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Commentary

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Commentary

Clyde Taylor

There's some buzz about Bill O'Reilly's racially ignorant remarks about Sylvia's Restaurant in Harlem.

But the darling of left-liberal media jokesters, Jon Stewart, had a good time on his Friday, September 21 show, first, at the expense of President Bush, and then at the expense of Nelson Mandela. Blogs are cheerleading the way Stewart caught Bush in another dumb statement—that Nelson Mandela is dead.

After a minute's mugging and double-taking of amazement and puzzlement, Stewart pulls a telephone from under his desk and pretends to dial a call. I half expected to hear the great leader on the phone, confirming his with-us-ness. The show has made surprise phone connections with celebrities recently. But no. Some strange quacking sounds come out of the phone. Stewart says "Nelly?" More quacking sounds. "Thank God. President Bush just said you were dead. Wait a minute, how do I know this is Nelson Mandela? What's the mole on my inner thigh shaped like? It does look like a boot. [Sigh of satisfaction.] I'll call you back." Delighted laughter from the audience.

The only comments I find on the web are kudos for Stewart's bashing of Bush. No mention of Stewart animalizing Mandela with sounds that echo the mumbo-jumbo sneer at nonwhite speech, or of his gender-bending Mandela by calling him Nelly. No mention of his depicting Mandela as his sex toy.

Stewart has surpassed Bill O'Reilly's dumb remark about Sylvia's. In fact, he has gone beyond Imus; this bit was not a spontaneous slip. The phone under the desk, the recorded sounds of a super-inarticulate Mandela, were all choreographed.

I'm curious that all the bloggers who cite this Stewart slur—you can still find a video of it on www.crooksandliars.com—are so bemused by Stewart's cleverness about Bush but give no thought to his sliming one of the few unblemished great men of the last century. One website called brownfempower.com, a self-styled "Woman of Color Blog," only had gushing comments about how John Stewart rocks.

It is finally now out in the open that Stewart is another one of those White hipsters who have channeled black culture to the point where, out of regret for their emotional dependency on black originality, they need to take revenge through a racism that others conspire with them to overlook.