

A Dog in the Fight - U.S. v. Hargrove and Why Americans Should Care about Sentencing Guidelines in Animal Cruelty Cases

40 Rutgers L. Rec. 249 (2013) | [WestLaw](#) | [LexisNexis](#) | [PDF](#)

On December 10, 2007, Michael Vick pleaded guilty to 1 count of violating the Animal Fighting Venture Prohibition for "knowingly sponsoring and exhibiting an animal in an animal fighting venture." In April 2007, federal, state and local authorities began the "The Bad Newz Kennels dogfighting investigation," which revealed a systematic and pervasive dogfighting operation. Led by Vick and several other individuals (commonly referred to as the "Bad Newz Kennel" business enterprise), the dogfighting operation resulted in the deaths of 6 to 8 dogs. After they refused to fight, some of the dogs were hanged or drowned. Additionally, more than 50 American Pit Bull Terriers rescued from the Bad Newz Kennels displayed signs of injuries. Law enforcement officials also found evidence that Vick and others tortured some of the dogs during the Bad Newz Kennels operation. Ultimately, Vick was charged with numerous violations of 7 U.S.C. § 2156(a)(1), and after pleading guilty was sentenced to 23 months imprisonment.

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