

Trevor Noah – Stand-up Monologue at the John Bishop Show

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6:44 mins.

Transcribed by Lale Eskicioglu

My name is Trevor Noah, and I am from South Africa. It is not my first time in the UK, but every time I come here, I get increasingly, more and more nervous. Every time I come in, I feel like it gets harder and harder to come into the country. Your border is very very strict. They ask a lot of questions. Questions I often know the answers to, but, I find, they'll make you doubt. I remember, I got here two days ago, and the guy was really interesting on this occasion. He got my passport, to which he replies:

[with an English accent] "Is this you?"

Never before have I felt so much pressure to look like myself. He asked question after question.

"So how long you're going to be out here for?"

"Four days."

"Four days? Is that right?"

"Yeah."

"What are you doing?"

"I am doing a comedy show."

"Oh. Comedy. Are you a comedian?"

"Yes."

"Oh. You don't look funny. Do you have any jokes?"

"I checked them in with my luggage."

[awkward silence] “Was that one of them?”

“No. I am sorry.”

“I need to know the address of where you are performing, Sir.”

“I don’t know the address.”

“Well, then, I can’t let you in.”

“You gotta believe me. I wouldn’t lie about that. I am just here to do a show and then I am leaving.”

“Well, I don’t know that you’re gonna leave, Sir.”

They always ask these questions making it seem like absolutely everybody wants to come and stay in the UK. I always want to say to them, “it’s not as great as you think.” It really isn’t. No, don’t get me wrong, I understand, right now, it is easy to be arrogant because you are having your five days of summer, but it is not as great as you think.

He was asking question after question. And then, he said something that was very true, very sincere. He said to me:

“You gotta understand, I am not trying to be hardass about this. But I can’t just believe you’re here to do what you say you’re going to do. You could do something else.”

I was like, well, you know what, fair enough, fair enough. That’s a great attitude to have. That’s an attitude that I wish we had when the British first arrived. Would have saved us a lot of pain. Because, we had no clue. No clue. It was the greatest trick the British ever pulled. They just pitched up on the shores of Africa:

[bugle call] “We have discovered this land.”

[Natives] came out like, “Hey! Hey!”

“Oh, look at that, we have discovered people.”

“We were here first, what are you doing here?”

“We’re here for a comedy show.”

“Oh, come on in.”

“Bang bang. Bang bang.”

“Ah-ah. That wasn’t funny.”

And they took over. They took over. I always think about those things. The guys pitching up at the country. No one speaks the language. That must have been the most awkward thing ever. The guys pitching up in the ship, shouting (at the locals).

“You, over there. What’s the name of this land?”

[answers in Zulu]

“No, no, I said who are you?”

[Zulu]

“This is horrible, we have to teach them English: A – B – C”

[Zulu]

“A – B – C”

[Zulu]

[the British start shooting]

“A – B – C”

“That’s a lot better.”

It’s fun game, colonization, really was. It’s the most arrogant form of patriotism, when you think about it, you know. It must have been cool. I wonder what Britain must have been like back then. It was so great that you guys wanted to go make it somewhere else. “Oh, this is wonderful. We should do it everywhere.” That’s what it was, colonization all over the world.

What's weird to me though, is like how people act like colonization never happened. I don't like that. Like it's weird when people say "all these foreigners coming into the UK, all these bloody foreigners." Well, it's because you told them about the UK. You gotta understand, in the world, we would not have cared for this place at all.

No one knew about the Great Britain. In India, they were having a good time. The British went and told the Indians about Great Britain. They were having fun with the elephants and spices. They had no need to come to this country. But the British got there, and they were like:

[bugle call] "Here ye, here ye. All Great Britain."

[Indian accent] "OK, first of all, you should have started with a hello. That was a brash entrance. I don't think it was necessary."

"Have you heard of Great Britain?"

"No, we have not, and you don't need to shout, I am right over here. I don't know why you are talking like that."

"You need to learn of Great Britain and come and see it."

"No, no, we are fine. India is a perfectly wonderful place. I don't know how great your land is. Considering your complexion, it doesn't look like you have much sun. I don't know if I want to go to a place like that."

"How dare you insult the land of the Queen! Do you know the one true God?"

"No, no, we have many gods here, many many gods, many gods."

"You need one god. Our God."

"Well, our gods are already in the positions. So, if anything opens up, we'll let you know."

"You don't know that Jesus loves you?"

“I do not know of Jesus. But, if you introduce me, maybe I could learn to love him too. But, right now, I am currently in a relationship.”

“How dare you! Jesus loves you!” [stabs him]

“Ahh. Ok, ok, ok, I get it, I get it, I can feel the love of Jesus now. Please, no more Jesus, it hurts, it hurts so much.”

It was a really crazy experience. But it was colonization done right. That’s what I truly enjoyed. The British did it perfectly. Because now we are friends. We all speak the same language. We even have a game we participate together. The Commonwealth Games. Ironically named. There was nothing common about it. The wealth was in one place.

“Let’s forget everything that happened and let’s play some games together. Do you guys have horses where you’re from?”

“No, we don’t.”

“Yeah, we’re gonna dance horses. Let’s do dancing horses. Jamaica, are you gonna be joining in?”

[in Jamaican accent] “No, we never gonna join in. Your people don’t wanna admit what you did to us. We never gonna play your games. Give us back our sugar, give us back our people, give us back our gold.”

“Well, we can’t do that, that’s ridiculous! But come and run with us.”

“Will you give us back the gold?”

“No, we won’t. But we’ll let you win it back, one medal at a time.”