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OPINION

The NFL Has A Very Bad Week

In terms of mere public relations, the National Football League may well have endured worse weeks than last week — but it's hard to remember when that might have been. Instead, at this moment, we are left with a parade of unseemly images that has many of us wondering what else lurks beneath the corporate-created surface.

The week started with Ray Rice of the Baltimore Ravens being dropped by the team after a video showed him knocking out his then-girlfriend (now wife) in an elevator last February in a public act of domestic violence.

A video recorded later in the sequence was leaked several months ago showing Rice dragging the woman out of the elevator. For months, the events leading up to that situation were left to the public's imagination — and the public pretty much had it figured out. The NFL's initial response had been to suspend Rice for just two games.

But last week's elevator video disclosure became even more incendiary when police revealed that they had shared the video with the league several months ago. Commissioner Roger Goodell's quest for the truth in the matter came under harsh question, and deservedly so. Did he see the elevator video before he made his rather tepid two-game suspension? Did he not see it? Did he not WANT to see it? (It was subsequently reported that Rice had told Goodell in June what had happened, which further makes us wonder how the league views such behavior.)

Then on Friday, Minnesota Vikings running back Adrian Peterson was indicted in Texas on charges of child abuse: According to accounts, he had taken portion of a tree branch, removed the leaves and used it as a switch to whip his son on the derriere. Peterson's defense was that was the kind of punishment that had been administered to him when he was a child. Nevertheless, the image of a professional football player — a high-profile star, no less — doing this to a child was distressing, and Peterson's arrest was another dismal moment for the league.

Meanwhile, three other players were on practice fields for NFL clubs despite having recent serious brushes with domestic violence. The San Francisco 49ers' defensive end Ray McDonald was charged two weeks ago with felony domestic violence after injuring his pregnant girlfriend. Carolina Panthers defensive end Greg Hardy played in the season opener after being convicted in July of threatening and beating up his girlfriend. (However, he was benched just prior to Sunday's game.) And last Tuesday, the Arizona Cardinals signed running back Chris Rainey, who had been released by two other clubs, at least once due to domestic violence.

Taken together, these items paint a disturbing portrait of a league ... or does it?

After all, the NFL essentially markets violence due to the nature of the sport. In some ways, these off-field transgressions do not wander so far from our expectations of what happens on the field, which Americans dearly love. And the league's docile approach to addressing such matters might suggest where its multibillion-dollar priorities really are.

None of this should suggest that all NFL players are violent, abusive thugs — that would be grossly unfair. But is it so far of a stretch to believe that there might be more of this kind of mentality in the players' ranks, especially based on what we expect and want to see Sunday after Sunday in the autumn?

What happens on the football field each week isn't reality. It's just a game, and it has little bearing on life other than being a form of violent entertainment and a revenue-generating enterprise. But what happens off the field is real and has actual consequences. What we saw off the field last week, and how we saw the league handle itself in these processes, were sobering and sickening. But will they be enough to change our perception of the league? And will that be enough to affect the NFL's prosperous bottom line? Sadly, those are probably the only questions that matter.

kmh

ON THIS DATE

By The Associated Press
Today is Tuesday, September 16, the 259th day of 2014. There are 106 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On September 16, 1974, President Gerald R. Ford announced a conditional amnesty program for Vietnam war deserters and draft-evaders.

On this date: In 1498, Tomas de Torquemada, notorious for his role in the Spanish Inquisition, died in Avila, Spain.

In 1810, Mexicans were inspired to begin their successful revolt against Spanish rule by Father Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla and his "Grito de Dolores (Cry of Dolores)."

In 1893, more than 100,000 settlers swarmed onto a section of land in Oklahoma known as the "Cherokee Strip."

In 1908, General Motors was founded in Flint, Michigan, by William C. Durant.

In 1914, "Candid Camera" creator Allen Funt was born in New York.

In 1919, the American Legion received a national charter from Congress.

In 1940, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Selective Training and Service Act. Samuel T. Rayburn of Texas was elected Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives.

In 1953, "The Robe," the first movie presented in the widescreen process CinemaScope, had its world premiere at the Roxy Theater in New York.

In 1964, the rock-and-roll show "Shindig!" premiered on ABC-TV.

In 1982, the massacre of between 1,200 and 1,400 Palestinian men, women and children at the hands of Israeli-allied Christian Phalangist militiamen began in west Beirut's Sabra and Shatila refugee camps.

In 1994, a federal jury in Anchorage, Alaska, ordered Exxon Corp. to pay \$5 billion in punitive damages for the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill (the U.S. Supreme Court later reduced that amount to \$507.5 million). Two astronauts from the space shuttle Discovery went on the first untethered spacewalk in ten years.

In 2007, O.J. Simpson was arrested in the alleged armed robbery of sports memorabilia collectors in Las Vegas. (Simpson was later convicted of kidnapping and armed robbery and sentenced to nine to 33 years in prison.)

Ten years ago: Hurricane Ivan plowed into the Gulf Coast with 130-mile-per-hour wind and a major storm surge; Ivan was blamed for 92 deaths, 25 of them in the U.S. The number of

foreigners kidnapped during the Iraq insurgency reached at least 100. The National Hockey League lockout went into effect.

Five years ago: Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mt., chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, unveiled sweeping legislation to remake the nation's costly health care system. Mary Travers, 72, one part of the folk trio Peter, Paul and Mary, died in Danbury, Connecticut. NCAA President Myles Brand, 67, died in Indianapolis.

One year ago: Aaron Alexis, a former U.S. Navy reservist, went on a shooting rampage inside the Washington Navy Yard, killing 12 victims before being shot dead by police.

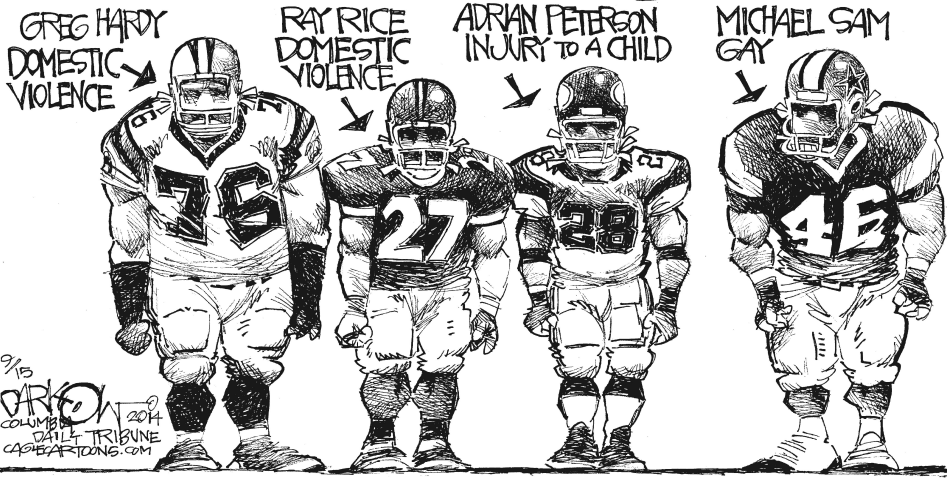
Today's Birthdays: Actress Janis Paige is 92. Blues singer B.B. King is 89. Clergyman-author Rev. Robert H. Schuller is 88. Actor George Chakiris is 82. Bluesman Billy Boy Arnold is 79. Movie director Jim McBride is 73. Actress Linda Miller is 72. Rhythm-and-blues singer Betty Kelly (Martha & the Vandellas) is 70. Musician Kenney Jones (Small Faces; Faces; The Who) is 66. Actress Susan Ruttan is 66. Rock musician Ron Blair (Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers; Mudcrutch) is 66. Actor Ed Begley Jr. is 65. Country singer David Bellamy (The Bellamy Brothers) is 64. Country singer-songwriter Phil Lee is 63. Actor-comedian Lenny Clarke is 61. Actor Kurt Fuller is 61. Jazz musician Earl Klugh is 61. Actor Christopher Rich is 61. Singer Frank Reed (The Chi-Lites) is 60. TV personality Mark McEwen is 60. Baseball Hall of Famer Robin Yount is 59. Actor Mickey Rourke is 58. Magician David Copperfield is 58. Country singer-songwriter Terry McBride is 56. Actress Jennifer Tilly is 56. Retired MLB All-Star pitcher Orel Hershiser is 56. Retired MLB All-Star Tim Lincecum is 55. Actress Jayne Brook is 54. Singer Richard Marx is 51. Comedian Molly Shannon is 50. Singer Marc Anthony is 46. Comedian-actress Amy Poehler is 43. Country singer Matt Stillwell is 39. Singer Musiq is 37. Actor Michael Mosley is 36. Rapper Flo Rida is 35. Actress Alexis Bledel is 33. Actress Sabrina Bryan is 30. Actress Madeline Zima is 29. Actor Ian Harding (TV: "Pretty Little Liars") is 28. Actress Kyla Pratt is 28. Actor Daren Kagasoff is 27. Rock singer Teddy Geiger is 26. Actress-dancer Bailey Buntain is 25. Rock singer-musician Nick Jonas (The Jonas Brothers) is 22.

Thought for Today: "You can love a person deeply and sincerely whom you do not like. You can like a person passionately whom you do not love." — Robert Hugh Benson, English author and clergyman (1871-1914).

FROM THE BIBLE

And for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good. Genesis 50:20. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis

WHO WAS TO BE THE "DISTRACTION" IN THE NFL?



The Rez Of The Story

On Domestic Violence

BY VINCE TWO EAGLES

Hau Mitakuepi (Greetings My Relatives), Lundy Bancroft, the author of "Why Does He Do That?: Inside the Minds of Angry Men," writes: "The confusion of love with abuse is what allows abusers who kill their partners to make the absurd claim that they were driven by the depths of their love feelings. The news media regrettably often accepts the aggressor's view of these acts, describing them as "crimes of passion." But would could more thoroughly prove that a man did not love his partner? If a mother were to kill one of her children, would we even accept the claim that she did it because she was overwhelmed by how much she cared? Not for an instant. Nor should we. Genuine love means respecting the humanity of the other person's self-esteem and independence. This kind of love is incompatible with abuse and coercion."

The National Football League is once again being visited with struggle as it is attempting to come to terms with the actions of running back Ray Rice, formerly of the Baltimore Ravens. As everyone knows, Rice has been suspended indefinitely from the NFL because of his criminal behavior know as domestic violence. I just want to take a second to express my gratitude for the use of surveillance cameras, or an otherwise all-too-common practice of violence against women would probably have gone unnoticed. It is too bad that we as a society have to resort to recording everyone's public behavior. People resort to telling lies to escape punishment and being held to account for their actions.

Kudos to the NFL for taking an exact (although slow in coming) course of action that sends a clear message to its members that violence against women will not be tolerated. Vice President Joe Biden, in an article published in TIME magazine this week, relates: "Domestic

abuse of any kind is ugly, and today there is rightful public outrage over it, whether the perpetrators are famous athletes or leaders of our communities."

We in Indian Country have to take this issue a lot more seriously. Gone should be the days of characterizing domestic violence as mere jokes about so-called, "Indian love." It is disgusting how incidents of partner battering get laughed off by some in Indian Country. None of us in modern society, whether it be Indian or non-Indian, should ever tolerate such criminal activity in our communities. Biden continues, "The American people have sent a message: You're a coward for raising a hand to a woman or child — and you're complicated if you fail to condemn it."

Hechetuado (and so it is)! Dismissing domestic violence because of being intoxicated is the worst kind of cowardice there is. I hear this excuse all the time. It's expressed as: "I don't remember, I must have blacked out." Yeah, right — so that makes it OK then? It is not OK for family members to treat each other with anything less than respect, support and responsible love. Our family has to be a place where we can find safety and comfort, not fear and violence. If violent behavior exists in your family, something is definitely wrong! Seek help immediately, don't let another day go by living in such a situation.

If you have trouble controlling your anger and find yourself taking out your frustrations on family members either verbally, emotionally or physically, seek counseling and anger management training. If you find yourself the victim of this kind of abuse or witness your children, nephews, nieces or grandchildren being victimized, now is the time to recognize you are not alone and there is help.

And now you know the rez of the story. Doksha (later) ...



Vince TWO EAGLES

Michael Reagan

The Media's Lynching Of Ray Rice

BY MICHAEL REAGAN
CagleCartoons.com

Let's get to the burning national media issue of the week — Ray Rice and spousal abuse.

All the professional media moralizers are jumping on the politically correct Rice soapbox to prove to each other how much they are against physically abusing women.

As if anyone is in favor of it. Rice knocked out his bride-to-be Janay in a casino elevator last February. That's about the only thing clear from the elevator footage TMZ released to the world.

How he knocked her out — with a punch or a push — isn't clear. Did she spit in his face? Looks like it on the video.

Did she hit him first? Apparently. Did both of them hit or spit at the other? Maybe. Were they both drunk, stupid and nasty to each other? Seems so.

All those annoying facts and nuances are not certain, and probably never will be. But they don't matter to the old and new media.

Those few seconds of silent and grainy elevator video were all the news media, the Ravens' ownership and the NFL front office needed to try, convict and sentence Rice to a prime-time lynching.

No one dared to say a word in Rice's defense. I even heard conservatives who should know better saying things like "There's never an excuse to hit a woman."

Never? Really? What if a woman is about to hit you in the face with a baseball bat? Or your wife is chasing you with a butcher knife? Or the WWE's women's champion is about to break you over her knee?

The knee-jerk reaction to what Rice did reminds me of what happened in Ferguson, Mo., when a white cop shot and killed an unarmed young black man.

We immediately were assured that Michael Brown was an innocent, peaceful young man and the latest example of bad behavior by a racist cop in America.

Many sensible people, especially conservatives, said, "Hold on a minute. We first need to find out

what really happened before the shooting." What did Brown do or not do to the officer before he was shot? Did he punch him or try to grab his weapon?

Until we get all the facts, they said, we can't make Brown as an innocent victim and we can't hang the cop.

Fact-finding is too late for Ray Rice and his career. No trial is required. He's guilty as charged by the media. Next case, please.

Unfortunately, and without excusing a thing the Rices did to each other, Ray Rice has become, at least for this week, the dirty face of domestic violence in America.

When the media are done exploiting him, beating up on the NFL's "culture of violence" and pretending they care deeply about America's problem with domestic abuse, they'll move on to exploit the next hot ratings-grabber.

Just as our child abuse problem disappeared in the media after the Sandusky case at Penn State, domestic abuse will quickly fall off their radar screens again.

Domestic violence is a real problem that won't go away. An estimated 1.2 million women will be abused by their husbands every year.

The abuse will continue to occur in all kinds of marriages and within all age ranges, ethnic backgrounds and economic levels.

Women are the victims 85 percent of the time, but men are abused verbally and emotionally, and sometimes even physically.

Domestic violence is never acceptable, no matter who does it or how it occurs. But until another celebrity case comes along, with video footage, you can bet the national media won't even mention it.

Michael Reagan is the son of President Ronald Reagan, a political consultant, and the author of "The New Reagan Revolution" (St. Martin's Press). He is the founder of the email service reagan.com and president of The Reagan Legacy Foundation. Visit his websites at www.reagan.com and www.michaelreagan.com. Send comments to Reagan@caglecartoons.com. Follow @reaganworld on Twitter.

YOUR LETTERS

Great Show!

Brenda and Ron Shipley, David City, Nebraska
I would like to thank everyone involved with having an outstanding concert and show at the WJ Ranch just south of Yankton recently. It takes a lot of hard work and much pride in hosting a family-oriented show like the one we experienced.

This was our first time being at the WJ Ranch and we will definitely be back. I'm still singing these great songs in my head; of course, I'm a huge Ty Herndon fan. He has a quality that is missing in today's country music. I would have never gotten to see him in a live performance this close to home if it weren't for the Schiferls and their wonderful sponsors who put on these concerts in such a unique atmosphere.

Online Opinion

The results of the most recent Internet poll on the Press & Dakotan's Web site are as follows:

LATEST RESULTS:

Who do you support in the South Dakota U.S. Senate race?
Rick Weiland 50%
Mike Rounds 27%
Larry Pressler 15%
Gordon Howie 2%
Not sure 6%
TOTAL VOTES CAST 518
The Press & Dakotan Internet poll is not a scientific survey and reflects the opinions only of those who choose to participate. The results should not be construed as an accurate representation or scientific measurement of public opinion.

CURRENT QUESTION:

Do you support the U.S. plan for taking military action against ISIS?
To vote in the Press & Dakotan's Internet poll, log on to our website at www.yankton.net.