



Comedy Central Rallies Satirize Beck, Tea Parties

Saturday's "Rally to Restore Sanity," hosted by Comedy Central's Stephen Colbert and Jon Stewart, proved to be a forum of absurdity and mockery of all things conservative, most notably, Glenn Beck. Intended to be a satirical version of Beck's Restoring Honor rally, the October 30 rally seemed to restore little sanity.



Saturday's event actually witnessed two simultaneous rallies. Stewart's rally called for greater sanity in political discourse, while Colbert encouraged his attendees to promote fear-mongering dialogue in politics. Colbert opined:

If Eve just had a healthy phobia of snakes, she would not have eaten that apple and cursed us all with original sin. Then I'd be able to walk around naked everywhere instead of just my bathroom, my living room, and participating Burger Kings.

Saturday's rallies at the Washington Mall boasted an estimated 200,000 attendees according to CBS News, though that number falls significantly than Beck's August 28 rally that drew up to 500,000. (For an article estimating the crowd at the Beck rally, [click here](#).)

The Colbert/Stewart rallies clearly imitated much of the Restoring Honor rally. Like Beck, who handed out awards to notable Americans who have espoused the ideals of Faith, Hope, and Charity, Colbert and Stewart handed out Sanity and Fear awards. According to Stewart, the awards were intended for people who have shown a propensity for sanity when they were in the public eye.

One recipient of the Sanity award was Steven Slater, the now-infamous gay former flight attendant with JetBlue who notoriously cursed out a passenger prior to departing the plane via the emergency exit slide.

Colbert provided Fear awards to those who have induced fear among others: CNN's Anderson Cooper, for instance, received a Fear award for his coverage of disasters. According to Colbert, when Cooper arrives in a neighborhood, it means bad news for the area.

It's likewise clear that Glenn Beck was on the minds of many participants. When questioned by *The Blaze*, attendees took the opportunity to target Beck as a "fear-monger" and "Nazi," asserting that they were more comfortable at Saturday's rally than they would be at any Tea Party or Beck rally, which they said attracted far more close-minded participants.

Meanwhile, both Colbert and Stewart drew on gay-related and race-related jokes to fire up the crowd. For example, when discussing how Stewart was to assess the success of his rally, he said, We all know its color and size.

The rally featured a performance of "There is no one more American than we," a song mocking the American patriotic spirit, during which Stewart and Colbert sang the line "from gay men who like football to straight men who like 'Glee.'"



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on November 1, 2010

Attendees at the rally bore absurd, though humorous signs, such as, I want my country (ham) back, and I have a sign.

Others, however, did seem interested in delivering left-wing messages. Some carried placards that said, Thank you, Obama and I fought Nazis in Europe and none of them looked like Obama.

Likewise, organizations such as Media Matters and LGBT (Lesbians, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender) attempted to make more out of the farce, bearing signs that read Restore Sanity: Fight Fox and providing transportation to a number of participants.

Overall, however, it seemed that the rally was intended to be a satire of today's political climate.

The director of law and security for Human Rights Watch participated in the rally by donning a chicken beak and handed out Fight Fear stickers.

He explained, It's part of the Colbert tongue-and-cheek satire of Keep Fear Alive, which means being chicken.

The clearly comedic nature of Saturday's event proved to be a disappointment to some political pundits who had believed that the rally would help motivate people to vote Democrat, including Colorado Representative Jared Polis.

Of the rallies, Politco wrote, The event, with the Capitol as the backdrop, was a comedic success. But Stewart's decision to avoid explicit partisan politicking denied the left a kind of galvanizing moment that might have driven to the polls his Democratic fans who weren't already planning to vote or motivated previously apathetic liberals to grass-roots activities.

Photo of large Stephen Colbert puppet at "Rally to Restore Sanity": AP Images



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