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Case Study Exercise

The dilemma in the case regarding the Eastern European athlete who died during a practice run is that news outlets that used the footage had to deal with the consequences of hurting the athlete’s family, friends, supporters and teammates. However, the news outlets that did not use the footage didn’t allow the public a chance to see what actually happened during the practice run.

Using the footage could prevent this type of accident from happening again in the luge. Some possible arguments for using this footage could be drawn from the Potter Box and teleology. These two points could determine why the news outlets that used the footage were right. The first step of the Potter Box is to review the facts of the case. By doing this, it can help pick out the dilemma. The second step of the Potter Box is to consider your loyalties as a resolution to the dilemma. A journalist’s loyalties are to the citizens and their employer. If your employer wants to use the footage, a journalist’s loyalty is to obey the employer’s wishes. Citizens may need to see the footage as well. An Olympic athlete is a public figure, so when a public figure dies, it becomes news. It is a journalist’s loyalty to the citizens to show the footage, otherwise they would be holding information back from the public.

The third step of the Potter Box is to review your own values. As journalists, following a code of ethics can help decide how to report a story. In this case, some outlets decided to use the footage. A journalist has an obligation to the truth. In this case, the ongoing effort to keep the story reactive and practical, is a part of being a journalist making ethical decisions.

The final step of the Potter Box is to consider appropriate principles. This final step relates to the nine principles of journalism. Two of the nine principles really stand out in this case. The first is truth, where journalists must keep an ongoing effort to consistently report news. This allows for citizens to trust that the news outlet will continue to report the truth and not keep anything from the public.

When news outlets decided to show the footage from the practice run at the Olympics, they were showing the truth of what had happened. The other principle that stands out in this case is keeping the news in proportion and making it comprehensive to the public. For this case, it is okay to show the footage if it is not shown too frequently. The Potter Box is the key process in answering the question of whether the footage should have been shown. In conclusion, the news outlets that used the footage were right.