

What If Herman Cain Were a Liberal?

✘ I don't know what Herman Cain did or didn't do with those women, but I do know this: while reporters will run over their grandmothers to get their face on the air or their byline in the newspaper, they will salivate more when going after a conservative Republican than a liberal Democrat.

Yes, the so-called mainstream media uncovered Gary Hart's sex scandal when he was running for president in 1988, and he was a liberal Democrat. They also went after Anthony Weiner, another liberal Democrat, who eventually resigned from Congress. John Edwards was something else. Reporters didn't want any part of that lurid sex story and covered it only when they couldn't ignore it anymore.

How about Bill Clinton? Yes, reporters covered Monica and the blue dress and all that. So we certainly can't say they ignored his sexcapades. But it's more complicated than that.

Let's go back to Herman Cain. His accuser is being described in the press as an Ivy League graduate. They never explain the relevance of that, so I'll tell you: it's to let you know that she's smart – just like the reporters who are covering the story – and that people who go to Ivy League schools should be taken seriously.

Unlike Paula Jones.

Paula Jones, you may recall, was the Arkansas state employee who said Bill Clinton, when he was governor, summoned her to a hotel room and exposed himself in front of her. Given what we know about Clinton, the story is hardly incredible. But the day she came forward with her story, NBC and CBS ignored what she had to say and ABC News devoted a measly 16 seconds to her story. (The networks started covering the story more

seriously three months later when she filed a lawsuit against Clinton.)

Charlie Gibson of ABC asked a colleague on the air: "Why does anyone care what this woman has to say?"

And Evan Thomas of Newsweek said Ms. Jones was nothing more than a "sleazy woman with big hair."

We all know about the media's liberal bias when it comes to journalism. But this bias – this elitism – is worse. It's repulsive. Paula Jones spoke with a thick southern accent, which is tantamount to a crime against humanity as far as elite journalists are concerned. She went to high school, but that was it. If she had gone to Harvard or Yale or Princeton they might have taken her more seriously. And, of course, she had "big hair" – perhaps biggest crime of all.

If there was a Ku Klux Klan for snobs, Evan Thomas would be the Grand Kleagle.

And when a respectable Arkansas businesswoman came forward when Bill Clinton was president and accused him of raping her in a hotel room, when he was attorney general of the state, the liberal media virtually ignored the story. NBC News had an exclusive with the woman but the president of the division didn't want to put it on the air. He finally relented, after a lot of internal pressure, but he still held held the story for a month, until Clinton's impeachment trial had ended, apparently fearing that putting it on during the trial might hurt Clinton.

But day in and day out there are Herman Cain sex scandal stories on the air and in the press, even though we don't know what he allegedly did or to whom he did or didn't do it. Part of the blame, of course, goes to Herman Cain himself for his amateurish handling of the story. But let's go back to my handy-dandy rule of thumb: reporters salivate more when they're going after conservative Republicans than liberal

Democrats. That's why they won't let this one go.

Imagine if Herman Cain were a liberal and all this was happening to him. And while we're at it, imagine that Clarence Thomas was also a liberal. Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton would be on television day and night screaming racism. "First they try to bring down a black man nominated for a seat on the Supreme Court," they would say, "then they try to bring down a black man leading in the polls who is running for president." And the editorial board of the New York Times would be working overtime to portray their critics as world-class racists. But because they're conservatives, the liberal civil rights establishment goes silent.

So, is race involved in the Cain sex scandal? Not in any traditional way. His critics aren't racists in the way we usually mean it. They don't hate black people because they're black. But make no mistake: liberals – in and out of the media – hyperventilate when a *conservative* black man gets too powerful. Black folks aren't allowed to stray from the liberal plantation. Liberals are the benefactors of black people – at least that's how they see themselves – and a black man with a conservative message – a message that says, "We don't need your paternalism" – poses a threat to their image of themselves as good white people who really, really care about black folks – black folks who could never make it in society if it weren't for liberal support.

Politico broke the Cain story but hasn't told us where they got it. Politico doesn't have to give us a name of its confidential source, but it does need to tell us his or her motive. We know that whoever leaked the story was trying to hurt Herman Cain. But that's not enough. We need to know, for example, if it was some other politician trying to bring Cain down. That would be important news.

One more thing: You think Politico would have gone with the story involving unnamed sources, unnamed accusers and unnamed

supposed acts sexual misconduct ... if Herman Cain were a liberal?