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Attorney draws parallels between law, lifting

Atlanta Business Chronicle - by [Doug DeLoach](#) Contributing writer

The two things John Floyd most enjoys doing he does exceptionally well.

As a partner at **Bondurant, Mixson & Elmore LLP**, he is regarded as one of the country's leading experts on RICO, the federal and state Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations statutes. In fact, Floyd is working on the second edition of "RICO State by State," which attorneys across the country refer to as "the RICO bible."

But when he's not sending depraved racketeers to prison and recovering record amounts of stolen loot, Floyd works out with weights, competitively. In 2007, Floyd won his age/weight category at the National Masters Weightlifting Championships in Savannah, a feat which he repeated that same year at the Pan American Masters in El Paso, Texas. He draws a number of parallels between competitive weightlifting, which he first picked up while earning his Juris Doctorate from **Emory University**, and his day job.

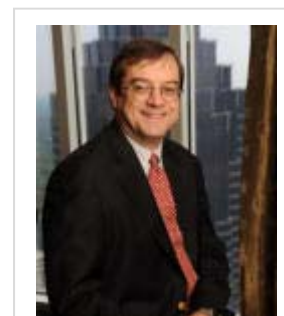
"In a lifting meet you go at it hard, but at the end of the day you can be friends with the other side," he said. "It's also a great stress-reliever from being a lawyer."

Born in Milwaukee, Floyd moved with his family to Chicago as a teenager before attending **Brown University**, where he earned his bachelor's degree with honors.

"I was intrigued by the intellectual challenge of the law and I was drawn to litigation because somebody wins and somebody loses," said Floyd. "You keep score in the law."

In the late 1990s, Floyd was a special assistant attorney general for the state of Georgia in the state's largest RICO case involving millions of dollars in fraudulently diverted funds at the **Medical College of Georgia** in Augusta.

In 2002, he served pro bono as a special assistant district attorney in the successful prosecution of Sidney Dorsey, the former sheriff of DeKalb County, who was convicted of murder, violations of the Georgia RICO statute and related offenses, including bribery and theft. Subsequently, he successfully argued the affirmation of Dorsey's conviction before the Supreme Court of Georgia. For his efforts, Floyd received awards from the **National District Attorneys Association** and the District Attorneys' Association of Georgia.



Byron E. Small

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“He is clearly an intellectual among lawyers,” said Mike Bowers, former attorney general of Georgia.

“When you have a complex RICO question, you get John’s book and try and figure it out,” said Bowers. “If you can’t figure it out, you call John.”

In 1996, Bowers called on Floyd to handle the legal side of an investigation into a scheme to divert large sums of Medical College of Georgia research funds into privately held companies. Working with chief investigator Richard Hyde, Floyd helmed the prosecution’s RICO case, which ultimately resulted in criminal and civil convictions of two former college faculty members. In addition, more than \$10 million was recovered.

Bower’s successor, Attorney General Thurbert E. Baker, said the case “may be the largest and most important criminal prosecution the Attorney General’s Office has ever undertaken.”

John Petrey, now in private practice in Decatur, was chief assistant to DeKalb County District Attorney J. Tom Morgan when he first met Floyd while working on the Sidney Dorsey case.

Petrey said there had been some discussion among the DA’s team about using RICO against the sheriff prior to the fatal shooting of Derwin Brown, Dorsey’s elected successor, which added murder to the list of charges that would eventually put the former sheriff in prison for life.

“I ran into a friend socially and told him if [the DeKalb DA’s office] wanted to discuss some ideas I would be happy to help,” Floyd said. “The phone rang within about 48 hours.”

“Not only is John incredibly knowledgeable, nobody outworks him,” Petrey said. On Super Bowl Sunday in 2001, with the official indictment due in Dorsey’s hands by the end of business on Monday, Petrey and Floyd labored for hours putting the finishing touches on the paperwork.

“John was sick as a dog with the flu,” Petrey said. “He was coughing and hacking, but it didn’t stop him. I’m not sure we would have had a successful prosecution without all the work he did.”

“For me, John is an endless education,” said David McLaughlin, a former state assistant attorney general who worked closely with Floyd on the Medical College of Georgia case.

He credited his colleague with bringing innovative theoretical and practical approaches to RICO and its application under the law.

“Freud said everything reminded him of sex; Floyd says everything reminds him of RICO,” said former partner at Bondurant, Mixson & Elmore Michael Sullivan. “Seriously, though, he relishes complex cases and his integrity is such that you could trust him with your life.”

Executive Profile

John Floyd

- **Current job:** Partner, Bondurant, Mixson & Elmore LLP

- **Education:** Bachelor's degree from Brown University, Juris Doctorate from Emory University
- **Family:** Wife, Elizabeth, sons David and Alan
- **Hobbies:** Weightlifting, mafia history

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