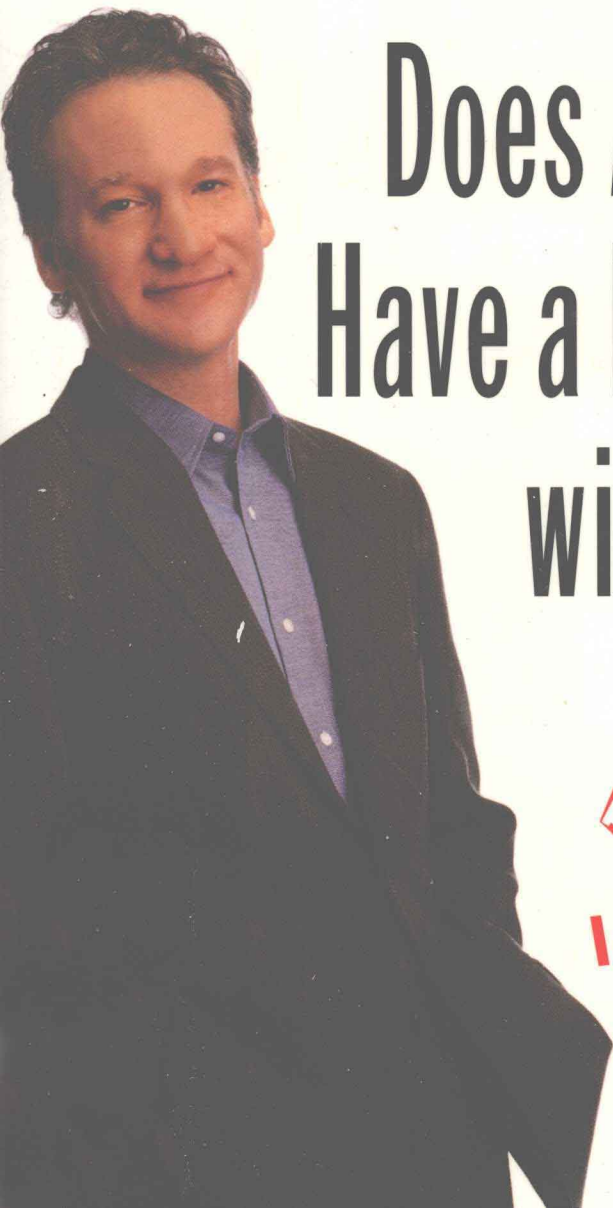


BILL MAHER



Does Anybody
Have a Problem
with That?



GREATEST
HITS

**Does
Anybody** *have*
a Problem
with **That?**

Politically Incorrect's

greatest hits

Bill Maher



villard

new york

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First Edition

Acknowledgments

Most of the material in this book was “TelePrompTer ready,” which means people slaved over the words until they were ready to be actually written out as prose for the prompter (this was in the days of the show when I used to read the questions).

This written material was prepared by the *Politically Incorrect* writing staff, which I proudly count myself among, but I would like to also acknowledge my appreciation to the following folks for not only turning out great stuff for the show, but making me laugh, too: Scott Carter, Christopher Case Erbland, Chris Kelly, Hayes Jackson, Eric Weinberg, John Hotchkiss, and Tim Long.

Preface

Ever since *Politically Incorrect* went on the air, people have been asking me what the phrase means, and where it puts me politically. The simple answer is that it sounded like a good title, and *Murder, She Wrote* was already taken. The slightly more complicated answer is that the name struck me as a convenient shorthand for my particular take on the world. To me, the notion of politically incorrect is neither liberal nor conservative, but an attitude of disgust toward unthinking, dogmatic politics of every stripe.

In fact, political incorrectness is not really political at all; it's more about not being treated like a child. It's a protest against the view that I am a child whose thoughts need policing, and that no one is capable of acting any better than the stupidest member of our society. For example, I *know* alcoholism is serious, but zillions of people drink and enjoy it and don't become alcoholics, and drunk bits are too funny to throw out of comedy. Trust me, I can tell a Polish joke *and* keep it in my head that Polish people aren't really stupid. Political correctness assumes we're morons who, if allowed to do anything naughty, will immediately turn into unmanageable terrors.

The nineties have been an incorrect time and will continue to be so. They always are. The denouement of a century is frightening, and the onset of a millennium makes you positively shit in your pants. So the nineties are gay, and people don't want to be so good. Smoking is up in America. You can do drug jokes on TV again. Maybe soon we'll be able to hold in our minds *both* concepts about drinking:

that alcoholism is sad, but drunks are funny! Hey, anything could happen, because even *men* are making a comeback, finally coming out of our sulking fit over women demanding the right to be as sleazy in their personal lives and ruthless in their professional ones as we've always been. Around *P.I.* that's what we call an "RBT"—and it's this commitment to stating the "rude but true" that I hope makes this compilation of material from our show stand out. That, and the terrifying, real-life accounts of alien abductions.

I hope you enjoy reading this book as much as I enjoyed having it read to me. And for those who've starting bugging me about when my *next* book will be appearing, be patient: I'm already hard at work on a full behind-the-scenes account of my experience playing the lovable robot C3PO in the popular *Star Wars* film series.

May the Force be with you!

—Bill Maher

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Better *to be* **Born**

with a

Pretty

Face

than a

Pointy

Head

Are People Getting Stupider? |

First aired 10•10•93

**Mark Kostabi, Merrill Markoe, John Lawton,
Marvin Kitman**

SAT scores are plummeting, college graduates can't read, and Americans are paying good money for bell-bottoms again. Let's face it, there *is* an education crisis in this country. In a math and science test among students from fifteen countries last year, the United States came in fourteenth. Slovenia, which has been a country since Tuesday, kicked our ass, and, sadly, literacy scores are no better. Reading, which gave us Shakespeare and Dostoyevsky, is being replaced by a visual culture that so far has made me so sick of seeing Madonna naked that I might as well be married to her. The question is, are people getting stupider, or is it just an impression I have from every second of every day?

• • •

"Is the average person stupider today than he was a generation ago? Or do you just run into more stupid people because fewer stupid people are getting eaten by bears?"

—Bill

Is America Anti-Intellectual?

First aired 10·29·93

**Jim Morris, Timothy Leary, Sally Kirkland,
Rep. Marjorie Margolies-Mezvinsky**

In America, we often hear the phrase “the best and the brightest,” as if we in any remote way consider them to be the same thing. In reality, we always appreciate a president, like Reagan or Bush, who leaves the country a little stupider than he found it, and we never fail to swoon for a smear campaign that labels some poor bastard an egghead, although to be fair, Dwight Eisenhower’s “I Like Ike” was just a catchier slogan than Adlai Stevenson’s “Smarty Pants for President.” It’s not that other countries have any more or less intellectuals than we do, it’s just that in other places they seem to be admired instead of despised. After America has broken down so many prejudices based on race, sexism, and religion, isn’t our bias against brains still the most dangerous of all?

• • •

“If you don’t believe that America is anti-intellectual, then why is it that on Gilligan’s Island the character who had the worst billing was the Professor?”

—Bill

Beauty Pageants

First aired 2•22•94

**Joe Queenan, Jonathan Katz,
Janeane Garofalo, Jeffrey Lyons**

What with the Miss America pageant just around the corner in September, we thought it appropriate to head off now any of the usual protests that in recent years routinely accompany any beauty pageant—protests that say it’s sexist to judge women only on their looks. Hey, the problem with these pageants is that they don’t just judge the looks—they throw in a lot of crap about having a talent and answering essay questions—and that America’s too sexually repressed, and radical feminists too scary, for us to admit there’s nothing wrong with the flagrant flaunting of beauty for beauty’s sake. Every category in that pageant should be about beauty: best legs, best smile, best chest of anyone not on *Baywatch*. Does anyone have a problem with that?

• • •

“How is it in this country that, if you pore over that Sports Illustrated swimsuit issue, you’re a pervert, but if you ogle the same babes in alphabetical order by state, you’re patriotic?”

—Bill

• • •

“Beauty pageant women, Sports Illustrated women, and women who work for Aaron Spelling: They are to me as Uncle

Tom is to the black man. . . . They are such Stepin Fetchit sell-outs."

—Janeane Garofalo

. . .

"We pretend not to tolerate racism on TV and in movies. Yet we allow sexism and objectification to run rampant every day and every way."

—Janeane

"You've said your piece. Let me ask you this: How would you end world hunger?"

—Bill

. . .

"What I think is so dangerous about the beauty pageants is the very narrow scope of what they regard as beautiful. Society in general—its idea of beautiful has much too much to do with thin. My feeling is that when you can actually see a woman digesting, then she's too thin."

—Jonathan Katz

Beauty over Bell Curve |

First aired 11.29.94

**Chris Rock, Robert B. Parker, Terrie Williams,
James Toback**

A recent bestseller, *The Bell Curve*, contained the controversial argument that IQ test scores are the most important factor in determining a person's success, although the book was widely criticized for also containing five hundred of Oprah's favorite recipes. Sadly, *The Bell Curve* gets it all wrong: As the O. J. Simpson trial has shown us, it's not brains that are important in life, it's being physically attractive. Stephen Hawking may be a brilliant, groundbreaking physicist, but he makes about one tenth as much as Heather Locklear, even though they're both at the top of their fields and they've both been married to the drummer from Mötley Crüe. You can always get ahead by further educating yourself, but among humans, it just may be better to be born with a pretty face than a pointy head.

• • •

"Money is the great equalizer. Money takes away all your faults. Money will turn a bald spot into a part!"

—Chris Rock

• • •

"You don't hear women described as having rugged good looks."

—James Toback

GET OVER YOURSELVES

Supermodels

First aired 11·2·94

Once again, it's time for our Prince Rogers Nelson "Get Over Yourself" Award, which we give out to the person or persons we feel most in need of getting over themselves.

In honor of Fashion Week here in New York, tonight's award goes to supermodels, who, admittedly through no fault of their own, have been elevated to a status in our society formerly reserved for war heroes and Nobel Prize winners—in other words, people who did something, as opposed to people who just plucked the lucky Pick 6 in the genetic lottery. I don't begrudge Cindy or Niki or Naomi their fame and fortune, because modeling all day is actually hard work. However, if you think it's tough spending all day in a trailer, try living in one. Not to mention how grueling it is cramming into exclusionary restaurants all night and breathing second-hand Mickey Rourke.

No, what I object to is the presumption in every disinterested sneer these girls wear that their stardom is somehow something they had coming to them, when in truth they could have just as easily been born with Down syndrome as with flawless features and long legs. So often we see them acting perturbed and put upon by all the adulation and the burden of being hit on by every man, as if for a second they'd change places with a plainer woman. Life's tough when you have to drink eight glasses of water a day and get paid a lot to, basically, stand there, but when I hear about Claudia Schiffer

writing her memoirs at twenty-three, it's almost as if she must have been put under a spell by some magician to think that she belongs in the library next to Schiller and Schopenhauer.

Look, supermodels, it's a short, wild ride, and the same fickle society that can't get enough of you now will get over you soon enough. So, before they do, get over yourselves!



Season One: Too much hair.