

Vick was a great cop pursuing his duty

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After reading Robin Magee's "Gearin, Minnesota Supreme Court owe Sgt. Vick a proper tribute" (April 15), one can only conclude that her idea of a fitting tribute would be dancing on Sgt. Vick's grave.

In her opinion piece, Professor Magee willfully misuses the record to come to a variety of false conclusions and comparisons. She paints the circumstances in St. Paul as only marginally better than those found in Bull Conner's jailhouse. But, the really contemptible part of her diatribe comes when she magically transforms the murder of Sgt. Vick into an attempted lynching of his murderer. It takes your breath away.

Any "professor of police practices" who is not aware that police officers are duty-bound to pursue suspicious behavior, and that a difference in size between the officer and the person he's pursuing doesn't justify the shooting of the officer, should have their fitness to teach re-examined.

Sgt. Vick's initial suspicions that Harry Evans was up to no good were conclusively borne out - when Evans murdered him.

The officers of the St. Paul Police Department are some of the most competent, dedicated, professional public servants in this state. We continuously work to make our high standards of community relations even better.

Sgt. Vick was one of those dedicated individuals who constantly strove for a safer St. Paul. He was a great guy who happened to be a great cop who almost two years ago confronted a convicted felon who was illegally carrying a concealed handgun. Sgt. Vick was brutally murdered. Magee didn't know Sgt. Vick or the family he left behind. Magee doesn't know the scores of street prostitutes and others he helped or about the Breaking Free House of Hope transitional housing program being dedicated under his name.

If she had known Jerry she wouldn't have assaulted his character. But since she didn't know him, Magee felt free to do a drive-by assassination of it.

And isn't it strange that in an article that's more than 1,000 words long, Magee has plenty of verbiage and space to drag Sgt. Vick's name through the mud, but she can't bring herself to actually mention the name of his murderer?

I hope Professor Magee confines her race baiting and cop-hating to her newspaper submissions and keeps it out of the classroom. I can't imagine that the students or the parents who may be paying to send their children to Hamline University would want that kind of indoctrination in the classroom.

Next month, 146 new names of police officers killed in the line of duty will join that of Sgt. Vick on the Police Officers Memorial in Washington, D.C. Sgt. Jerry Vick is dead because he tried to keep a convicted felon with a handgun from menacing the law-abiding citizens of St. Paul. What possible purpose did the opinion-page editor of the Pioneer Press think he was serving when he allowed this reprehensible attack into the paper?

Which brings me to my final question: If Robin Magee had been on that sidewalk on the night in question, I wonder if she would have rather had Sgt. Vick walking toward her or the man whose actions she defends, his murderer, Harry Evans?

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