



OpEdNews Op Eds 8/11/2024 at 5:16 PM EDT

## [The MAGA Strategy of Personal Insults Against Harris is Backfiring](#)



Robert S. Weiner



Olivia Ardito

Article published in *The PuLSE Institute*

By Robert Weiner and Olivia Ardito

The MAGA strategy of personal insults against Harris is backfiring big time. While being interviewed by panelists from the National Association of Black Journalists on July 31, Trump claimed that Harris "turned black" and raised skepticism about the legitimacy of her black identity.

The second Harris entered the presidential race, MAGA Republicans began hurling insults at her. "Laffin Kamala Harris" and "Crazy Kamala" are just a few of the taunting nicknames Trump has used for Vice President Kamala Harris as of late. Others include calling her "crazy", "nuts", and "dumb as rocks" in posts on his social media platform Truth Social. JD Vance, the other half of the Republican ticket, made headlines recently for calling Harris a "childless cat lady" and claimed she did not care about the future of our nation because she has not had children. Shockingly, some religious far-right MAGA supporters have stooped so low as to call her a "j\*zebel" who slept her way into politics, simultaneously insulting her with a sexist and racist term. And we've lost track of the amount of far-right Republicans who have called Harris a "DEI" president, which has become a quasi-slur due to their hatred of "DEI" initiatives.

This Trump-MAGA strategy of name-calling comes as no surprise. Trump has a history of utilizing personal and identity-based insults against his opinions. He came up with many names for Biden - sleepy Joe took the internet by storm. He also personally insulted Obama by coming up with outlandish theories about his country of birth and taunting his middle name, Hussein. Trump also raised similar, completely fictional accusations about Harris in 2020 as she assumed the role of Vice President due to her being of Jamaican and Indian origin. He claims to believe that Harris is either lying about her ethnic background or that she is not as American because she is black and Indian.

Historically, many of his supporters have been a fan of this insult Trump tactic. These insults along with his slogans, catchphrases, and merchandise helped create the MAGA brand. It turned being a Trump Supporter from a political opinion to a lifestyle and an identity. True to his businessman roots, Trump transformed MAGA into a cult-like group and this strategy helped him win in 2016.

Harris' strategy, now as the nominee for the Democratic party, is extremely different. Rather than focus all her energy on hurling insults at Trump, she has been building herself up. She launched a marketing campaign to target the youth demographic by capitalizing on trending singers, such as Charli XCX and Megan thee Stallion. She rebutted against Trump at a campaign rally in Atlanta on July 30 by daring Trump: "Meet me on the debate stage... because as the saying goes, if you've got something to say, say it to my face." Additionally, Harris and her Democratic colleagues have described MAGA's strategy as "just plain weird".

These bold attempts show that Trump is ineffective at tearing her down. She is standing strong, and his name-calling and insults are no sweat off her back.

She insists "we are going forward not back" on programs that affect the poor, middle class, and minorities, including jobs, health, housing, food, student debt and assistance, and democracy and election counting.

Harris' strategy is superior to Trump's, and the proof is in the polls. Newsweek reported August 1 a "Kamala Harris Youthquake as she jumps 20 points among voters aged 18-30 compared to Joe Biden". Additionally, in polls released by Bloomberg on July 30, Harris led over Trump in four swing states - Arizona, Michigan, Nevada, and Wisconsin - whereas Trump only polled slightly better in two swing states.

Clearly, the American public is tired of Trump's strategy of childish name-calling and hurling insults at opponents. It is ineffective and simply mean. It reminds voters of playground fights rather than presidential elections. On the other hand, Harris' strategy of focusing on herself and not letting others pull her down is faring much better. The ultimate test will happen in this coming November, but until then it seems many Americans favor the fresh, more professional take Harris is bringing to the campaign trail.

*Robert Weiner was a spokesman in the Clinton and George W. Bush White Houses. He was communications director of the House Government Operations Committee, and senior aide to Congressmen John Conyers and Charles Rangel, Reps. Claude Pepper and Ed Koch, Sen. Ted Kennedy, and Four-Star General/drug czar Barry McCaffrey. Bob is a member of the National PuLSE Advisory Board.*

*Olivia Ardito is a policy analyst, research coordinator, and Op-Ed writer working at Robert Weiner Associates News and Solutions for Change.*