



An unidentified gunman, fires several shots at his attorney in this television from Court TV, Friday, outside the Los Angeles courthouse. (AP photo)

## Camera Rolls as Attorney Gets Shot

Victim feels fortunate to be alive

(AP)—A lawyer who survived a gunman's attack that was captured on videotape said he hadn't met the suspect before the assault and feels fortunate to be alive.

Gerry Curry, 53, was released Sunday from a hospital after being shot at close range by a man identified by police as William Strier, 64. Curry was shot in his arm and neck.

Dramatic television footage from crews covering Robert Blake's murder case Friday showed Curry, of Simi Valley, trying to hide behind a tree as Strier fired a revolver outside the Van Nuys courthouse.

"It's weird. It's the kind of thing that always happens to someone else," Curry said. "This is the thing

you see on TV, but this time it happened to me. But the main thing is that I survived, so I'm very grateful."

After the attack, Curry staggered from behind the tree, blood on his face, and held up his hands before collapsing. An off-duty sheriff's reserve officer tackled Strier.

Strier was arrested, booked for investigation of attempted murder and was being held on \$1 million bail. He was scheduled to appear in court Tuesday.

With scars on his face and his arm in a sling, Curry told reporters that he had never met Strier before, but had heard about prior threats.

## Army Accused of Double Standard

Black soldier's disability much smaller than counterpart

(AP)—The father of former prisoner of war Shoshana Johnson has accused the Army of shortchanging his daughter of disability benefits after she was offered a smaller paycheck than fellow POW Jessica Lynch.

"She is not getting what she deserves," Claude Johnson said.

Family members confirmed that Lynch, a private first class who was snatched from her Iraqi captors on April 1 in a rescue by Special Forces, is receiving an 80 percent disability. Johnson, a specialist who was released on April 13 with four other American POWs, has been offered 30 percent, Claude Johnson said.

The Rev. Jesse Jackson, who consulted the Johnson family, said race was playing a part in Army's decision. Lynch is white; Johnson is black.

"There's a long history of blacks not receiving fair and adequate recognition in the military," said Jackson. "The first black female POW who survived is about to be discharged and suffers the trauma, the



A file photo shows Shoshana Johnson after being freed as a prisoner of war in Iraq.

emotional injury and has a 3-year-old daughter to raise. She deserves more."

The NAACP has called for an explanation from the Army.

"Unless there is an honest rationale, the discriminatory double standard the United States Army has applied to Iraqi war hero Shoshana Johnson is disgraceful," said Julian Bond, chairman of the NAACP Board of Directors.

Army spokesman Maj. Steve Stover said Shoshana Johnson's

payment can be appealed.

Stover said the two cases are different and race is not an issue.

Military officials said Lynch was hurt after her Humvee utility vehicle was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade and crashed into another vehicle. She suffered multiple broken bones and other injuries and it was four months before she could walk again.

Shoshana Johnson was shot in both ankles and was held by Iraqi captors for 22 days. She still periodically uses a walking cast, has a

hard time staying on her feet for any period of time and is not sleeping well, her father said.

In a statement released by her attorney, Lynch said she was "disappointed for Shoshana."

"When she visited me in West Virginia last month, we discussed the extent of our injuries and the long road back to health, including a lifetime commitment to physical therapy and rehabilitation," Lynch said. "I support her efforts 100 percent and wish her a continued ... recovery."

## JFK Conspiracy Theories Persist

40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of assassination approaches

Forty years after the event, John F. Kennedy's assassination on Nov. 22, 1963, remains the most popular subject for conspiracy theories in America, says a UC Davis scholar who is writing a book on such theories during the 20th century.

In fact, only 10 percent of Americans believe Lee Harvey Oswald was acting alone when he shot the 35th president, says Kathryn Olmsted, author of "Challenging the Secret Government: The Post Watergate Investigations of the CIA and FBI."

"Throughout their history, Americans have been concerned about excessive government power, and you can see conspiracy theories dating back to the founding of the nation," Olmsted says. "But it isn't until World War I, when you get a really powerful government, that conspiracy theories became more extreme and widespread."

Conspiracy theories about JFK's murder didn't really gain steam until the Church Committee in 1975 revealed government cover-ups in the original 1964 Warren Commission report on the Kennedy assassination.

Tracking JFK conspiracy theories is now a major hobby, with hundreds of books offering various theories of who killed the presi-

## Widow Testifies in DC Sniper Trial

(AP)—The widow of a bus driver slain in last year's sniper attacks testified Monday she saw his empty bus on television but couldn't get to the hospital fast enough to say goodbye.

Denise Johnson, widow of Conrad Johnson, said she didn't know right away that it was her husband's bus but immediately tried to reach him on his cell phone without success.

"I thought maybe he had seen something," she said, testifying for the prosecution in the trial of John Allen Muhammad.

She eventually received a call

from her mother-in-law saying that he had been shot and rushed to the hospital. Her husband was alive when she arrived but she didn't get to see him until after he died.

Defense lawyers objected to her testimony, as they have to similar testimony, saying it is unfairly emotional and irrelevant to the case. Circuit Judge LeRoy F. Millette Jr. instructed prosecutors to keep the testimony brief.

Prosecutors are introducing evidence in 16 shootings in Maryland, Virginia, Alabama, Louisiana and the District of Columbia in an effort to show that Muhammad is respon-



Denise Johnson, wife of sniper victim Conrad Johnson, pauses during her testimony in the trial of sniper suspect John Allen Muhammad. (AP photo)

sible for multiple deaths and engaged in a form of terrorism - necessary conditions for the two death penalty charges against him.

Muhammad, 42, and 18-year-old Lee Boyd Malvo, who goes on trial Nov. 10 in connection with another

sniper shooting, were arrested Oct. 24, 2002, at a Maryland highway rest stop. They had been sleeping in a 1990 blue Chevrolet Caprice that authorities say was adapted so someone concealed inside the car could fire a rifle through a hole in the trunk.

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## Combs Supports Kids with Marathon Finish

(AP)—Running on a bum right knee and after just two months of training, hip-hop entrepreneur Sean "P. Diddy" Combs completed the grueling New York City Marathon Sunday, raising \$2 million for children - double what he had planned.

"Never in my life have I ever experienced anything as crazy as this," Combs said. "It was a beautiful experience."

Combs' official race time was 4:14:54. It was his first marathon.

The producer-rapper said he had raised \$2 million since announcing in September that he would run. The money will be

divided among two children's charities and New York City public schools.

Combs said he gained support from an NBC reporter covering the race who ran with him, as well as from children in Harlem who cheered him on.

"I definitely wanted to stop," Combs said. "This is definitely a life-changing experience for me because I did not stop."

Combs shed about 15 pounds in training, and developed severe tendonitis in his right knee.

"Twenty-six miles isn't a publicity stunt," he said after the race.



Sean 'P. Diddy' Combs crosses the finish line of the New York City Marathon, Sunday. He raised \$2 million for children, double the amount he planned. (AP photo)

## Judge Defends Conservative Record

NAACP opposes court nomination

Federal appellate nominee Janice Rogers Brown is defending her work as a conservative jurist promising

that the opinions she has expressed in some of her speeches would stay separate from her role on the bench.

Brown, a California Supreme Court justice, has been nominated for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, a court that is seen by many as a training ground for the U.S. Supreme Court.

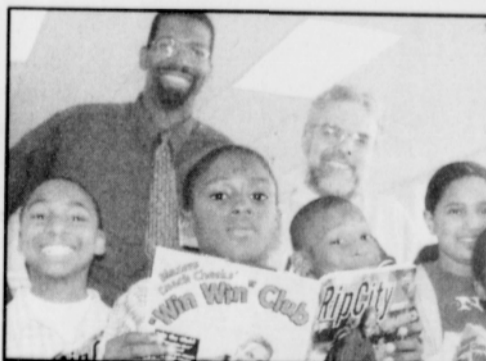
Her conservative positions worry the NAACP, other civil rights groups and Democrats.

But Brown said she would keep her personal opinions out of her future work. "I absolutely understand the difference in roles in being a speaker and being a judge," she told the Senate Judiciary Committee during confirmation hearings.

A 54-year-old black woman from the South, Brown supports limits on abortion rights and corporate liability and opposes affirmative action.



Janice Brown



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