

Victimless crime?

by The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

It can be said of many others in politics who have fallen prey to their own character flaws, but it applies in particular to Eliot Spitzer, the soon-former governor of New York:

Oh, what might have been.

Spitzer made a career of going after corporate wrongdoers as New York attorney general and even after prostitution rings as a prosecutor. His crusades made him a rising star in Democratic circles.

Now, he is just another former politician felled by tawdry - and we might add, illegal - behavior.

Spitzer on Wednesday announced that he is resigning, the only move left to him once his dalliances with high-priced call girls divested him of any credibility, hence no ability to achieve anything in Albany. The only question in our mind is why he didn't resign a day earlier. He should have done so as soon as the behavior was known.

Spitzer's past targets and political enemies are, no doubt, relishing his downfall. The crusading do-gooder was not so good after all.

But our view is that, like a well-known philanderer in high office before him, sullyng behavior in one sphere does not necessarily mean lack of accomplishment in others.

What prompted this behavior? Hubris surely.

Prostitution is said to be a victimless crime. Not strictly true. Our hearts go out to Spitzer's wife, Silda, and their three daughters.

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