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DECODING THE SAM HARRIS-IAN MURPHY FLAMEWAR



by Miles Mathis

Last year [2013], *Salon* republished an Ian Murphy article that I believe had already been published at *Alternet* and *The Beast*—so apparently someone in Langley wanted to be sure you saw it. It was called [Why does anyone take Sam Harris seriously?](#) An excellent question, and precisely the question I typed into Google to trip across this article more than a year later. To get you up to speed, Harris is one of the “four horsemen of atheism,” or was until Christopher Hitchens dismounted in 2011. I guess he is one of three now, unless they have since hired Murphy to take Hitchens' place. I am sure Murphy has submitted his resume, and that it is on file somewhere now. Murphy is also an atheist, a fact he is keen to quote several times in this very article—though the article has nothing to do with atheism. Murphy is the editor of *The Beast* (not to be confused with the *Daily Beast*), and, as we have already seen, is often republished across the internet. He is known mostly for his sense of humor and his “youthful, fiery” writing style, which, we suppose, is intended to appeal to younger, cooler audiences. He is talking to the intellectual dudes. He does occasionally say something clever—unlike Harris—and I am not here to deny it. In this article, he scores a lot of points on Harris, and though some of them are mildly amusing, they are the peppery left jab sort of points that don't really draw blood. We must suppose Murphy doesn't own a firm right, since we have never seen it land, but it is possible he has it but has been instructed not to use it. It conflicts with his assignment.

You see, Harris and Murphy are really on the same team, although they are pretending not to be. They have been instructed to create a diversion, so that you never see the main event. To show you what I mean, one of the tags beneath the title of this article at *Salon* is “Sandy Hook.” What Harris and Murphy are pretending to disagree about is Sandy Hook. *Salon* has been running interference for Sandy Hook [from the beginning, mainly from the desk of Alex Seitz-Wald](#). Harris is arguing that it is logical for people to go out and buy guns after Sandy Hook and Murphy is arguing it isn't. But, [as I have shown](#), this whole debate is manufactured, not only here with Harris and Murphy, but across the board and across the internet. It is just as manufactured at Infowars.com as it is manufactured at CNN.com. I will keep this short by only telling you the two main reasons why and how it is manufactured. First, it is manufactured to keep you from looking closely at Sandy Hook. They need to divert you very quickly into a gun debate, because if your mind is on the gun debate you won't have

time to analyze the actual story from Connecticut. Notice that both Harris and Murphy take for granted that Sandy Hook happened as we are told. They both accept it as a starting point, and do not question any of it. This is the assignment. This is psychological ground of all their articles on this topic: sell Sandy Hook as a given and move the audience on.

Although both Harris and Murphy drop the terms “science” and “morality”—and many similar terms—the logical, scientific, and *moral* thing to do is first be sure the event actually happened. Before you start debating the correct reaction to an event, you should verify the event. Sandy Hook has not been verified. In fact, under scrutiny, [it has completely collapsed](#). The mainstream told a ridiculous story that has not held up to even the most cursory analysis, and then refused to clarify it. When they got caught telling a mountain of lies, they basically shut down. They red-taped and then bulldozed the scene, changed the timestamps, put a gag order on everyone involved, and threatened all investigators with prosecution. They broke all sorts of transparency and reporting laws, rewrote others, and ignored the rest at will. When a large percentage of Americans expressed doubt and asked for clarification, all they were offered was a soundbite debunking that failed utterly to debunk anything. In fact, the form of the debunking only increased the suspicion. Seeing the failure of all their primary gambits, the mainstream fell back on the secondary gambit that has been used with great success in the past: pretend that their failure was a success.

That is what Harris and Murphy were hired to do. They are pretending everyone believes Sandy Hook actually happened and going on as before. They take that as a given, so what their readers will get first from either argument is “Harris and Murphy are both convinced that Sandy Hook happened. If they weren't, they wouldn't be arguing about the best response to it, would they?” It is a hypnotist's trick, or psychologist's trick. Refuse to acknowledge that the question has been asked, and move on to “a more important question.” No doubt they would tell you Sandy Hook is just a single event. “Gun control is much more important than one event. If you don't accept Sandy Hook, we can take another example. Aurora, for example, or Santa Barbara.” And if you reply that those were manufactured as well, they throw up their hands and say, “I can't argue with a conspiracy theorist! You guys don't even start from the same assumptions normal people do!”

No, we don't, because we don't work for Intelligence like the planted people in the media do, and we don't just accept everything we are told by the media. That *should* be seen as a scientific response—since it is—but you can be sure both Harris and Murphy will find some way to make you look unscientific for demanding evidence before you believe something. As Murphy's buddy from *the Beast* Matt Taibbi did when debating 911 Truthers, they will call you “certifiably insane” for expecting mainstream stories to make sense or follow the laws of physics. Once you demand evidence and they realize they have nothing for you, this is all they can do. They can call you names, and Murphy is one of the best name-callers in the business. He does it with much more flare than Harris or even Taibbi can manage.

That's the how, now for the why. You will say, “I see your point with the misdirection, but how does it help them to tear one another down? If these guys punch each other about enough, they are going to ruin each other's reputations, aren't they?” Not really. They never really had any qualifications to start with. As with all the others you see and hear in the media, they were hired because they were funny or had good hair or because they looked good in a suit or something, not because they were actually experts in any field. So they will continue to have that even after the spat. Besides, as I said, they are instructed to land only wiping left jabs, the kind that score points with the judges—because hand touched face—but that don't do any lasting damage. Harris and Murphy simply aren't big enough people to hurt each other. They are like girls hitting each other with their purses. Harris is sold as a

neuroscientist, but he has never done anything in that field. Getting a PhD at age 42 doesn't make you ranking person in the field, you know. Supposing he really earned that PhD and wasn't just given it as part of his cover, it was still a later occurrence, and appears to have been done to give him some ballast he never had. His first book was published in 2002 but the PhD didn't come until 2009. And since neither atheism nor Middle East politics (his top two subjects) have anything to do with neuroscience, it is not clear any ballast was created. He's a propagandist. He writes books that are promoted by the agencies, and lectures for the same folks. He basically has no credentials, and appeared out of nowhere after 9/11 spouting pro-Israel, anti-Islam nonsense rhetoric, sprinkled heavily with all the other desiderata of the ruling fascists like anti-religion, modern art, neoconservatism or neoliberalism, depopulation, genetic modification, and the joys of surveillance. When he debates, he only debates other agency people, like Deepak Chopra or someone. It's like Wrestlemania—a complete set-up. The same can be said for Murphy, who has no known bio and came from nowhere. Was he a janitor at Langley who they pulled out of the men's room and gave a keyboard to? For all we know.

Plus, these guys are basically expendable. The agencies have an endless supply of people like this, replaceable and interchangeable, like Olympic Chinese divers or boy bands. Their reputations mean nothing. The bottom line in these exchanges is not the people involved, it is the ideas, and those producing the show want to see *both* the pro-gun position and the anti-gun position pushed hard. They profit from both. You will say they can't have it both ways, but, oh, are you naïve. They can and do have it both ways. The superrich who own your country want to pass comprehensive gun laws, yes, but they want you to go buy guns first, since they own all the gun companies like Smith&Wesson, Luger, etc. It's just like how they want you to buy gold: the more guns and gold you have, the more guns and gold they will get when they confiscate them. Think of it like a thief who comes up to you on the street, sells you a Rolex for \$20,000, and then steals the Rolex from you. He now has both the Rolex and the \$20,000. Brilliant. You have to be doubly stupid to fall for it, but a lot of people are falling for it.

So this is who Harris and Murphy are. Harris is selling you the gun and Murphy is selling you the confiscation. While your head is spinning from that, the Sandy Hook story is being written into the history books despite the fact it never happened. And you are too worried about your guns or your neighbors' guns to care.