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Bill Maher’s bigoted atheism:

His arrogant shtick is just as ugly as religious intolerance

by Mary Elizabeth Williams

*You know what you call someone who makes sweeping generalizations on billions of people based on the extreme actions of a few? A bigot.*

Mary, you know what you call someone who intentionally misrepresents someone's position because they disagree with it?

A lying sack of ... (well, let's just leave it at that)

*Bill Maher, for example, is a bigot.*

Mary, according to Dictionary.com, "bigot" is defined as:

"a person who is utterly intolerant of any differing creed, belief, or opinion."

Mary, that definition does nothing to separate ... you from Maher.

*And if you’re a fan of his smug, dismissive shtick, you’re a bigot too.*

Mary, calm down. Emotional, nasty rhetoric might fly among the ignorant masses, but it fails among those who want to see the evidence for your name-calling.

*On Friday’s “Real Time,” Maher, who has been openly atheist his whole career but has been increasingly vocal against organized religion in recent years,*

Mary, let me fine-tune that for you. Nearly all Atheists have been increasingly vocal against organized religion since 9/11. It was the event that finally awoke the sleeping bear.

*squared off against Fareed Zakaria, who gave a powerful rebuttal to Maher’s reiteration of the “Islam is the motherlode of bad ideas” assertion.*

Mary, Zakaria gave the usual "Straw Man" reply that "you people" resort to when you cannot defend your position. It's not surprising that you refer to a logical fallacy as "a strong rebuttal" because, in your mind, it obviously is.

*Zakaria said “My problem with the way you approach it is, I don’t think you’re going to reform a religion by telling 1.6 billion people — most of whom are just devout people who get some inspiration from that religion and go about their daily lives — I don’t think you’re going to change religion by saying your religion is the motherlode of bad ideas, it’s a terrible thing. Frankly, you’re going to make a lot of news for yourself and you’re going to get a lot of applause lines and joke lines. Push for reform with some sense of respect for the spiritual values.”*

Mary, what makes Zakaria think that showing respect to those who refuse to respect others, will advance reform within Islam?

*And on behalf of Muslims, Christians, Jews and anybody else who prays to somebody sometimes, let me just say, thank you.*

Mary, there is only one reason why you can publicly and proudly admit that you talk to yourself without embarrassment ... and that's because you Ghost Worshipers are so numerous and you still control the planet.

Hopefully, the day will come when "you people" will get the psychological help you so desperately need.

*As the threats of terrorism and right-wing Christianity have risen in the past few years, Maher’s aggressive brand of atheism — also popularized by the likes of Richard Dawkins and Sam Harris — has gained a strong following among a certain type of self-professed intellectual.*

Mary, let's take a quick look at how you've tried to manipulate your audience with little insults disguised as innocent adjectives:

1) "openly Atheist" (as if it is something that should be hidden)

2) "self-professed intellectual" (meaning arrogant but stupid)

You are one nasty little piece of work Mary.

*Maher has famously said, “Religion is dangerous because it allows human beings who don’t have all the answers to think that they do” — which is pretty funny, given the know-it-all arrogance of the anti-religion big leaguers like Maher himself.*

Mary, science does not claim to have all the answers nor claim absolute certainty; those are found only in religion. So you are projecting Mary - yet another psychological flaw.

*As Zakaria very eloquently pointed out,*

Mary, it's entertaining to watch you now manipulate your audience with adverbs like "eloquently" which you reserve only for those you agree with.

*that stance has given Maher more power and reach than he’s ever had in his long career. But whatever you believe or don’t, if you’re selling blanket intolerance, you don’t get to call yourself one of the good guys.*

Mary, that depends on what you are intolerant of, doesn't it?

For instance, I hope you are not tolerant of slavery; or genocide; or rape. According to your definition, that would make one a bigot.

But you aren't tolerant of slavery, genocide, or rape, are you Mary?

So maybe you should accept the true definition of the word "bigot" and quit trying to redefine it, in order to insult those with whom you disagree.

*I’m a Christian,*

Mary, it's interesting to watch people beam with pride as they announce their special superiority over everyone else. You aren't an "open" Christian, or an "admitted" Christian; you are a proud Christian.

*which in my urban, media-centric world is basically equivalent to self-identifying as a hillbilly.*

Mary, that depends on which type of Christian you are. If you are a modern progressive Christian then I don't think many people would think of you as a "hillbilly." In fact, the only people who might direct hate your way would be Tea Party Christians. You know, the Old Testament Fire-and-Brimstone Christians.

*It also means that I have to accept that I apply the same word to myself that a lot of hateful morons do. But on Sunday at my little neighborhood church, our priest delivered a sermon in which he said, “I can’t understand how in places like Indiana, people are using Christianity as an excuse to close their doors, when we should be welcoming to everyone.”*

Mary, I agree with your priest. Unfortunately, his sermon would not have been well received in many parts of the nation.

*Guess what? That’s faith too.*

No Mary, it isn't. That's human decency. Faith is believing in something for which there is no evidence. As a writer, I would expect you to have a better understanding of English words and their meanings.

*I am also keenly aware that in other parts of the world, people are being murdered for a faith that I am privileged to practice openly and without fear.*

Mary, what you left out, was that for centuries, the people doing the killing in the name of God ... were Christians. And Mary, it still happens - even in America; as the grieving families of murdered abortion doctors and medical staff can attest to.

*And anyone, anywhere, who is openly hateful to others for their religion is part of a culture that permits that kind of persecution to endure.*

Mary, as one of the smallest minorities, Atheists have been unable to stop religious believers from murdering each other. That is true throughout history and wherever you go on Earth. The people who are most hateful (and will kill you) for your religion, are usually other religious people.

*Here’s what I would like Bill Maher and his smug, self-righteous acolytes to understand.*

Damn Mary, you write like a pubescent teenager with a genital infection. You don't seem capable of writing in a controlled, mature way that addresses the facts. Maybe you can ask your priest to help you with that one?

*There are literally billions of individuals in this world who are not murderous, ignorant, superstitious, hatemongers, who also happen to practice a religion.*

Mary, thanks for giving us the Straw Man ... yet again. We already know that. No one is denying that. You are trying to use the Straw Man argument to distract your audience from the fact that you have no defense for the inhuman violence that religion is bringing to the world, every single minute.

*Billions of people who I swear — to God — have no investment in forcing their beliefs on Bill Maher.*

Mary, save your swearing. History proves that Christians have in fact, invested heavily in forcing their beliefs on others.

*Right here in the U.S., there are millions of my fellow Christians who are strongly committed to the ideals of the Constitution, and who don’t want to live in a theocracy any more than they do.*

Mary, those Christians are not the problem. It is the tens of millions of Tea Party Christians who are attacking our Constitution and have openly stated that they desire a theocracy, who are the problem.

But when progressive Christians like you bury your heads in the sand, and make apologies for them ... you aren't helping. If you really want to preserve our Constitution and our Democracy, then you need to help us fight against those who are doing everything in their power to take us back to the Middle Ages.

*I recently had a conversation with an atheist friend who asked why, knowing all I do of the wrongs committed by the Catholic Church, disagreeing as strongly as I do with many of its positions on women’s rights, LGBT equality and reproductive justice, I continue to stay within it.*

Mary, I can answer that one. The answer lies in your own Holy Book. What do you believe will happen to you if you lose your faith?

You will lose eternal salvation and spend eternity being tortured in Hell. There is nothing any of your Atheist friends can do to help you as long as you believe that is true; and since that is what the Bible says, and you are a Bible-believing Christian, then you will spend the rest of your life being terrorized by an invisible ghost.

It's not that we don't want to help you Mary ... it's that we can't.

*And my reply was that this is where I feel I can do the most good. I am not a disinterested party. I’m a citizen of my church and I’m going to continue to demand better of it. I don’t, however, want to sell it to anybody else. You don’t have to believe in God — or however else you may define the concept of something else out there. I don’t have all the answers to life, the universe and everything; I’m just trying to get through this plane of existence in a manner that’s philosophically satisfying and guides me in the direction of not being a selfish jerk.*

Mary, your writing style doesn't so much say "selfish jerk" as it does "self-righteous, holier-than-thou, Christian."

*That’s it. All I ask — all that many, many, many of us who practice their respective religions ask — is that you conduct yourself with respect and compassion and a spirit of coexistence, and we’ll do the same.*

And Mary, after 2,000 years, how has that worked out?

Don't bother trying to answer Mary ... we already know.

*I ask that you not make assumptions about the vast majority of the world’s population based on your own need to feel good about yourself and how smart you are.*

Mary, Maher isn't the one who made the assumptions. He based his statements on a Pew Survey. If you wish to challenge the survey results ... be my guest.

*Like Zakaria says, you’re not going to bring about reform that way. And as Maher and his ilk prove, you don’t need a religion to be in the business of spreading hate.*

Mary, disagreeing with Liberal ideologues like you is not spreading hate. But what else can you throw at him when you can't attack the facts nor defend your position. The Straw Man and false accusations of spreading hate ... are all you've got.

<http://www.salon.com/2015/04/13/bill_mahers_atheism_is_just_bigotry/>

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THE SCIENCE SEGMENT

Fast-moving unbound star

has broken the galactic speed record

The unbound star, named US708, is traveling at 1,200 kms per second (or over 2 1/2 million miles per hour). That is the fastest speed ever recorded for such an object in our galaxy, meaning it is not held back by gravity and will eventually leave the Milky Way.

US708 is believed to have once been part of a double-star system, which also included a massive white dwarf star. The white dwarf is thought to have turned into a 'thermonuclear supernova' and exploded sending US708 hurtling across space.

The discovery of US708 sheds light on the mysterious double-star systems that give rise to thermonuclear explosions. Thermonuclear, or type IA supernovae have long been used to calculate the distances to faraway galaxies, a measurement which helps to determine how the universe is changing and expanding.

Using a range of data gathered over the last 59 years, researchers were able to determine the full 3-D motion of the star and measure how quickly it is moving across the plane of the sky.

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FAMOUS QUOTES

Abbie Hoffman (1936–1989) 52 years

He was an American political and social activist who co-founded the Youth International Party ("Yippies").

Hoffman was arrested and tried for conspiracy and inciting to riot as a result of his role in protests that led to violent confrontations with police during the 1968 Democratic National Convention. The group arrested was known collectively as the "Chicago Seven." While the defendants were initially convicted of intent to incite a riot, the verdicts were overturned on appeal.

"You measure a democracy by the freedom it gives its dissidents,

not the freedom it gives its assimilated conformists."