Case Study #3: Aristotle & the NFL

Read the section on Aristotle in our text and the attached article from CNN, and then answer the following questions. The completed assignment should be two pages long, using 12 pt. fonts and single spacing with one inch margins. Each answer should be proportionate to the number of points possible and supporting quotes should be no longer than one or two short sentences. Quotes must be cited and if pulled from our text all you need do is indicate the page – if not from our text, a full citation is required. Please separate and number each response as shown in the example attached. This study is worth a total of 60 points. Your completed assignment is due on the 12th (MW)/ 13th (TTh) of November.

Please refer to Case Study #1 for further instructions, general suggestions, grading rubrics, and a sample completed assignment!

1. Paraphrase the argument made by Fran Tarkenton in the attached article from CNN regarding who he holds responsible for counteracting domestic abuse and sexual assault by NFL players. Include the reasons he offered/implied supporting this position. (5 points)

2. Asking the right questions: What facts would you need to know about his case to make a reasonably informed judgment? In this section, note that you should be raising questions such as the incidence rates of domestic abuse and sexual assault among football players, current NFL policies, etc. but not questions about Aristotle. Provide as a bulleted list and pose in question form. For this assignment, you do not have to do the research but you need to raise the kind of questions that would drive such a project. These should be research questions and as such should be concrete and answerable. No bias or prejudice should be evident and the questions should be non-normative (no “ought” or “should” questions). Think about facts that, if known might help determine how one should or could respond to the case. (15 points)

3. Aristotle’s Position: First, how would Aristotle view sexual assault and domestic violence? Second, would Aristotle argue that for football players, owners and fans, character should be important even if it impacts the team’s ability to win in the NFL? Explain your answers. Be sure to provide citations from Aristotle (primary source = Aristotle’s writings and does not include secondary commentary from Rosenstand or from me) to support your answer. In citing the quote, all you need do is indicate the page from the text. (25 points)

4. Critical Objection: Identify one key counter consideration or objection to the argument you’ve made in section 3. This objection should come from a problem with the application of Aristotle’s Aretaic approach to ethics to this particular case. (10 points)

5. Conclusion: Having examined what you think Aristotle would say and possible objections to that position, where do you personally stand on this question of whether the player’s character should be a critical consideration in the NFL? Who do you think is responsible for stemming the tide of domestic abuse and sexual assault in the NFL? Defend your answer without resorting to a repetition of points made in previous sections. (5 points)
Hall of Famer Fran Tarkenton: Fans should boycott NFL games²

(CNN) – NFL Hall of Famer Fran Tarkenton gave an impassioned reaction to Commissioner Roger Goodell's statements Friday, saying the league is trying to cover up a wider problem, and protect star players. Fans, he said, need to do something.

"(Fans) should start writing letters, writing e-mails, and stop going to games," Tarkenton said in an interview with CNN's "The Lead with Jake Tapper."

Goodell announced a sweeping policy to counter domestic abuse and sexual assault, mandating all players and staff on the league's 32 teams undergo education and training about how to prevent abuse.

But Tarkenton dismissed the announcement, calling it "the most whitewashed press conference I've ever seen."

The Hall of Fame player said Goodell's resignation will not solve the problems plaguing the NFL, because the commissioner is not the one who is really in charge.

"The problem is going to be solved by 32 owners who control the National Football League," said Tarkenton.

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¹ Please note that you are not limited to the background offered. It is expected that you will do a bit more in-depth reading to develop your thesis. You may feel free to use any credible/reliable source as evidence for your arguments. Additionally you may use additional material from Aristotle to defend your answers. Please provide full citation for all research.

In the last few weeks since Baltimore Ravens running back Ray Rice was caught on camera viciously punching his fiancee, now wife, few owners have stepped forward and taken a hard line against domestic violence.

"(Owners) are looking the other way because in their locker room, we have people abusing kids and abusing women and they're doing illegal drugs to make them bigger, faster. Look at their bodies. They see it and don't acknowledge it because it's win, baby, win," he said.

For more of our interview with Fran Tarkenton, check out the video below.