

## Has The Black Jury Been "Bell Curved?"

BY FRED BEAUFORD

The ruling by Judge Ito not to allow the jury in the O.J. Simpson trial to listen to the full hours of the racist tapes made by the former Los Angeles detective Mark Fuhrman, did not sit well with Oakland based attorney John L. Burris.

"O.J. has a right to confront his accusers," the veteran trial attorney said from his Oakland office. "By not allowing the jury to hear the full extent of the hate and rage that Fuhrman held against black people, undermined the defense's case that Fuhrman is just the kind of cop who would plant evidence, and frame Mr. Simpson."

As he spoke, Mr. Burris was constantly interrupted by a series of phone calls from various media outlets who wanted his opinion on this latest development in "The Trial of the Century."

And again, race seems to be playing a strong role in Judge Ito's

decision.

"Absolutely," Burris said, emphasizing his point with an arched eyebrow. "Absolutely. First, the DA knows that they have lost the 'race card' because of Fuhrman's conduct, so they are now deeply afraid of the American juror."

"The Judge, and this is clear, also seems to believe that the jury would have become so inflamed by the tapes that they would have not been able to reach an objective decision."

Is this fair, or is the black jury being "Bell Curved?"

"Bell Curved! I like that. That's about right. But you can see what this idea does if you are on the defense, and you are trying hard to get as much evidence before the jury to help your case."

"The real message that we are getting is that you can only present certain kinds of evidence to black people because they can't handle their

emotions.

"This is an insult to black people," Burris said.

Burris is still uncertain if this has permanently hurt the defense's case.

"It has damaged it, no question. But we still have a way to go, and anything can still happen. My major concern, however, is that we really have to look closely at how different juries are looked at in this country, and if there can be a single standard of behavior in how and what evidence is presented."

"Does the quality of justice turn on the racial makeup of the jury? If so, in the long run, African Americans lose. This

"bell curving," as it was put, of African American juries, could have a really bad impact on how blacks receive justice in this country."

"This is a very serious concern, and should not be taken lightly," Burris said.

## Remembering The Victims



JoAnn Bowman, a survivor of domestic abuse, speaks out Tuesday as tensions run high because of the verdicts in the O.J. Simpson double-murder trial. Standing in support are Tess Wiseheart (left) of the Portland Women's Crisis Line, and Chiquita Rollins, Mikal Shapazz Iman of the Moslem community and Lawrence Dark of the Urban League of Portland also addressed the news media during the news conference at the Portland Urban League office.

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## Simpson Vows to Pursue True Killers

Continued from front

blacks, two whites and one Hispanic — seemed to be headed for a conviction.

It was the most closely watched criminal trial in U.S. history, a case that has placed the justice system under the microscope, raised troubling questions about U.S. race relations and inspired more marketing spinoffs than a Disney movie.

As hundreds of excited people gathered outside the downtown courthouse before the verdict, police mobilized hundreds of extra officers throughout the city in case of unrest. But Police Chief Willie

Williams said no trouble was expected.

Every major U.S. television network and a number of overseas stations cut into their regular programming for live broadcasts of the grand finale of the so-called "Trial of the Century."

The full trial, including jury selection, lasted more than a year, encompassing about 120 witnesses, 45,000 pages of transcripts and 1,100 exhibits.

In nine months of testimony and a week of fiery closing arguments, prosecutors and defence attorneys presented such diametrically opposed theories that some analysts wondered

at times whether they were talking about the same case.

Prosecutors depicted the celebrity defendant as a man so obsessed with his beautiful ex-wife that he when he learned that he could no longer control her, he killed her in a murderous rage. Goldman was struck down, prosecutors said, because he was "in the wrong place at the wrong time."

But Simpson's defence team painted their celebrity client as the innocent victim of a police evidence-planting conspiracy led by a racist rogue cop, now-retired Detective Mark Fuhrman.

## Making A Difference Together



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Portlandia's birthday is celebrated Friday with music, cake and an extra special surprise.

## Party Celebrates Portlandia

The public is invited to help celebrate Portlandia 10th birthday on Friday at noon at the Portland Building, Southwest Fifth and Main, downtown.

Portlandia is the statue that adorns the building. The sculptor Raymond Kaskey and local celebrities will be on hand for the celebration.

Help to care for Portlandia can be made by contributing to the Adopt-a-Sculpture Fund to provide for her ongoing maintenance and care.

You are asked to bring you spare pennies. After all, Portlandia is copper too. donations larger than pennies will be gladly accepted.

The event is sponsored by the Regional Arts and Culture Council. The organization serves the people of Portland and the metropolitan area so that art and culture will enrich the lives of every citizen.

### Combating Domestic Violence

Raphael House, the largest domestic violence shelter in Portland, holds its 13th annual dinner and auction on Saturday.

The "Providing a Foundation for Hope" fundraiser will begin at 5:30 p.m. at the Grand Ballroom of the Portland Hilton Hotel. Musical entertainment will be provided by local pianist Tom Grant.

Raphael House protects nearly 400 women and children every year. But nearly 2,400 people are turned away annually because of lack of room and resources to help.

Proceeds from this year's auction will be used to expand bed space in the organization's emergency shelter. Each new bed will become the temporary home for up to 10 women and children a year.

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