision of "I" is simply a convention of the executive order genre. However, the executive order genre includes instances of the first-person pronoun. For example, Jimmy Carter's executive order in 1979 outlining the national security threat posed by Iran—a consideration similar to both executive orders written by the Trump administration—uses "I" frequently: "I, JIMMY CARTER, President of the United States, find the situation in Iran constitutes an unusual and extraordinary threat to then national security. . . I hereby order blocked all property and interest in property of the Government of Iran" (*The American Presidency Project*).

value. Consequently, this sentence structure can function extra-rhetorically, and thereby conceals discrimination, by presenting observations about the world as having a high-truth value, or an objective quality.

Instances of "to be" in both "travel ban" executive orders and their surrounding discourse draw on these various implications—by eliding agency and therefore the fallibility of perception and by appearing to objectively report the threat of Muslim-majority immigrants, the discourse characterizes this threat as extra-rhetorical and consequently masks animus against Muslims. The administration's first "travel ban" executive order includes the following examples of this discursive feature. The first instance of this discursive feature appears in Section 5: "Realignment of the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program for Fiscal Year 2017."

The first sentence of this section exemplifies the administration's intent to completely halt the travel of refugees and immigration from the countries identified as threats to national security; it reads, "The Secretary of State shall suspend the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) for 120 days." Following this section's declaration of intent to stop all travel associated with USRAP, "subsection c" includes the following statement, which demonstrates the administration's attempt to legitimize the necessity of its "travel ban" by locating the threat of refugees and immigrants as extra-rhetorical and therefore concealing animus. And, as argued above, animus against Muslims is the logical catalyst for the "travel ban" executive orders: Donald Trump frequently expressed Islamophobic statements during his campaign, and because no Syrian refugee or immigrant has been arrested on charges of terrorism, barring Syrians from entering the United States seemingly indicates that the administration *was not* seeking to protect the country, but to instead fulfill Donald Trump's campaign promise to "shutdown" Muslim

immigration ("Countering Violent Extremism"). This animus against Muslims is subsequently

concealed in the following example from "subsection c" of Executive Order 13769:

> The entry of nationals of Syria as refugees is detrimental to the interests of the United
> States and thus [the United States] suspends any such entry.

In this example, using "to be" to establish the risk of allowing Syrian refugees to enter

the United States obfuscates this statement as a *possible* risk made present by the discourse itself.

Instead, the risk of admitting these refuges appears to describe an extra-rhetorical, definitive

threat that the administration is taking precautions against. The administration, however, must

make this threat appear to describe the state of world so as to characterize this legislation as a

necessary, protective measure. Otherwise, animus against Syrians, a country with an 87%

Muslim majority, would be direct and therefore implicate the administration for excluding a

group of people based on religion, an inimical worldview disparaged in the narrative of

American acceptance (*U.S. Department of State*).

Following "subsection c," the executive order continues to argue that the admission of

immigrants or refugees from not only Syria, but the other countries outlined in the order, would

threaten the safety of the United States. The point following the previous example, for instance,

explains, "that the entry of more than 50,000 refugees in fiscal year 2017 would be detrimental to

the interests of the United States." This statement functions in a similar way to the example

above. However, its use of conditional mood with the auxiliary "would," interestingly suggests

that the admission of 50,000 refugees would be detrimental *if* certain conditions were met.

Notably, the numerous examples of "to be" as the primary verb indicate the administration's

attempt to demonstrate that those conditions necessitating the restriction of travel have, indeed,

been met.

The administration's seeming attempt to avoid implications of holding and acting on

animus against Muslims is further developed by the next example. This example, like the first,

comes from Section 5 of the first executive order, "subsection a":

> Such additional procedures [taken by this executive order] are adequate to ensure the security and welfare of the United States.

By including this statement anchored by "to be" as the main verb, the Trump

administration seemingly attempts to objectively instantiate the necessity and efficacy of the

procedures implemented by Executive Order 13769. Taking up Schiappa's argument as to the

function of "is," the statement should actually read, "such additional procedures ought to be

adequate to ensure the security and welfare of the United States." However, replacing "are" with

"ought to be" lays bare the subjectivity of this statement, exposing the administration's attempt

to implement legislation that may, in fact, be embedded with discriminatory, inimical sentiment

prompting the exclusion of Muslims, instead of characterizing the President as seeking necessary

steps to protect the "security and welfare of the United States."

To tease out this idea further, it is helpful to consider the usage of "national security" in

political contexts—Wolfers, for instance, claims, "the possible discrepancy between the

objective and subjective connotation of the term is significant in international relations despite

the fact that the chance of future attack never can be measured 'objectively'; it must remain a

matter of subjective evaluation and speculation" (485). He continues to explain how following

World War I, France, in a state of panic about its national security, appealed to the necessity for

increased security measures, appearing to objectively instantiate threats to France as imminent

(485). Wolfer's example of how France's post-war government used an argumentative

framework characterizing the threat to national security as objective and therefore extra-

rhetorical is eerily similar to the Trump administration's efforts to obscure discrimination against

Muslims by positioning future danger as certain. Of course, as Wolfers points out, future threats to national security can never be objectively stated.

Following the publication of the first executive order, the Trump administration released a statement defending it on January 29, 2017. The administration's need to defend and legitimize this order is a response to significant public outcry criticizing the order as an unfair restriction on travel based on religion. On January 28th, for instance, protests occurred at airports across the country indicating a segment of the population was indeed deeply critical of the legislation. Reacting to this criticism, the administration published an explanatory statement titled, "President Donald J. Trump Statement Regarding Recent Executive Order Concerning Extreme Vetting."

Interestingly, the administration frequently referred to the order as "extreme vetting," seeking to hamper the more colloquial name the order had assumed, "Trump's travel ban" or "the travel ban." However, Donald Trump himself eventually denied the phrase "extreme vetting," tweeting, "people, the lawyers, and the courts can call it whatever they want, but I am calling it what we need and what it is, a TRAVEL BAN." Despite the President's apparent comfort with referring to the executive orders thus, a phrase many had come to associate with the orders' seeming basis in religious profiling, the administration continued to obfuscate discrimination as the discourse following the first executive order demonstrates—the presidential statement released on January 29th includes numerous instance of "to be" as the main verb. The first example from this presidential statement follows:

> American is a proud nation of immigrants and we will continue to show compassion to those fleeing oppression, but we will do so while protecting our own citizens and border. America has always been the land of the free and home of the brave. We will keep it free and keep it safe, as the media knows, but refuses to say.

This statement appears to objectively describe the ideals of the American nation as contingent on immigrants. If the Trump administration observes this ideology as reality, then the executive order cannot be enacting animus toward immigrants—or so the sentence structure may lead readers to believe. To reiterate the foundational argument key to this research, because no immigrant from the Muslim-majority countries outlined in both "travel ban" executive orders there are two potential interpretations of these "travel bans" ("Countering Violent Extremism"): either the Trump administration didn't have access to all the facts, which is unlikely considering they were easily acquired for this research, or the administration was fulfilling a xenophobic campaign promise to, essentially, eliminate Islam in America. This research suggests both executive orders are materializations of the latter, thereby enabling the argument that the Trump administration was enacting discriminatory legislation against Muslims and simultaneously attempting to conceal that animus as it contradicts liberalism and the "core American values" of acceptance and religious tolerance.

Returning to the example outlined above, by including this statement in the press release, the administration seemingly attempts to disassociate legislation restricting Muslim-majority immigrant travel from the American narrative of acceptance. The dissonance between this statement and the order's legislative impact captures the dichotomy embedded in the executive order. That is, the language of the executive order communicates one thing, but the executive order itself is rooted in animus against Muslims, which communicates the opposite—a reflection summarizing the manipulative potential of language which conceals a discourse's foundational ideology. Another example from this presidential statement on January 29[th] demonstrating how "to be" as the primary verb can mask this discrimination follows:

> This is not a Muslim ban, as the media is falsely reporting. This is not about Religion—this is about terror and keeping our country safe . . . I have tremendous feeling for the people involved in this horrific humanitarian crisis in Syria. My first priority will always be to protect and serve our country, but as President I will find ways to help all those who are suffering.

In this case, the use of "to be" establishes the administration's defense of the executive order as *not* religiously motivated, instead casting the "travel ban" as a necessary response to the reality of, as Donald Trump once said, "the Muslim problem." To expound, the statement could have read "The President did not intend this legislation to be a ban of Muslims; he instead hopes to keep our country safe from terror." In this statement, the verbs "intend" and "hopes" impart the potential fallibility of intent, positioning the legislation as possibly embedded with animus against Muslims and, further, perhaps *not* achieving its outlined goal of national protection.

Following the stay of the Trump administration's first executive order, in March of the same year, the administration penned a second executive order seeking to restrict travel once again from several Muslim-majority countries including Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Yemen, Iran, and Iraq. Because the first executive order was challenged on the grounds of excluding immigrants based on their religion, the administration likely sought to bolster their claim that this second executive order was, in fact, not based on religious discrimination. Strengthening this claim includes responding to the critiques the first executive order received as well as more intently attempting to establish the threat of immigrants as extra-rhetorical, as objective reality.

As a result of this attempt, the second executive order includes even more examples of sentence structures including "to be" as the primary verb. The following examples are from the first section of Executive Order 13780, "Policy and Purpose." This section, paralleling the first executive order issued in January, outlines the necessity of restricting travel from these countries. The section then continues to primarily explain the legality and necessity of the *first* executive

order, seemingly criticizing the Ninth Circuit Court's decision to stay Executive Order 13769.

To illustrate the purpose of this section, the administration writes, "on January 27, 2017, to

implement this policy, I issued Executive Order 13760. . . in ordering this temporary suspension

of entry . . . I exercised my authority under Article II of the Constitution: 'Whenever the

President finds that the entry of any aliens or of any class of aliens into the United States would

be detrimental to the interests of the United States, he may by proclamation. . . suspend entry of

all aliens or any class of aliens.'" Notably, while the Department of Justice grounded their

argument for the orders' legality on this constitutional line, many state courts, including those

that successfully "blocked" both "travel ban" orders, argued that the Trump administration

violated the First Amendment of the constitution by singling out one religion to "ban". So, while

the Trump administration argues that these orders are a legal enactment of the president's

constitutionally-conferred power, many in the legal community strongly disagree (Zurcher).

Following the argument for the orders' constitutional basis, the discourse continues by,

once again, seemingly attempting to obscure discrimination against Muslims. Markedly, if this

animus was not concealed, it would challenge the section's opening proclamation that

immigrants from these Muslim-majority countries pose an objective and impending threat.

However, returning to Wolfers' claim above, future threats to a country can never be objectively

reported. Nonetheless, examples of "to be" concealing animus from the "Policy and Purpose"

section of Executive Order 13780 follow:

> Each of these countries [identified as needing travel restrictions] is a state sponsor of
> terrorism, has been significantly compromised by terrorist organizations, or contains
> active conflict zones. Any of these circumstances diminishes the foreign government's
> willingness or ability to share or validate important information about individuals seeking
> to travel to the United States.

In many parts of the country [Libya], security and law enforcement functions are provided by armed militias rather than state institutions. Violent extremist groups, including the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), have exploited these conditions to expand their presence in the country.[7]

Both these statements reference Libya—the first statement does so implicitly. Libya was removed from the US government's list of states sponsoring terrorism in 2006 for their continued efforts to expel terrorist organizations from the region—in fact, ISIS was expelled from Libya completely by the end of 2016 (*U.S. Department of State*). Therefore, using "to be" as the primary verb in this section describing Libya as a state sponsor of terrorism conveys a reality that is significantly oversimplified. That is, the discourse establishes Libya as a state sponsor of terrorism, while that simple reality does not acurately describe the state of terrorism in Libya, the Libyan government's response to terrorism, or the Department of State's foreign policy with regards to the country; instead, the discourse functions to create this reality. However, because this sentence structure positions the administration as objectively describing the world, the discourse positioning Libyan immigrants as definitively dangerous, it characterizes the executive order as responsive to this impending danger. By characterizing this statement as descriptive and objective, the discourse obfuscates animus against primarily-Muslim immigrants from Libya, a country in which 96% of the population are Muslim (*Central Intelligence Agency*)—discourse that positions the rhetor as objectively describing the world seeks to sidestep implications of animus and religiously-based discrimination. To put it more colloquially, the Trump administration appears to be "simply telling it like it is."

To conclude this section on how "to be" as the primary verb can normalize an exclusionary worldview and conceal the discrimination of Muslims, Schiappa's argument that

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[7] Following the explanation of the threat posed by Libya, the administration outlines the threats posed by all seven countries listed in the executive order. The discursive techniques used to instantiate the threat of Islamic terrorism differ little from country to country.

"to be" often encodes a recommendation, which is necessarily subjective, and could easily be

replaced by "should" or "ought" sheds even more light on the function of "to be" in this

discourse. Specifically, comparing an example of "should" written in the second executive order

with the more common use of "to be" illustrates the subjective quality of "to be." An example of

"should" in the discourse occurs in the first section, "Policy and Purpose" of Executive Order

13780:

> Decisions about issuance of visas or granting admission to Iraqi nationals should be
> subjected to additional scrutiny to determine if applicants have connections with ISIS
> or other terrorist organizations, or otherwise pose a risk to either national security or
> public safety.

"Should," in this example, could easily be replaced with "is," which would cast this statement

within the same role as other instances of "to be" throughout both "travel ban" executive orders

and their surrounding discourse. The ease with which "should" and "is" are interchangeable in

this example suggests that the frequent use of "to be" throughout the discourse can, inversely,

easily be replaced with "should"—further suggesting that each example of "to be" as the primary

verb outlined above are in fact subjective propositions, as opposed to their characterization as

objective, extra-rhetorical statements.

Passive Voice

In addition to syntax with "to be" as the primary verb, passive voice occurs and reoccurs

in the executive orders and their surrounding discourse. Passive voice can also operate to

conceal animus. The capacity of passive voice to obscure discrimination relies on the ability of

this syntactic transformation to delete agency and to therefore make processes appear to be

normal outcomes inherent to the objects acted upon. Hodge and Kress address the normalizing

potential of passive voice, arguing that passive voice, or non-transactive sentences as they call it,

can make questions about causality and responsibility unaskable, and answers to such questions

tend to be involve replies such as, "because, it is the property of X to do so" (42). Subsequently,

any questions about causality of passive structures usually include responses naturalizing the

process itself. For example, the passive construction "money was stolen" naturalizes theft,

leading to explanations like "money gets stolen from time to time—this is simply a property of

money itself."

The use of passive voice throughout the executive orders and their surrounding discourse,

can subsequently function to conceal animus through naturalizing actions, making them appear

inherent to the context and thereby situating such actions as extra-rhetorical: some phenomenon

objectively occur in certain situations. Passive voice also masks discrimination by deleting

agency and therefore attempting to remove the blame for actions that might be considered

discriminatory or inimical. In relation to the "travel ban" executive orders, if the process of

travel restriction is foregrounded, it follows that the agent implementing that process is

consequently backgrounded, along with their potential animus against Muslims. The first

executive order includes the following examples of passive voice. This first example comes

from Section 1 "Purpose" of the order, and as previously noted, the "Purpose" section seeks to

legitimize the necessity of the legislation, tracing the threat of Muslim immigration back to the

terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001:

> Numerous foreign-born individuals have been convicted or implicated in terrorism-related crimes since September 11, 2001, including foreign nationals who entered the United States after receiving visitor, student, or employment visas, or who entered through the United States refugee resettlement program.[8]

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[8] The United States Refugee Resettlement Program is a program coordinated between the Department of Homeland Security and the State and Health and Human Services (HHS) to "work together to uphold America's humanitarian response to refugees. In this program, the State Department "coordinates admission and allocation to specific cities and resettlement agencies," offering medical and financial support to the refugees resettled. The program was implemented in 1980 with the passage of the "1980 Refugee Act" during Jimmy Carter's tenure in office (*Office of Refugee Resettlement*).

This statement, included in the order's first section, the "Purpose" section, deletes the agent entirely. Specifically, the statement conveys that certain immigrants, or foreign-born individuals as the administration states, "have been convicted of terrorism-related crimes." By removing the agent doing the convicting, the discourse eclipses the possible fallibility associated with convictions. To clarify, if the Trump administration wrote the previous statement in active voice, it might read, "various judges have convicted foreign-born individuals of terrorist-related crimes." However, active voice introduces questions about the trial process and possibility that these convictions were in err.

By eliminating the agent from this statement, and thereby questions of who was doing this convicting and under what circumstances, the discourse suggests that these Muslim immigrants were not only rightly convicted of these crimes, but that "being convicted of terrorist-related crimes" is simply a component of "being Muslim." The latter argument draws on Hodge and Kress's idea that passive voice suggests that certain actions are the inherent property of certain objects, i.e. being convicted of a "terrorist-related crime" is the inherent property of Muslims. In using passive voice to suggest terrorism as a property of being Muslim, the administration casts its executive order as merely responding to an objective threat. Again, because no immigrant from the six countries outlined in the executive order have ever been convicted of committing terrorism in the United States, Donald Trump's campaign promise to solve the "Muslim problem" points to the embedding of animus throughout the executive order ("Countering Violent Extremism").

Another instance of passive voice concealing animus from Executive Order 13769 follows. This statement was written in the Section 10 of the order "Transparency and Data Collection," "subsection i." This section predominately outlines the administration's plan to

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collect information on "terrorism-related offenses" in order to "be more transparent with the American people, and to more effectively implement policies and practices that serve the national interest":

> Information regarding the number of foreign nationals in the United States who have been charged with terrorism-related offenses while in the United States. . . [and] information regarding the number of foreign nationals in the United States who have been radicalized after entry into the United States [will be collected].

This statement includes two instances of passive voice—"who have been charged" and "who have been radicalized." "Who have been charged" functions similarly to the previous example: the subject doing the charging has been eliminated and therefore their subjectivity elided. "Who have been radicalized" also deletes the agent radicalizing and therefore establishes the process of radicalization to appear as the natural outcome for Muslim-immigrants imigrating to the United States. Referring once again back to Hodge and Kress's argument that passive structures cause a faulty perception that processes are seemingly catalyzed without a source, the radicalization of immigrants appears, in this example, to be a natural process by the very nature of these individual's status as Muslim immigrants—it is the nature of Muslims to be radicalized and to therefore commit acts of terror. Notably, many American citizens are radicalized by the rhetoric of terrorist organizations and consequently commit heinous acts of violence. However, these cases should be considered on an individual basis and not assigned to the entire Muslim demographic seeking entry into the United States. By normalizing and generalizing radicalization, the discourse once again positions the executive order as a descriptive document, describing the world and reacting to its ills accordingly, which masks animus in the process: If a text presents itself as objectively describing reality, taking precautionary measures against a threat can't be called discriminatory or inimical. However, as Wolfers highlights, no discourse describing a future threat can possibly be objective.

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Following the first executive order, Press Secretary Sean Spicer defended its necessity and legality frequently in his daily press conferences. In one such press conference, Mr. Spicer is continuously questioned on the "travel ban" executive order despite his consistent efforts to redirect this questioning. His answers to these questions often include statements defending the order, statements including passive voice.

> . . . the people who have been stopped at a port of entry in one of these seven countries to ensure that the proper vetting took place before they were able to move on.

This example eliminates the subject performing the action of "stopping," thereby removing the subjectivity potentially involved in identifying a terrorist threat and consequently stopping an immigrant from traveling into the United States. Removing the agent and therefore the fallibility of their perception normalizes the process of "stopping, " subsequently eliding the possible animus instantiated in the process of assessing which travelers are and are not able to enter in the United States. Another example of passive voice from Mr. Spicer's press conference assumes a different intention in that, responding to a reporter's concern over how the "vetting process" would be fairly and meticulously implemented, the statements seeks to reassure American citizens that they will not be affected by the "travel ban." The following exchange occurred between Mr. Spicer and journalists:

> Q: Sean, yesterday you said 109 individuals were affected by this extreme vetting.
> MR. SPICER: Right
> Q: DHS officials said that it was over 1,100
> MR. SPICER: No, no, no, hold on . . . the people who have been stopped at the port of entry [were] to ensure that the proper vetting took place before they were allowed to move on
> MR. SPICER: No American citizens will ever be targeted

This statement, reassuring American citizens that the legislation won't "target" them, also elides the act of perception in "targeting" a group of people who are deemed acceptable to enter the country. Again, by eliminating the agent "targeting," the discourse removes questions about

the fallibility of perception. If the fallibility of deciding whom to target is eliminated, the discourse suggests that the process of "targeting" is an objective process. To clarify, consider the alternative to this passivated sentence—"customs officials won't target any American citizens." By including the agent, "customs officials," the rhetor poses questions of fallibility, and motivating discrimination against Muslims grounded by the administration in the vetting process itself. In sum, whenever a human agent is included in a sentence, inevitably questions of perception, fallibility, and cognition are introduced, although not always explicitly, in the audience's reading of that discourse. By deleting the agent, the discourse can render questions of subjectivity invisible, and can therefore, naturalize processes as the inevitable product of *something*. In this case, acts of terrorism and radicalization have been characterized as inevitable outcomes of Islam, and the security efforts in airports across the nation have been cast as objective processes in which security officials are effectively determining who does and does not pose a threat to the United States by, as the executive order outlines, religious profiling alone. By positioning terrorist threats as a characteristic inherent to all Muslims and presenting the vetting process as objective and effective, the use of passive voice in the discourse conceals animus against Muslims by portraying the executive orders as merely responding to an objective threat.

In addition to both the first executive order and its surrounding discourse, the second executive order also includes many instances of passive voice, included below. The first example originates in the first section "Policy and Purpose." This section elaborates on Executive Order 13769 by more fully explaining how and why the administration has selected these seven countries from which to restrict travel:

> Among other actions, Executive Order 13769 suspended for 90 days the entry of certain
> aliens from seven countries: Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen. These

are countries that had already been identified as presenting heightened concerns about terrorism and travel to the United States.

This statement functions to directly legitimize the order—the statement seeks to legitimize the identification of these seven countries, a defense the administration frequently forwarded after the public outcry against both executive orders. Notably, this statement has been passivated, obfuscating the agent who identified these countries. In other instances forwarding this defense, the agent, the Obama administration, is almost always included. For example, a presidential statement released on January 29, 2017 read, "the seven countries named in the Executive Order are the same countries previously identified by the Obama administration as sources of terror."[9] The attempt to legitimize the inclusion of these countries in the second executive order is, contrastingly, passivated. This passivation, then, seemingly indicates a concerted effort by the administration to generally remove agents from the executive orders' syntax and to thereby eliminate subjectivity. Put differently, the contrast between frequently using the Obama administration as the agent identifying these countries, seemingly deflecting blame from the Trump administration, and the passivation of this statement in the executive order suggests the administration's conscious effort to generally obscure subjectivity by passivation throughout these texts.

The passivation of this statement adheres to the functions outlined above: passive voice naturalizes processes and positions them as naturally occurring actions. So, by passivating the identification of these countries, the administration seemingly seeks to normalize the inclusion of these seven Muslim-majority countries. Normalizing this inclusion consequently functions to

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[9] While the Obama administration did identify several of the countries outlined by Donald Trump's "travel ban," they never took steps to block the travel of any national from these countries into the United States, and many argue that attempting to deflect the criticism the "travel bans" received to the Obama administration is misleading to the American public (Kessler).

position the process of identification as an objective, extra-rhetorical report of reality and to therefore position the legislation as simply describing seven countries that must, to maintain national safety, be regulated by a travel restriction.

In keeping with the previous example's demonstration of the administration's attempt to legitimize imposing travel restriction on *these* seven Muslim-majority countries, another press conference with Mr. Spicer includes examples of passive voice. In this example, Kaitlan Collins from *The Daily Caller* continues a line of questioning seeking to clarify how the order affects the visa-issuance process as well as the "temporary" status of the ban.

> Q: So why doesn't the order prevent people who didn't have visas by the day of the first order from coming into the country? Because, wouldn't that safeguard from the people who went and got visas during the revision period?
> MR. SPICER: I would just say, I think, that there's appropriate steps that have been taken during that period to ensure that the homeland has been protected.

The use of passive voice in Mr. Spicer's response to Ms. Collin's question functions in much the same way as outlined above. By stating that "appropriate steps have been taken" and "to ensure that the homeland has been protected," the rhetor removes the agent, and by extension the subjectivity involved in determining which appropriate steps ought to be taken as well as who decides the homeland "has been protected." The function of passive voice in Mr. Spicer's response is highlighted by the use of active voice before calling on Ms. Collins—"we felt confident in knowing that they [those "properly vetted"] were coming in." In this statement, the subjectivity conveyed by "we felt confident" starkly contrasts the following attempt to cast the vetting process as an objective necessity.

Once again, then, by normalizing and legitimizing the order's security measures through passive voice, the administration not only positions these security measures as necessary, but also effective in maintaining American's safety. If the administration is implementing security

measures that aren't subjective, in as much as the administration, fulfilling Donald Trump's campaign promise to "ban Muslims," has preconceived animus toward Muslims, they subsequently attempt to avoid criticisms of religious discrimination, which is a subjective assessment.

Manufacturing Collective Assent

To further position the discourse as descriptive and to further convey the exigency of this threat, the administration seemingly seeks to discursively establish a collective assent by manufacturing an American public who agrees that this legislation is necessary to safeguard their shared values and beliefs. Karon analyzes how discourse establishing collective assent can characterize a discourse as functioning extra-rhetorically and subsequently appeal to objectivity. She claims that once "[a statement] is confirmed strongly enough by the assent of others, it may pass as cognition of things as they actually are" (103). So, by instantiating collective assent, a discourse may characterize subjective propositions as "cognition of things as they actually are" or objective observation. Wiser emphasizes the connection Karon draws between the ascent of a proposition to objective observation through wide-spread public agreement; he writes, "[there is an] intimate association between a public truth and the. . . mode of its articulation" (667). In this statement, Wiser points to the "intimate" process by which discourse can, essentially, make or unmake a public's truth. Subsequently, Karon and Wiser highlight how rhetors can instantiate "public truths" or objective reality through discursively manufacturing assent.

Charland further explains how discursively manufacturing collective agreement can position discourse as extra-rhetorical:

> the persona or subject [created by collective assent] exists only as [an] ideological effect . . . if a [people] exist, it is only in ideology . . . [However, manufacturing a collective assent] articulates the meaning of being a people as no mere fiction . . . [that is] in telling a story of a people, a people comes to be. (139; 142)

Charland's text demonstrates how discourse that constitutes collective assent is necessarily ideological or subjective, but encourages an extra-rhetorical reading that, as Charland puts it, articulates a collective whose will and beliefs are not fiction, but rather an objective description of a public. Charland and Karon's description of manufacturing assent is a common feature in both the executive orders and their surrounding discourse. The discursive features that establish a collective assent include collective, and often generalized, referents and foregrounding what a rhetor perceives to constitute a public's shared values.

Establishing collective assent is commonly realized through the use of generic pronouns or generally referring to a diverse group of people as one thing (Fairclough, *Analysing Discourse* 146). General pronouns include "we/us," "they/them," or "you." General referents more broadly can include referents to an entire nation, social position, occupation, etc., such as "Americans," "the government," "citizens," "police," "terrorists," "immigrants," "refugees," or "foreign nationals"—all collective referents common in the Trump administration's executive orders.

Of course, one may argue that collective referents establishing public assent is a not only a common feature of presidential discourse, but many discourses addressing a wide-bodied public. In fact, Landemore points out that because democratic systems of government rely on notion of majority rule, instantiating majority assent is necessary to legitimize legislation in democracies (10). Landemore broadly defines legislation in a democratic system thus, "democracy [is the] 'rule of the many,' using the term to refer to both a specific decision rule— whereby the many are the ultimate, if not direct, decision makers rather than one or a few persons" (10). So, discursively manufacturing assent in democratic contexts seems a necessary convention of the rhetorical situation. However, while this is accurate, it should not excuse the

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manipulative function of discursively manufacturing a collective will to conceal animus. In

contrast, it should lead audiences to be more critical when reading any political text that includes

collective referent and thereby seemingly attempts to manufacture collective assent.

The first executive order includes the following examples of collective referents. All

three of the examples below establish collective assent by referring to "The United States" and

"Americans."

> The United States must be vigilant during the visa-issuance process to ensure that those
> approved for admission do not intend to harm Americans that they have no ties to
> terrorism.

> 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.

> It is the policy of the United States to protects its citizens from foreign nationals who
> intend to commit terrorist attacks in the United States.

All three examples above demonstrate how the first executive order seemingly creates

collective assent—by including these collective referents, the discourse constitutes one American

people who support the implementation of the executive orders. As a result, the administration

seemingly seeks to both legitimize its "travel ban" and to obscure the discrimination against

several Muslim-majority countries by positioning both orders as the will of the American public.

Additionally, by manufacturing public assent where it arguably does not exist, the administration

suggests that the executive orders, in fact, had no opposition and subsequently attempts to silence

the segment of the American population who vehemently opposed them.

More specifically, by establishing a collective who "must remain vigilant," "must ensure

that those admitted to this country do not bear hostile attitude toward it," and "[whose] policy it

is to protect its citizens from foreign nationals," the Trump administration positions Executive

Order 13769 as implementing and enforcing the desires of *all* Americans. By constituting the

legislation thus, as Karon argues, the discourse seemingly situates the threat of "foreign nationals" as extra-rhetorical: a widely agreed upon threat transforms subjective observation into an objective reality. To reiterate, if the threat posed by Muslim-majority immigrants is an objective reality, the administration's executive order is a necessary response to imminent danger, not a materialization of animus against Muslims.

This Islamophobic sentiment was a common campaign feature of Donald Trump's campaign rhetoric, suggesting that this animus was the motivation behind implementing both "travel bans." Demonstrating this Islamophobic campaign rhetoric, on March 9, 2016, he stated, "I think Islam hates us. There's something there that—there's a tremendous hatred there . . . there's an unbelievable hatred of us." Notably, this statement also uses collective referent to not only characterize the entire Muslim population as "hating" America, but to also suggest that the entire American population is the target of that "hatred."

In keeping with the quote above positioning every American as the object of "Islamic hatred," the discourse conveys the threat of immigrants as adversely affecting the collective. This also implies collective assent as it positions all Americans as the object of "hatred," and therefore collectively endangered. It would follow, then, that because all Americans are seemingly endangered by these Muslim-majority immigrants, they would collectively assent to the increased security measures implemented by the "travel ban" executive orders.

This manufactured agreement is further evident in phrases like "to ensure that [immigrants] do not intend to harm Americans," "In order to protect Americans," and "to protects its citizens." Similar instances of discourse conveying this collectively-affecting threat in the surrounding discourse include "the safety of American citizens," "protecting our own citizens and borders," and "ensuring they're here not to do us harm." Relating these statements

back to Wiser's argument that public truths are often intimately wound together with their articulation, it can once again be argued that manufacturing collective assent through positioning the audience as collectively endangered can position the executive orders as extra-rhetorical. To clarify, if the discourse establishes the assent of the American public to implement these orders, then the administration seemingly situates these orders as responsive to the inevitable threat of terrorism posed by immigrants from these Muslim-majority countries.

Notably, terrorist attacks do affect the entire nation as a people collectively mourn and grapple with horrific acts of violence. However, because no immigrant from the seven countries identified by the executive orders has ever been convicted of terrorism in the United States, implicating these individuals as an objective, extra-rhetorical threat to "us" seemingly indicates an attempt to veil animus against Muslims, thereby normalizing exclusive measures based on religious discrimination ("Countering Violent Extremism"). And, because there is no historical basis to include the Muslim-majority countries these executive orders outline, this research is left to rely on what does exist—a wide body of Donald Trump's campaign rhetoric promising to "shutdown" Muslim immigration and deal with "Muslim problem." However, because such direct religious discrimination contradicts liberalism and "core American values of acceptance," it seems to have been discursively encoded.

Following the publication of the first executive order, the administration defended its purpose. This defensive discourse also includes numerous instances of manufacturing collective assent. The examples from the discourse, while including many referents to "Americans" and the "United States," will demonstrate a different collective referent establishing the widespread agreement of the American public than outlined above—the pronoun "we" and "us."

> It [the executive order] was crafted in a way that was very clear about the countries and was not focused on anything else but the vetting requirements that we have to make sure

that we know who's coming into this country, and that they're here not to do us harm. (Press Conference with Mr. Spicer)
It's seven countries previously identified by the Obama administration where, frankly, we don't get the information that we need for people coming into this country. (Press Conference with Mr. Spicer)

We are also taking strong measures to protect our nation from radical Islamic terrorism. (Press Conference with Donald Trump)

We will shortly take new steps to keep our nation safe and to keep out those who will do us harm. (Press Conference with Donald Trump; he is referring in this passage to the release of the second executive order as "the new steps" to be taken)

It's [the process to write and implement an executive order] working well—that the government is doing what it's supposed to, to protect its people. And that's the number one thing that we can do. (Press Conference with Mr. Spicer)

These five examples, all including either referent to "we" or "us" functioning to similarly constitute collective assent, and establishing this consent demonstrates the function of collective referent further: characterizing the collective will with broad referents such as "we" again constitutes the collective agreement that this executive order was a necessary step to protect the country. Notably, such a broad collective referent suggests an even wider consensus that "we" agree as to the necessity of such legislation. By constituting a broad consensus through the use of "we" and "us," the discourse, by the same line of argumentation above, transforms subjectivity in objectivity, thereby obfuscate discriminatory sentiment.

To expound, as this research has argued, concealing animus can be discursively accomplished by characterizing a text as an objective, extra-rhetorical representation of reality— if, in the case of the "travel ban" executive orders, the administration is objectively describing and responding to the threat of terrorism posed by these Muslim-majority immigrants, then they sidestep implications of animus, a subject-centered perspective of an outgroup. The collective referents of "we" and "us" outlined above obscure animus by, as Karon argues, manufacturing consent and therefore making the subjective appear objective. Further, manufacturing assent

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seemingly seeks to silence the widespread opposition to the Trump administrations "travel bans." While the efficacy of this discursive move is questionable, it remains that such an intent was likely.

Pursuing Collective Assent

In addition to manufacturing collective assent through the use of general referents like "Americans" or "we," rhetors cans also pursue collective assent by more implicitly appealing to an audience's perceived shared values. Booth describes pursuing collective assent, noting that assent occurs for all of us as soon as we start hearing and using language. We absorbed views of the world that . . . others offered us, openly or tacitly" (382). Booth contextualizes this subsection well, advancing that assent is often a linguistic process that can pursued implicitly by foregrounding certain values in order to persuade an audience's adherence to a specific worldview. For instance, a rhetor may pursue collective assent, or an audience's adherence to an anti-same-sex marriage stance, by stating, "the Bible suggests that marriage is between a man and a woman." In stating this, the author pursues the collective assent of an audience who would seemingly value religious doctrine and its blueprint for modern institutions. Subsequently, if this statement appeals to the audience's shared values, then it has effectively pursued collective assent that same-sex marriage corrodes the values of religious doctrine.

In the case of the Trump administration's "travel ban" executive orders, the administration seemingly foregrounds "core American beliefs," in order to pursue a collective assent that these Muslim-majority immigrants are endangering an "American way of life," and to further pursue the American public's assent that these executive orders are necessary, protective measures. So, the Trump administration not only explicitly manufactures assent through the use of collective referents, but also pursues collective assent by presenting certain supposed

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"American values" as under assault by immigrants from the Muslim-majority nations outlined in the executive orders.

Beasley extensively discusses how American presidents have historically pursued collective assent. She argues that presidents evoke a set of "American values" that unite the public and situate them as complying with the rhetors' "views of government and the world" (10). Speaking further of how a president pursues collective assent by emphasizing the nation's shared beliefs, Beasley writes, "the American people's very sense of peoplehood derives not from a common lineage, but from their adherence to a set of core principles. . . immigrants from all over the world can assimilate, so long as they too dedicate themselves to the propositions" (63). In this passage, Beasley explains how emphasizing shared values or core principles constitutes an American "us" divided from a "them" by American's adherence to a set of values, values that Beasley suggests presidents may characterize as not understandable by the outgroup or directly challenged by the outgroup's "coercive actions."

Consequently, the Trump administration seeks to pursue collective assent for its "travel ban" executive orders by uniting an audience whose shared beliefs are under assault by Muslim-majority immigrants. Once again, by establishing a national belief that the threat of terrorists from these Muslim-majority nations is imminent, the administration positions itself as simply responding to and objective reality: by associating and directing the audience's attention to "American values," the Trump administration pursues collective assent by suggesting the public's communally-held values are under attack by immigrants from these Muslim-majority nations and characterizes the executive orders as taking necessary, protective action to safeguard those values.

The examples below pursue collective assent by emphasizing egalitarian values, common to narratives of what makes America, America. Egalitarian values in American culture consist of the ideology presented in the Declaration of Independence that "all men are created equal," thereby establishing equality as a core principle. This concept of egalitarianism as central to "American values" in reinforced in the text *American and Politics in the Information Age*:

> egalitarianism is the doctrine emphasizing the natural equality of humans, or at least the absence of a preexisting superiority of one set of humans above another . . . Americans endorse this intrinsic equal worth of all people. Survey data consistently indicates that between 80 percent and 90 percent of Americans believe that it is essential to treat all people equally regardless of race or ethnic background.[10] (198 – 199)

By emphasizing this shared belief, the administration clearly has a sense of what its audience values, or ought to value. Consequently, emphasizing such values and positioning them as in danger pursues collective assent. That is, by evoking a "core American value" and arguing it is endangered by immigrants from these Muslim-majority nations, the discourse encourages the collective agreement that the administration is taking necessary protective measures. Therefore, the administration strengthens its appeal to objectivity, a claim once again relying on Karon's argument that articulating collective agreement can characterize a proposition as objectively true and therefore extra-rhetorical.

In keeping with this reasoning, the first two examples below, from the first executive order, direct the audience's attention to the potential coercion of "American values" of tolerance and acceptance of all people, positioning Muslim-majority immigrants as destructive to these values.

> 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.

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[10] This research was conducted by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press in 2009.

Information regarding the number and types of acts of gender-based violence against women, including honor killings, in the United States by foreign nationals.

By characterizing these immigrants as posing threats to women, the LGBTQ community, and other religions, the discourse once again implies that Executive Order 13769 is taking necessary precautions to safeguard these minority populations. Ironically, the executive order essentially legitimizes the discrimination of one population by arguing it is protecting others. In doing so, the Trump administration further establishes itself and the goals of its legislation as protective, not discriminatory. Through positioning themselves thus throughout the discourse, concealing animus becomes evident once more: if the executive order is describing an extra-rhetorical threat posed by these immigrants, the legislation isn't enacting animus, but rather taking a necessary precaution.

Following the first executive order, the second executive order similarly emphasizes the destructive capacity of Muslim-majority immigrants to minorities, effectively threatening common narratives of American acceptance and tolerance. The following example from Executive Order 13780 is an interesting inclusion not found in the first order. Perhaps because of the legal challenges the first order faced, the administration seemingly sought to more completely conceal animus against Muslims by emphasizing the objective, extra-rhetorical threat posed by these individuals.

> In October 2014, a native of Somalia who had been brought to the United States as a child refugee and later became a naturalized United States citizen was sentenced to 30 years in prison for attempting to use a weapon of mass destruction as part of a plot to detonate a bomb at a crowded Christmas-tree lighting ceremony in Portland, Oregon

This example emphasizes the religious persecution of Christians by a Somalian immigrant, and, seemingly, by extension all Muslim-immigrants outlined in the second executive order, by selecting an example that emphasizes the potential violence against families at a

Christmas-tree-lighting ceremony. The administration's decision to include this example

indicates their attempt to frame Muslim-majority immigrants as enacting not only violence

against the entire American population, but more specifically enacting violence against

Christianity and its accompanying values—evoking the narrative of religious freedom written

into the nation's constitution itself.[11]

To emphasize this point, the administration could have generalized this example to state,

"a Somalian refugee planned an attack in a crowded park in Portland, Oregon." However, the

discourse meticulously describes the setting in order to direct the reader's attention to the

violence these immigrants pose to religious freedoms. Again, the irony is palpable as the Trump

administration attempts to legitimize religious discrimination by evoking religious discrimination

as contradictory to "American values." Nonetheless, by emphasizing that Muslim-majority

immigrants pose a threat to the values of religious freedom, the second executive order extends

the administration's attempt to pursue collective assent by instantiating an audience whose

values are at stake, legitimizing their legislative actions as representing the will of a people

united to protect their "core beliefs" as a nation.

Conclusion

This section hinges on the following reasoning: both "travel ban" executive orders were

motivated by animus against Muslims. This motivation is determined by a process of

elimination—there are two probable explanations for the administration's inclusion of several

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[11] It should briefly be noted that the individual accused of this plot, while born in Somalia, immigrated to the United States with his family at the age of two and is reported to have been radicalized in high school ("Oregon Resident. . ."). Subsequently, using this example to justify the exclusion of all Somalian immigrants is problematic in that it accuses a nation of breeding terrorism while the suspect in this case was, in fact, radicalized in the United States through web videos and internet exchanges with terrorist organizations like Al-Qaeda—leading to further questions concerning the Trump administration's legislative focus in curbing radical Islamic terrorism ("Convicted Bomb Plotter . . .").

Muslim-majority countries in these executive orders, immigrants from which have never been convicted of a terrorist attack in the United States—either the administration did not have access to accurate statistics concerning terrorist attacks in the United States, which is highly unlikely, or the executive orders were a product of Donald Trump fulfilling his campaign promise to completely "shutdown Muslims entering the United States" ("Countering Violent Extremism"). Assuming this second reason is most likely, the legal challenges and ideological contradiction the executive orders would catalyze necessitated that the administration attempt to mask this discrimination against Muslims. To do so, the administration used three primary discursive features to conceal animus. These discursive features described above include syntax with "to be" as the primary verb, passive voice, and both the manufacturing and pursuit of collective assent.

CONCLUSION

The ability of these executive orders and their surrounding discourse to conceal animus against Muslims, by characterizing the threat of Muslim-majority immigrants as extra-rhetorical and objective, can be questioned. However, the fact remains that the administration attempted to and continues to attempt to obfuscate a discriminatory and inimical worldview, seemingly seeking to make the exclusion of immigrants from these Muslim-majority nations both legally and ideologically acceptable. Further, because this attempt at concealment happens at the level of discourse, it is imperative that more attention be given to how the language of the Trump administration seeks to hide discriminatory sentiments.

Notably, encoding anti-immigrant sentiment in presidential discourse is nothing new, antipathy of the outsider dating back to the presidency of John Adams and likely further. However, the recent public uproar criticizing the Trump administration's anti-Muslim rhetoric establishes a kairotic moment: a moment to reflect on the tensions between exclusionary discourse and liberal political theory, a moment to reflect on the contradictions between anti-Muslim sentiment and "core American belief" that America is place of acceptance, a moment to reflect on how representative the words etched on the statue of Liberty are of American ideology:

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,

With conquering limbs astride from land to land;

Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand

A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame

Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name

MOTHER OF EXILES. From her beacon-hand

Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command

The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.

"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she

With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,

Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,

The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.

Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,

I lift my lamp beside the golden door!" (Lazarus)

This research, subsequently, has endeavored to demonstrate how political discourse may take advantage of linguistic tools that can conceal animus against an outgroup. This research outlines three of those linguistic tools: "to be" as the primary verb, passive voice, and both manufacturing and pursuing collective assent—all of which obscure the discrimination against Muslims in the administration's now infamous "travel bans." So, while the United States navigates a presidency that has continued to deeply divide the nation, it is beneficial to take a proverbial step back to closely analyze how Trump administration seeks to use discourse to normalize the exclusion of Muslims as well as how this administration compliments and contradicts previous presidential rhetoric on immigration.

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