

How Megyn Kelly made 2 big enemies and won millions of admirers



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(Photo: Chris Carlson, AP)

Megyn Kelly had one hell of a year.

The former Fox News anchor found herself in the news rather than just reporting it, a dual role she managed during one of the most contentious presidential elections in history.

Perhaps most famously, [President-elect Donald Trump attacked her after she posed a question about \(/story/life/people/2016/12/07/trump-talk-gets-megyn-kelly-booped-hollywood/95121226/\)](#) his comments on women. She also was attacked by former U.S. House Speaker [Newt Gingrich](#) and fellow Fox News anchor Sean Hannity. Experts say it was this ability to challenge conservative diehards while leading a right-leaning

cable network that made her a star.

"A lot of her popularity has to do with the context as much as content," said John Carroll, a mass communication professor at [Boston University](#). "She's at Fox News and she doesn't adhere to the party line at all times, and that gives her a freshness that many other personalities don't have."

[Megyn Kelly bolts Fox News for NBC News](#)

(<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2017/01/03/megyn-kelly-bolts-fox-news-nbc-news/96112100/>)

Her ability to find herself in the news drove her momentum, said Ben Bogardus, an assistant professor of journalism at [Quinnipiac University](#).

"It made her a character instead of an anonymous news anchor," he said.

Trump called Kelly overrated and off-base after her famous question. The two, however, later made nice. She again made the news when she told investigators that her boss, Roger Ailes, sexually harassed her in the past. Kelly also relayed her experience to Fox's parent company, 21st Century Fox, shortly after former Fox host Gretchen Carlson sued Ailes for sexual harassment. In her book *Settle for More*, Kelly said Ailes first started harassing her in 2005.

"She didn't just cover the presidential election," Carroll said. "She was a player during the presidential election and that gave her a status that went beyond the normal news profile or journalistic profile that others had."

But Carroll questions whether Kelly will maintain atop the media landscape as she leaves Fox News for NBC.

"It may be that in the Fox News environment, that's where her appeal is greatest," Carroll said. "If you put her in a more general environment, one that's less agenda-driven, what makes her unique becomes less of a factor than it is at Fox News."

[These 10 execs, newscasters shook up media in 2016](#)

(<http://www.usatoday.com/story/money/business/2016/12/27/these-10-execs-newscasters-shook-up-media-2016/95527494/>)

At NBC, Bogardus said, Kelly may experience the same struggles other news anchors experience when jumping networks. Others like [Katie Couric](#), [Sam Champion](#), and [Keith Olbermann](#) have attempted such a move unsuccessfully.

"There's also no guarantee Kelly's conservative-leaning audience at Fox will follow her to the parent company of left-leaning MSNBC, or that NBC viewers will accept a former Fox News personality," he said. "Newscaster-led daytime talk shows have been a difficult sell recently. Viewers seem to want more Ellen-style entertainment shows, instead of harder-edged shows."

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