

# Did the Media Play Fair with Herman Cain?

☒ So Herman Cain is finally out. He left the race insisting he's innocent, that he didn't do any of those things he was accused of. Absent a confession some time down the road, or some improbable piece of evidence popping up, we'll never know for sure if he did what those women say he did. That's fine with me since I don't need to know, and frankly, I don't want to know.

A more important question, for me anyway, involves the media. Did Herman Cain get fair treatment from journalists? The answer is yes. And no.

Here's the yes part: As much as Cain's supporters might wish the media simply ignored the stories, how could they? Here's a guy running for president, doing very well in the polls, and facing all these allegations involving sex. That's news.

Yes, it's true that once upon a time there was a kind of gentleman's agreement between journalists and politicians whereby reporters would pretend they didn't know what they knew when the subject involved sex and infidelity. JFK comes to mind. But that was a long time ago. And imagine if the media did ignore the Cain story and he somehow got the GOP nomination. What if the Obama campaign went public with the allegations right before Election Day? That's the kind of October surprise that would probably sink Cain, or any other candidate. He'd be finished and his supporters would be screaming about how liberal reporters brought their guy down ... *by keeping the story under wraps.*

Here's the no part: Conservatives are right when they complain about a double standard. Anthony Weiner aside, the media simply salivate more when they're going after a conservative

Republican than a liberal Democrat. The media didn't want to have anything to do with the John Edwards story, until they couldn't ignore it any longer. And they even ignored, for as long as they could, all sorts of sexual allegations against Bill Clinton.

But Herman Cain was different from Bill Clinton. With Clinton it was all about sex. Cain's real crime, as far as a lot of liberals in and out of the media are concerned, is that he is a black man who had the audacity to call himself a conservative Republican. That, to a lot of liberals, is the kind of crime they cannot ignore and will not forgive.

Herman Cain always struck me as a very nice guy. I like him. But I don't believe him. In the end he didn't have a media problem. He had a women problem.