



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on July 24, 2019

Rep. Erica Thomas Wants Man Arrested for Exercising His First Amendment Rights

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Rep. Erica Thomas (shown) claimed that the man in the grocery store gave new meaning to the term “discriminating shopper.” He told her, an American-born-and-bred black woman, “Go back to where you came from!” after a checkout-aisle confrontation, she stated in a tearful video. The problem?

It turns out that it was all basically a hoax.

The sparks flew when the accused man, Eric Sparkes, came forward and credibly claimed that Georgia state representative Thomas (D-District 39) fabricated the “go back” story for political gain. It didn’t help the legislator’s cause that Sparkes is Hispanic and an ardent, Trump-deriding Democrat with the social-media posts to prove it. She subsequently backtracked on her initial accusation.

Yet while much has already been reported about this story, that a certain aspect of it is underemphasized speaks volumes about our time’s askew, perverse priorities. The focus has been on what Sparkes did or didn’t say, with the idea that this determines his “guilt or innocence.” But what’s more significant? What the man said?

Or that a *lawmaker* believes he [should be arrested](#) for saying it?

There is that little thing called the First Amendment, you know.

His apprehension was Thomas’s desire, too, as the following tweet relates:

State Rep. Erica Thomas just told us she wants police to charge the man who confronted her in a Mableton grocery store. At 12, how this controversy has gone viral, and how both Dems and Repubs are reacting to it. <pic.twitter.com/m45wKyBHxL>

— Richard Elliot (@RElliotWSB) [July 22, 2019](#)

Charged with what? Commenting while white?

For the record, this story began, both sides agree, when Sparkes confronted Thomas after she went in an express aisle at a Georgia Publix supermarket with more items than allowable. It was apparently an innocuous incident that would have gone without notice — if Thomas hadn’t released the following tearful video:

In the above Thomas quite fashionably complains about “white privilege” being out of control. Her video captured great Fake News Media attention, too, released as it was in the wake of President Trump’s



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directing of the “go back” line at four anti-American congresswomen, including Somali-born Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.). The now-stale narrative was that Trump’s rhetoric was fueling a national rise in hate.

Never mind that Thomas’s claim’s timing was just *too* convenient, and that she laid it on pretty thick in the video. Never mind that we should ask: Would you want a snowflake who falls apart after a little verbal confrontation anywhere near the reins of power? (Sorry, if you need a comfort puppy, you can’t be top dog.) Never mind that, body-language science informs, putting a finger over the mouth while talking, as Thomas did, can signal deception; the psychology may be that your unconscious mind is trying to stop the lies passing the lips. (The good news: This probably means Thomas isn’t a sociopath.) She might have gotten away with it, too.

That is, if Sparkes didn’t come forward, leading to the following explosive press conference involving the two:

Note that Thomas’s performance above doesn’t help her case. Belying her claim of being a waning pregnant woman unable to stand for long periods, she appears strong and highly aggressive. And attacking an average citizen — someone less powerful than you are — over a tempest in a teapot is never a good look. She just dug her hole deeper.

This is especially true since her admission of her initial claim’s inaccuracy (video below).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cWa4vivfNyA>

Now Thomas states that the only thing she’s sure of is that Sparkes used the words “go back,” which, even if uttered, could have been in reference to going back to the regular aisle (not express). Regardless, if you’re going to allege something explosive, as she did, you better make *darn sure you’re accurate*.

Note, too, that Sparkes *did not* have to reveal himself. That he did so lends credence to his version of events, part of which is an admission that he did call Thomas “a lazy b***h” for unnecessarily using the express aisle. Moreover, he says that he’s considering a defamation suit against the legislator (there should be surveillance footage; let’s hope it doesn’t get “accidentally” erased), as the tweet below indicates.

Eric Sparkes’ statement continues: “Ms. Thomas accuses me of telling her to go back to wherever. Those words were never spoken. She backtracked slightly and now is changing her story. I am in the process of exploring with attorneys a defamation lawsuit against her.”

— Richard Elliot (@RElliotWSB) [July 22, 2019](#)

Ironically, it has come out that not only did Thomas [express sympathy](#) for Parkland mass murderer Nikolas Cruz, but also that she [tweeted in 2015](#) that she was hate-hoaxer-to-be Jussie Smollett’s biggest fan.

Apropos to this, the *Washington Examiner’s* Brad Polumbo correctly states that the reaction to Thomas’s initial allegations reflects “outrage culture.” The incident is akin to “similar examples of media malpractice such as the Jussie Smollett hate crime hoax and misleading coverage of the ‘MAGA hat’ Covington Catholic students and native American protester Nathan Phillips,” he [writes](#). “It’s clear that the manufactured outrage over the Erica Thomas incident is part of a larger, disturbing pattern.”

Yet it’s also part of an even more disturbing pattern, one universally missed. Let’s start with a question:



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Imagine that Sparkes really did say, “Go back to where you came from!” Is that illegal now?

It was still common to hear in my grade-school days, “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me.” Though words can be powerful and damage feelings, this message was necessary to instill children with respect for freedom of speech.

Kids don’t hear that anymore. In this emotion-über-alles time, they’re instead taught to conflate verbal with physical assaults, bruised feelings with bruised bodies. They’re instructed on “hate speech” — even though *no such category exists in American law*.

Yet thus weaned, they may think it does. And, regardless, this phenomenon engenders askew priorities. Just consider the O.J. Simpson [murder case](#) in 1994-’95. The media actually behaved as if the [use](#) of the n-word by Mark Fuhrman, a police officer central to the case, was worse than the brutal murder of two people.

At least there, however, at issue was a racial epithet. In contrast, “Go back to where you came from,” though inappropriate to direct at Thomas, is *entirely justifiable* with anti-American, self-described foreigners such as Ilhan Omar. It’s a variation on “America, love it or leave it.” Is this to be out of bounds now?

If so, it joins “Build that wall!” and “MAGA” hats as things liberals have deemed “racist.” The Left is attempting to squelch dissent by labeling anything rhetorically effective for conservatives — anything that has influenced people or threatens to do so — as hateful.

The even deeper issue is profound and dangerous ignorance of First Amendment principles. It’s not just Thomas, either. Earlier this year, CNN anchor Christiane Amanpour actually suggested to ex-FBI director James Comey that perhaps his agency should have “shut down” Trump supporters’ anti-Hillary Clinton chants of “Lock her up!” during the 2016 presidential campaign (video below).

This is no small matter. Our freedom of speech cannot long survive such pseudo-elite, and man-on-the-street, ignorance.

Photo of Rep. Erica Thomas: AP Images



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