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MY FIRST AND LAST WORDS ON LOWLIFE MICHAEL VICK

A number of readers have asked why I haven't written about the Michael Vick saga. I have tried to ignore the subject since everyone else feels compelled to blather about it ad nauseum. What is there left to say?

Frankly, Vick isn't worth the precious space I am allotted on these pages. He is a lowlife and a liar who assumed that because he is a gifted athlete he could operate by a different set of rules than the rest of us. Bad assumption. The feds have thrown him for a loss. After months of denying any responsibility, Vick finally has pled guilty in U.S. District Court to financing a gambling enterprise for dogfights, and for the death of six to eight defenseless dogs through the "collective efforts" of Vick and his boyhood buddies. He has also been suspended indefinitely from the NFL and lost his endorsement deal with Nike.

For once, the usual list of suspects who would try covertly to position Vick as a victim of racism has been drowned out by public outrage — black and white — over his despicable behavior. But give them an "A" for effort. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference's out-to-lunch President Charles Steele had stated that his group would find a way to salute Vick during its recent national convention. "We will recognize Vick for being an outstanding human being," said Steele. On what planet has this guy been residing?

Fortunately, State Rep. Tyrone Brooks, president of the Georgia Association of Black Elected Officials, was able to help Steele extricate his foot from his big mouth. There would be no awards for this "outstanding human being" at the convention after all. "There are a lot of young people who need our help," Brooks said. "Michael Vick is not one of them. All he does is run and throw a football."

Brooks also mentioned in passing that the quarterback hadn't been a financial supporter of the SCLC. Hmm. I wonder if Brooks would have been as hard-line had Vick showered the SCLC with dollars instead of pursuing his interest in animal cruelty? Since this is the first time I have ever agreed with anything Tyrone Brooks has uttered, I will give him the benefit of the doubt.

Not wanting the SCLC to hog all the headlines, the Atlanta chapter of the NAACP decided they should weigh in. R. L. White, the group's president, said, "We ask the NFL, Falcons and the sponsors not to permanently ban Mr. Vick from his ability to bring hours of enjoyment to fans all over this country." Why in the name of Hades does he care about bringing "hours of enjoyment to fans"? Why isn't he speaking out instead about black-on-black crime? Single mothers? Deadbeat dads? Why isn't the NAACP holding press conferences, to tell young people that Michael Vick is a lousy role model and to stay in school, get an education and become productive members of society?

Then there is the pride of Georgia Tech, Stephon Marbury, who gave up his dream of becoming a nuclear physicist after only a year in school so that he could play pro basketball and get tattoos all over his body. Marbury opined that he considers dogfighting a "sport" conducted behind closed doors. If Sheila the Family Wonderdog reads this, she is liable to bite Mr. Marbury where the sun doesn't shine. She would consider that great sport.

And poor ol' Arthur Blank. This naïve man bought the Atlanta Falcons with a part of the fortune he amassed at Home Depot and then gave Vick $130 million for 10 years to quarterback the team. He even piloted Vick around in a wheelchair on the sidelines at the Falcon games after the PETA poster boy broke his leg. The "outstanding human being" repaid his owner's generosity with boorish behavior on and off the field, and by lying to Blank about his dogfighting enterprise. Welcome to the wonderful world of professional sports, Arthur.

So Michael Vick's days as an Atlanta Falcon or even as a pro football player appear to be over. So what? I say goodbye and good riddance. There you have it: My first and last words on the subject.

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