



# NEW ENGLAND NEWS FORUM

## FOUNDING COLLABORATORS

- Joe Bergantino (MA) investigative reporter, CBS-4
- James Boylan (CT) retired editor, Columbia Journalism Review
- Bob Casell (ME) exec. director, public affairs, Univ. of Southern Maine
- Michael Dukakis (MA) faculty, Northeastern Univ.; former Massachusetts governor
- George Geers (NH) New England Society of Newspaper Editors
- Loren Ghiglione dean emeritus, Medill School of Journalism former publisher, Southbridge [Mass.] Evening News
- Irwin Gratz (ME) news director, Maine Public Radio, ex-SPJ president
- Tarcy Himeline (ME) city editor, Lewiston Sun Journal
- Elizabeth Kolbert (MA) writer, The New Yorker
- Ray Lamont (RI) executive editor, The Westerly Sun
- Meredith McCulloch (MA) Retired librarian, Bedford, Mass.
- Daniel Okrent (MA) ex-editor, New England Monthly first New York Times public editor
- Larry Parnass (MA) managing editor, Daily Hampshire Gazette
- Laurisa Sellers (MA) ex-director, Minnesota News Council; Simmons College
- Norman Sims (MA) journalism professor, UMass Amherst
- Michael Socolow (ME) journalism professor, Univ. of Maine-Orono
- Michael Waller ex-publisher, Hartford Courant
- Robert Whitcomb (RI) editorial-page editor, Providence Journal
- Ralph Whitehead (MA) journalism professor, UMass Amherst
- Lisa Williams (MA) placeblogger, Center for Citizen Media

## ON THE WEB:

<http://www.newenglandnews.org>

**ABOUT US** -- <http://www.newenglandnews.org/?q=about>

The New England News Forum is a collaboration among journalists, educators and the public to inspire active citizenship through discussion and spotlighting of media issues. We aim to increase public trust and deepen public understanding of the news media by promoting the practice of trusted, thorough, and accountable journalism.

- The forum, launching during 2007, is supported by a seed grant from John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and is based at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.  
<http://www.mediagiraffe.org/wiki/index.php/Nenc-formation>

## WHY NOW?

Buffeted by changing advertising economics, new expectations from audiences who now have cheap technology for do-it-yourself news, and caught amid lagging regional growth, New England news media are reexamining the role they can afford in civil society. They welcome fresh insight and new tools for remaining connected with and trusted by readers, listeners, viewers and users.

The Internet now provides a means for active, timely exchange over matters of civic importance affected by news coverage. But until now, there has been no common resource which aims to help the public become better citizens though better use -- and support -- of the news media. We hope to fill that void, primarily through a literate, articulate, moderated web community.

**WHAT WE DO** -- <http://www.newenglandnews.org/?q=projects>

The New England News Forum offers an independent resource which can help define, research, advise -- and hopefully strengthen and expand -- the relationship between news producers and news consumers. On the web we offer journalists, web-news entrepreneurs and active citizens a place to engage in discussion, to share and resolve disagreements over media issues such as privacy, coverage, access, accuracy, bias and emphasis. Our topical, web-based, moderated forum is open to regional public-policy issues that touch on matters of journalistic practice.

Our activities advocate and advise on:

- General analysis of the region's media and critical regional issues.
- The effect of the web and new technologies on news presentation and ethics.
- The relationship between traditional and "citizen" journalists.
- How to understand and contribute to the news.
- Open records and open government.
- Methods for assisting news organizations to perform openly.

As we launch during 2007, the News Forum seeks support to:

- Host a [moderated forum](#) for civil and productive discussion of issues related to New England media, with regular conveners by region and topic.
- Convene [seminars, talks and other events](#) around the region on topics addressing the relationship between media and the public. The first such events are scheduled for May 10 at the Springfield, Mass., public library and May 17 at the Boston Public Library.
- Develop a [consumer guide](#) to using the news
- Study the state of [open records, open meetings](#), and open information in New England
- Research and report on the state of New England K-12 efforts to [teach and test critical skills](#) for consuming media in ways which promote civic engagement and participation.

## WHO BENEFITS FROM THE NEWS FORUM?

There are at least seven constituencies who can benefit from the New England News Forum's research, discussions and advice:

- Leaders of policy non-profits and government agencies whose success depends upon effective collaboration with the media.
- Active citizens, who use and care about the news and about the vitality, diversity and responsiveness of regional state and local institutions and government.
- Working newspeople in print, broadcast, cable, Internet and mission-driven media.
- Former journalists working in marketing, PR, or unrelated fields who maintain concern for the role of the press in civil society.
- Teachers, especially in grades 7-12, who seek help with curricula and ideas that connect news with the daily experience of youth.
- Professionals and individual contributors: Academics, nurses, doctors, lawyers, technologists, entrepreneurs, investors and others.
- Professors and graduates of New England journalism programs

## WHO ARE WE?

The New England News Forum is a service of the University of Massachusetts Amherst [journalism program](#) and its [Media Giraffe Project](#), with seed funding from the [John S. and James L. Knight Foundation](#). We are forging region-wide collaborative relationships with:

- Other academic institutions committed to teaching journalism
- Media, news and professional associations
- Businesses, foundations and organizations concerned with journalism's role fostering democracy
- Groups and individuals concerned about New England's future

**JOIN US -- <http://www.newenglandnews.org/?q=join>**

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