

# New England Cable News and the Terry Glenn Story

## Abstract

This text+video case is about how a news organization, New England Cable News (NECN), handles the arrival of a fax alleging sexual misconduct by a member of the New England Patriots football team. The case itself is all video, and unfolds in real time, allowing students to experience the pressures of a newsroom deadline within the context of the classroom. Students come to class already familiar (through a background section) with the history of NECN and its competitive position within the Boston media market, as well as with the iconic place that the Patriots, and player Terry Glenn, occupy within Boston's sports culture. Based on this and short video clips, they are expected to weigh the pros and cons for NECN of running a story 1) right away; 2) after some basic reporting; or 3) at all. Some video advances the story; other clips provide support to both sides of the debate over whether or not to air the piece at various junctures.

Students have the opportunity to debate the proper role of the press: should it be the gatekeeper, the filter, or the pipeline for news items? What is the responsibility of a news organization—to get news out as soon as it is available, updating as necessary; or to wait until all the facts are established? What about the he said/she said approach—is it right to publish the fact of a charge as newsworthy in its own right, before the merits of the charge are known, so long as a contrasting view (a denial or other) is presented simultaneously? Students also have a chance to discuss how to manage the competitive pressures within the world of broadcast journalism.

The case study can be used in a class on editorial decision-making, on broadcast news, on cable news or on editorial ethics.

## Credits

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