Name of Student

Name of Professor

Name of Class

Day Month Year

My paper will discuss the role of silence in two stories, “Barbara the Slut” by Lauren Holmes and “Drown” by Junot Diaz. I will discuss whether “silence” becomes a character in these stories or not. Both authors used a distinctive way of molding their stories with the threads of silence. Both of these books are poignant and yet hilarious. In “Down,” the author has written into the silences that are created by serious ethical questions which are preferred not to ask by the society but still such questions crucially demand appropriate answers. On the hand, in “Barbara the Slut” the author has beamed on the life of those who face extreme bullying and shame for their sexual acts. She has discussed how the personality of a person gets trapped in the deep dark dungeons of his/her own silences in which depression and stress prey one's soul and engulf every reason to live and move forward in life.   
 In "Drown," characters have a background from the Dominican Republic which has impacted much on the life they are living presently. For Junot Diaz, it is neither responsible nor honest to blame the culpability of the dictatorship of Trujillo on the wicked personality of a single man; one needs to analyze the geopolitical system which still backs such dictators to promise never-ending prosperity accumulation for privileged elites who are self-elected. Moreover, the characters in Diaz’s story have a cultural bias and it looks more like they are in cultural shock. Yunior is the main character and narrator of this story who experiences everything. His character stays in silence in different situations he analyzes everything that is happening around him, how he is being treated socially and emotionally, and how the much deeper train of his thoughts sets course when he experiences every good and bad in his life because of his race, language, and culture. In addition, Silence is an important entity in this story which is driving several elements in it.   
 The character of Yunior has a strong relationship with Beto, but as they are grown up now Beto is a “pato,” a faggot according to Yunior. Yunior had enjoyed a great time of his life with Beto and made good memories. Beto is considered as a family member in Yunior’s family even now but he has different standards of living now. His goals and his perceptions are changed. Both friends are apart and there is a great barrier between the personalities of these two boys now. In the story, Yunior goes to the apartment of Beto thinking he will experience the same welcoming and familiar environment but he does not, he feels unwelcomed and alien in this his apartment. Here Diaz has shown the struggles of Yuniors in his head and all those battles that he is fighting. All Yunior finds there is a great silence in the present which has shut down the doorway of creating the same moments he had experienced before. He embraces this silence and thinks of all those memories they both made and all those times when this place welcomed him. His thoughts, memories, emotions and his bonding with Beto make him look for Beto and his is driven by them and visits the pool, thinking that he'd be there but he couldn’t.

In throughout the story Diaz has beamed how Yunior is being pushed with the forces of his silence. The silence in Diaz story has several doorways, each of which leads to the depth of the particular emotion, feeling, experience, memory, and decision. Part of his silence thwarts him from doing a lot what he is capable of, a part of that silence makes him dwell in the pool of his memories and experiences of past, and another part pushes him to do what he does. It can be said that Diaz has processed silence in this story to become a character.

In “Barbara the Slut” by Lauren Holmes, the author discusses the sufferings of those who are shamed and bullied for being their selves. She has discussed how the cruelty, harshness, and bitterness of the society insert the silence inside one's personality which thwarts him/her to speak up for what an individual believes is right. Such individuals mask their selves in front of the society and hide their pain, depression, and stress behind but they are fighting horrible battles from the inside. The author illuminates the consequences of such silence and drops the curtain away from the reality of such individuals.

Barbara, a character in her story who faced slut-shaming in her high school, even though her character appeared to be fearless, confident and daring, bullying and shaming did break her heart and left painful imprints which tore off her soul again and again in her life. Silence intertwined her personality and weakened her from inside to heal from the wounds she got from the brutal thinking and commenting of the society. Although she managed to silence her emotions from the inside even when one of her classmates yelled *“Go kill yourself, slut!”* it wasn’t disturbing for her, she shut down everything which was boiling in her. For instance, when she told the boy that she slept with, that she follows her “rule” of not sleeping with the same boy twice, he told her, *“Jesus, Barbara. Do you ever wonder why people call you names?”* She did not let her feelings take any decision. Silence is more than a character according to author in this story.