

## **Gail Shister / CNN's Dobbs rides tall with immigration issue**

The Philadelphia Inquirer

May 9, 2006 Tuesday

Copyright 2006 Philadelphia Newspapers, LLC All Rights Reserved

**The Philadelphia Inquirer**

Found on Philly.com

**Section:** FEATURES MAGAZINE; Pg. E01

**Length:** 844 words

**Byline:** **Gail Shister**, Inquirer Columnist

### **Body**

---

Going south of the border is driving **Lou Dobbs'** numbers north on Nielsen.

Tapping into the zeitgeist with a vengeance, **Dobbs'** rants against illegal **immigration** are yielding big ratings for CNN.

The 6 p.m. weekday *Lou Dobbs Tonight* averaged 817,000 total viewers last month - a 46 percent increase over April '05, according to Nielsen Media Research.

Moreover, **Dobbs** was up 34 percent among the 25-to-54-year-old audience that advertisers pay a premium to reach.

"The passions of the country have aligned with Lou's passions for subjects like broken borders," says CNN/U.S. president **Jonathan Klein**. "The rest of the nation is awakening."

Reality check:**Brit Hume's** *Special Report* on Fox News Channel clobbers **Dobbs** at 6. Hume is averaging 1.4 million total viewers this year, almost double **Dobbs'** total. Still, **Dobbs** is up 33 percent so far in 2006.

**Dobbs'** position on illegal **immigration** dates back more than four years, he says. The **issue's** in full flame now, with Congress debating a controversial new bill, and rallies being held around the country.

"As a citizen, the idea that 4 1/2 years after 9/11 we would have such porous borders is completely outrageous to me," **Dobbs**, 60, says. "It's unconscionable."

"We've been absolutely committed to this **issue** for years. It touches nerves."

So does **CNN's** Klein. Comparing **Dobbs** and Hume, he says the former "is more informed about the critical **issues** facing the country, and more objective about what's going on in the world. Lou **Dobbs** is in the pocket of no man."

That's a not-so-veiled reference to **President Bush's** new press secretary, former Fox newsman **Tony Snow**.

Hume "is a well-respected journalist," Klein says, "but for Fox in general, when a Fox anchor is the president's spokesperson, it might be hard for viewers to presume that it's reporting independently on the... **issues**."

An FNC rep returns fire: "After **CNN's** dismal performance [in April], Jon should be more concerned with keeping his job than passing judgment on a respected journalist like Brit Hume."

As a journalist, **Dobbs** has "utter contempt" for the language used in much of the coverage. His beef: Too often, **immigration** is used instead of *illegal* **immigration**.

"There's so much political correctness... . It's not honest language or honest terms. It offends me any time the public is denied the truth. The coverage has been remarkably shallow."

Unless federal agents can secure the borders, citizen **Dobbs** supports building fences "wherever necessary. There's no other reasonable, responsible position to take."

Some argue that journalists shouldn't take any position publicly, to avoid even the appearance of a conflict of interest.

Klein argues that **Dobbs**' 30-plus years of experience informs his mixture of news, analysis and opinion, "and it's clear which is which."

**Dobbs** says his audience *expects* him to express his views. For those who don't appreciate his brand of advocacy journalism, "it's because they don't agree with my conclusions, in nearly every case," he says.

**Dobbs** will continue pounding illegal **immigration** "until Congress and the administration - this or the next - lives up to their responsibility to provide for the safety of the American people, and we resolve the **issue**."

**Done deal.** It's official. **CNN's Anderson Cooper** will contribute up to five reports a year to CBS's *60 Minutes* beginning in the fall, CBS said yesterday.

Cooper's *60* pieces will get a one-time reshewing on his CNN show, *360*. With two years remaining on his four-year contract, Cooper remains a full-time CNN employee.

For now. "He's definitely a candidate for a full-time position at some point," says *60* executive producer **Jeff Fager**. "This is an example of how highly we think of him."

Cooper did two stories for the now-defunct *60 Minutes* early last season. "It's a rare reporter who's a natural fit for *60*," Fager says. "He got the full package as a reporter."

CNN chief **Jonathan Klein** labels the deal "a perfect fit. I think they still do some of the best journalism on TV, and he's one of the best journalists."

**Life or death?** Will gay Vito get whacked on *The Sopranos*?

**Neil Giuliano**, new president of the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) and a serious *Sopranos* fan, predicts that Vito will keep on keepin' on.

After being outed by a member of Tony's crew, Vito (**Joseph Gannascoli**) is on the lam in a small New Hampshire town, where he's fallen for a macho firefighter.

A father and a husband (to a woman), Vito "is an intriguing and complex element of the show now," says Giuliano, in town over the weekend to participate in the Equality Forum.

"There's so much more to be explored, I think the producers will take the opportunity to explore it. I might start a 'Keep Vito Alive' fan club."

Even wise guys can be gay, Giuliano says.

Because it defies all the stereotypes, viewers of "one of the most popular shows of our time can see there are lesbians and gay people everywhere. Some of them are even thugs and killers."

Gail Shister | CNN's Dobbs rides tall with immigration issue

Contact TV columnist **Gail Shister** at 215-854-2224 or [gshister@phillynews.com](mailto:gshister@phillynews.com). Read her recent work at <http://go.philly.com/gailshister>.

## Classification

---

**Language:** ENGLISH

**Publication-Type:** Newspaper

**Subject:** TELEVISION RATINGS & SHARES (90%); **IMMIGRATION** (89%); ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS (89%); BORDER CONTROL (89%); JOURNALISM (89%); TERRITORIAL & NATIONAL BORDERS (78%); SPECIAL INVESTIGATIVE FORCES (73%); POLITICAL CORRECTNESS (66%)

**Company:** NIELSEN MEDIA RESEARCH (84%); FOX ENTERTAINMENT GROUP INC (83%)

**Industry:** TELEVISION RATINGS & SHARES (90%); TELEVISION INDUSTRY (90%); TELEVISION PROGRAMMING (77%); NETWORK TELEVISION (77%)

**Person:** GEORGE W BUSH (57%)

**Geographic:** UNITED STATES (79%)

**Load-Date:** May 9, 2006