

LOUSY PIECE OF JOURNALISM FROM CRUX

Christopher White, a Crux correspondent, can't even spell Bill Donohue's name right, but his more serious delinquencies entail what he wrote about him in a news story on the Amazon synod.

He correctly says that Donohue pointed out that the bishops have a dilemma on their hands. They must decide "how to respect the culture of indigenous peoples while at the same time acknowledging inherent deficiencies in it." If the next sentence sounds like an odd transition, it's because it is. "In short, there is nothing noble about savages—quite the opposite."

In fact, that sentence appears five paragraphs later, after Donohue quoted from the esteemed anthropologist Napoleon Chagnon about what he described as the savagery of an Indian tribe, the Yanomami, from the Amazon region. But the reader would never know this by reading what White said.

So why would White jump to this sentence, taking it completely out of context? So he could tee it up for this gem: "Donahue's [sic] language characterizing the 'deficiencies' in indigenous culture was slammed by a number of Catholic theologians and commentators as insensitive or tinged with racism."

The deficiencies Donohue made reference to were not something of his imagination: He quoted what the authors of the working document on the Amazon synod said. Besides deficiencies in medical care and education, they wrote about the "inefficiency of health/sanitation services." That's their language. Does this make them insensitive or racists as well?

One more thing. Who are these theologians and commentators who "slammed" Donohue? Why doesn't White say who they are? Why

haven't they surfaced? Are they cowards?

Crux has done some very fine work under the auspices of John Allen. But this piece is not of that vintage—it is a lousy piece of journalism.