

# Bill Maher admits abortion is murder

## Or, 'kind of' murder, and he's okay with that

by *Keaton Halley*

In a recent moment of candor, irreligious comedian Bill Maher made a shocking admission about abortion on his television program, *Real Time*.<sup>1</sup> The episode aired April 12 and, since then, clips of Maher's comments have been circulating on the internet and social media.

Maher first corrected the misconception held by many on the political left that pro-lifers hate women. "They don't hate women. They just made that up," Maher chastised.

Then, he was honest enough to admit he agrees with pro-lifers about the real rationale behind their opposition to abortion. Unfortunately, this didn't lead him to join their ranks. Maher said:

They think it's murder and [pause] it kind of is. I'm just okay with that. I am. I mean, there's eight billion people in the world. I'm sorry. We won't miss you. That's my position on that.

*It's not really clear what it means to be 'kind of' murdered. One either is or isn't.*

Yikes. Even with Maher's hedge phrase, 'kind of', this strikes people as morally appalling, and ought to. Maher is okay with people being 'kind of' murdered. It's not really clear what it means to be 'kind of' murdered. One either is or isn't. But Maher just doesn't value all human lives and thinks that there are too many of us. This isn't terribly surprising since Maher does not believe the Genesis account of creation which tells us that God made human beings "in his own image" ([Genesis 1:27](#)). This is the only adequate foundation for treating other people with dignity and respect, for acknowledging human rights, and for highly valuing all human lives from the womb to the tomb.

Yet Maher is simply confessing the truth of what abortion actually does. Elective abortion intentionally and unjustly kills an innocent human being.

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Bill Maher

This is not the first time abortion advocates have made surprising admissions along these lines. But they are becoming more frequent as the abortion debate has shifted over the years.

## One tactic: impugning the child's humanity

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For decades, abortion has been justified by downplaying or denying the humanity of the pre-born.<sup>2</sup> This has always been an uphill battle for abortion supporters, because just about all pregnancy guidebooks and websites call the pre-born a "child" or a "baby", and this is both common parlance and common sense. Despite this, champions of abortion often avoid calling the pre-born by these scientifically valid and popularly accepted terms. Instead, they opt for dehumanizing labels like 'tissue', 'clump of cells', 'product of conception', and so on (yet abortion-lovers themselves are just as much 'tissue' and 'clumps of cells', and are certainly 'products of conception'). Many of their arguments for legalizing abortion avoid any discussion of the occupant in the womb, but implicitly assume that this entity is not a genuine human being. So, a useful pro-life strategy has been to simply point out that one of the central issues is the humanity of the pre-

born. If the occupant in the womb is a living human being, then all the typical justifications for abortion are hopelessly inadequate.

For instance, consider the following pro-abortion slogans and responses (cf. the ['two-year-old test'](#)):

*"My body, my choice."*

Not if your 'choice' is to kill a human being. The human being inside you is not merely one of your body parts. It's a distinct individual human being and therefore deserves the right to life.

*"Every child should be wanted."*

That's no excuse for killing a human child who already exists, and the pre-born is an already existing human being at an early stage of development.

*"Women have a right to privacy."*

But that right doesn't extend to the freedom to kill human beings, and it is a scientific fact that the pre-born is a whole, distinct, living human being.

**"The child may be a financial burden."**

All children are! But given that the pre-born is a living member of the human community, just like a born child, that's no reason to end her life.

**"I'm not ready to bring a child into the world."**

The child is already in the world, just not out of the womb. Abortion ends the life of an already existing innocent human being; it doesn't prevent a life from coming into existence.

**"The fetus may not be viable."**

How dependent an individual is on others is not what determines whether she is a human being. Newborns, the elderly, sick, and disabled are highly dependent too. But they are humans, and therefore we cannot kill them just because they need help to stay alive.

**"What if pregnancy was the result of rape?"**

This is an emotionally-charged question, often rhetorically effective because nobody wants to make life harder for a woman who has been violated by such an evil and despicable act. Yet, here too, the moral logic is clear. If a two-year old was conceived by rape, and the burden of caring for this toddler adds to the mother's trauma, does that justify killing the toddler? No, because two wrongs don't make a right, and even though this situation may be very emotionally difficult, the morally right thing to do is sometimes hard. The pre-born child is a full-fledged human being just like the toddler, so she should not be killed for the crime of her father either.

## Another tactic: denying human equality

However, the above responses may not work if the abortion supporter is coming from a different perspective, which sidesteps the issue of the humanity of the unborn. Many abortion advocates today will concede that the inhabitant of the womb is fully human, and argue for abortion on other grounds.

The shift in recent years is based on advances in science that give us a clearer picture of what happens inside the womb, so it's harder to deny the humanity of those growing there. Back in 2006, even *New Scientist* magazine, no friend to the pro-life movement, reported the conclusion of a bipartisan 'South Dakota Task Force on Abortion' that "new recombinant DNA technologies indisputably prove that the unborn child is a whole human being from the moment of fertilization, that all abortions terminate the life of a human being, and that the unborn child is a separate human patient under the care of modern medicine."<sup>3</sup>

Also, pro-life advocates have been tireless in their efforts to educate the public about the scientific facts in this regard. So, many abortion advocates will now acknowledge that the entity in the womb is a *bona*

*fide* human being. But, rather than concede that this means abortion is wrong, they believe there are some human beings who are less valuable than others.

Some radicals, like 'bioethicist' philosopher Peter Singer, advocated this as far back as 1976. In an article for *The New York Review of Books*, Singer said,

The pro-life groups were right about one thing, the location of the baby inside or outside the womb cannot make much of a moral difference. We cannot coherently hold it is alright to kill a fetus a week before birth, but as soon as the baby is born everything must be done to keep it alive. The solution, however, ... is not to accept the pro-life view that the fetus is a human being with the same moral status as yours or mine. The solution is the very opposite, to abandon the idea that all human life is of equal worth.<sup>4</sup>

More recently, Mary Elizabeth Williams, writing for Salon.com, unashamedly declared:

All life is not equal. ... a fetus can be a human life without having the same rights as the woman in whose body it resides.<sup>5</sup>

Maher's admission follows in this disturbing tradition. He is not claiming it's okay to murder just anyone. But there are certain people of supreme value who have the right to life, and others who are less valuable, with lesser rights (if any). The lower humans can be killed if their lives are inconvenient to the higher humans. They can be 'kind of' murdered.

This division of humanity into two groups of differing value is a perspective that has been applied practically many times throughout the last few centuries, at great cost. It's the perspective shared by racists and

sexists who discriminate against some people based on a differentiating characteristic that is not relevant to the equal value we all share, given our common human nature.

The Bible teaches that *all* people are made in God's image. This is the foundation from which the ideas of human value and human rights are derived in the first place. But, the more society rejects the Bible and its account of creation, the more people will push Maher's thinking even further, to its logical, horrifying conclusion. God forbid.

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## References and notes

1. Davis, E.E., Bill Maher says the silent part out loud: Abortion is murder, *The Washington Times*, 18 Apr 2024. [Return to text.](#)
2. The pre-born's humanity is a scientific fact, not just a 'religious' claim. This is why there are groups such as Secular Pro-Life, run by atheistic women; [secularprolife.org/abortion](http://secularprolife.org/abortion). [Return to text.](#)
3. Alison M., Abortion: science, politics, and morality collide, *New Scientist*, 18 Mar 2006. [Return to text.](#)

4. Singer, P., Bioethics: the case of the fetus, *The New York Review of Books* **23**(13), 5 Aug 1976. [Return to text.](#)
5. Williams, M.E., So what if abortion ends life? Salon.com, 23 Jan 2013. [Return to text.](#)