

NBC's 3rd *Hour of Today*

09/16/26

9:18:41 a.m. [TEASE]

7 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Later; Colin Kaepernick]

AL ROKER: And then, later, former NFL quarterback Colin Kaepernick is here to talk about his revealing new memoir.

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9:27:39 a.m. [TEASE]

14 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Next; Colin Kaepernick]

CRAIG MELVIN: All right. Coming up, former star quarterback Colin Kaepernick here in the studio sharing his story in a whole new way. Ten years — ten years after his silent protest sparked a national debate.

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9:32:25 a.m.

4 minutes and 30 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Colin Kaepernick on New Memoir]

DYLAN DREYER: We are back now with former San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick. He played six seasons in the NFL and helped lead his team to the Super Bowl in 2013.

ROKER: Then, before a game in September of 2016, Colin took a knee during the national anthem, a peaceful protest in response to racial injustice. He continued kneeling throughout the season. That sparked a national debate.

MELVIN: Well, just a few months later, Colin became a free agent and he has not played professionally since. Now he's got a new book out. He's written a book about his journey and life before and after that decision. The book is called *The Perilous Fight*. Colin Kaepernick, welcome, sir. Thanks for being here.

DREYER: Good morning.

COLIN KAEPERNICK: Al, good morning. Pleasure to be here.

ROKER: Thanks.

MELVIN: So, let's talk about the book. You write about your childhood. I thought that the way you started the book was very interesting. Not to give away too much, but you grow up in this — this town, adoptive parents, not a lot of diversity in this town.

KAEPERNICK: Yeah.

MELVIN: Then, you write about some guys who ganged up on you.

KAEPERNICK: Yeah.

MELVIN: Why start the book that way?

KAEPERNICK: Well, I immediately want to set the tone of what is to come. And some of what I've had to navigate throughout my life.

MELVIN: Yeah.

KAEPERNICK: A lot of the conversation is — post-protest is, well, you are a professional football player, you have privilege, you have access. Like, why do you care about this, and how has it ever affected you?

MELVIN: Yeah.

KAEPERNICK: And I wanted to give that sense to readers immediately and give them that insight because it really sets the stage for everything to follow.

MELVIN: Got it.

ROKER: So, now that you have had this time, you know, and this distance, take us back to — to what led to the knee. You were sitting at a preseason game.

KAEPERNICK: Yeah.

ROKER: What was happening that had this bubbling up for you?

KAEPERNICK: Yeah. It — a lifetime of experience that led to it. Also, I have been doing more reading, more research. The autobiography of Malcolm X was a huge turning point for me that opened a lot of doors to knowledge and discovery. And, in the midst of that, we're also seeing Mike Brown in Ferguson, we're seeing Eric Garner, we've seen Tamir Rice, and more specifically, leading into 2016 we see the police killings of Mario Woods, Alton Sterling, Philando Castillo and you — I had a sense of, well, I have to do something. I now understand the issue. I have the background in the historical context of it. What action am I going to take to try to change this, to make sure that we can make it home safely?

DREYER: And we know your teammate Eric Reid supported your vision, suggesting you take a knee.

KAEPERNICK: Yeah.

DREYER: Since that time, have you seen change?

KAEPERNICK: There — there has [sic] been changes made, but not at the level that needs to be made. We — we've seen changes in policy at local levels, at state levels. We've seen actions taken as far as deploying social workers as opposed to police, and those are steps in the right direction, but the scale and magnitude of change that needs to happen largely hasn't. We're in a place today where police killings are higher than they were in 2016. Police budgets have continued to grow — grow, so we need to actually distribute resources that benefit people, and serve their needs, and create safer communities.

MELVIN: First of all, it's hard to believe it's been ten years. It doesn't seem like it's been that long since all of this went down, but you haven't played since. A lot of folks thought, okay, he will sit out a season or two, and he will come back. You weren't able to come back. You did settle with the NFL out of court. I understand you don't even watch football anymore.

KAEPERNICK: No.

MELVIN: It's — first of all, why? And if given an opportunity, would you suit up again?

KAEPERNICK: Yeah. Well, I don't watch football because I'm not going to support the organization that's black-balling me, but as far as stepping back on the field, I continue train and prepare. Wake up every day at 4:30, get all my training in and then go about my day, but stepping back on the field, I would love to step back out there, and that's something that I think I could do today.

MELVIN: And, as you, of course, know the NFL maintains and has maintained that you were never black-balled. As — as — we don't have time to get into all of that.

KAEPERNICK: Yes. Fact and patterns would say otherwise —

MELVIN: Alright.

KAEPERNICK: — but I understand why they would say that.

MELVIN: Colin Kaepernick, thank you.

DREYER: Thank you.

KAEPERNICK: Thank you.

MELVIN: The book is called *The Perilous Fight*, and that book is out now.