

Sean Hannity 'Pulled a Gun' on Juan Williams CNN Claims, Sparking Twitter Feud

If you thought the devolution of the media could go no further, you thought wrong.

CNN reporter Dylan Byers filed a report Thursday saying sources at Fox tell him Sean Hannity "pulled a gun" on Juan Williams.

The article opens with a video in which CNN host Brian Selter accuses Hannity of anti-journalism. It then segues into charges from Byers that Hannity is a Trump shill and crybaby who rudely calls people jackasses if they disagree with him. Then Byers [drops this nugget](#):

Last year, after ending one of his many spirited on-air arguments with liberal contributor Juan Williams, Hannity pulled out a gun and pointed it directly at Williams, according to three sources with knowledge of the incident. He even turned on the laser sight, causing a red dot to bob around on Williams' body. (Hannity was just showing off, the sources said, but the unforeseen off-camera antic clearly disturbed Williams and others on set.)

For the record: Hannity's colleagues brought the Williams incident to the attention of Fox News executives, though it's not clear whether anything came of it. The sources said it went to Bill Shine, the network's co-president and longtime Fox News executive, who is Hannity's longtime friend and a former producer. A Fox News spokesperson said the incident was referred to the legal and human resources departments.

Byers included a statement from Williams in which the Fox host

said the event “is being sensationalized.” Williams later tweeted a similar statement. But that did not deter the CNN reporter.

(1/2) This incident is being sensationalized – everything was under total control throughout and I never felt like I was put in harm’s way.

– Juan Williams (@TheJuanWilliams) [March 17, 2017](#)

I stand by my reporting, Juan. Every word. 110%.
<https://t.co/vvYMdWCs4E> <https://t.co/Um7dZfIqnq>

– Dylan Byers (@DylanByers) [March 17, 2017](#)

Fake news hack. Of course u do. Lol. It’s not true. Unless u r calling me and Juan liars. Shocking from “White Lash” network. <https://t.co/lueCKtPirX>

– Sean Hannity (@seanhannity) [March 17, 2017](#)

I stand by my reporting, Sean. <https://t.co/7qX3tnAi2N>

– Dylan Byers (@DylanByers) [March 17, 2017](#)

Byers then spends the next 400 words questioning Hannity's temperament and suggesting the chippy Fox News host, whom he is poking with a proverbial stick, is always "spoiling for a fight." (Byers writes all of this without a sense of irony.)

We don't know the actual facts of the interaction between Hannity and Williams (neither does Byers). But I suspect the accusation that Hannity "pulled a gun" on Williams is at worst wrong and at best misleading and needlessly inflammatory; a device to buttress CNN's claim that Hannity is a loose cannon who practices "anti-journalism" in contrast to CNN's real journalism.

But the larger question is this: Why is CNN so interested in what Sean Hannity is doing? I suspect it's about ratings and entertainment.

Regarding the former, the old gossip king Walter Winchell [once quipped](#) that the fastest way to become famous is to "throw a brick at someone famous." Whatever one thinks of Sean Hannity, he's a ratings king and a brick lobbed in his direction will draw attention. Selter and Byers know this.

Regarding the latter, the Roman poet Juvenal (100 A.D.) once observed that the masses anxiously desire two things: *panem et circenses* (bread and circuses). Petty feuds between television hosts are lowbrow stuff, but they are great for ratings. And CNN's ratings are, [well...](#)

CNN is a solid news network, and their international coverage is especially good. Byers might be right about Hannity's temperament, but when "the most trusted name in news" runs this kind of sensationalism and shop gossip it reveals itself a purveyor of the yellow journalism it often decries.

Alas. *Panem et circenses*.

The moral? Turn off your television and find [a good book to read](#).