**“If It Doesn’t Fit, You Must Acquit”**

The O.J. Simpson Case: Johnnie Cochran’s Closing Argument Excerpts

The Defendant, Mr. Orenthal James Simpson, is now afforded an opportunity to argue the case, if you will, but I'm not going to argue with you, ladies and gentlemen. What I'm going to do is to try and discuss the reasonable inferences, which I feel can be drawn from this evidence.

I'd like to comment and to compliment Miss Clark and Mr. Darden on what I thought were fine arguments yesterday. I don't agree with much of what they said, but I listened intently, as I hope you'll do with me…

Ultimately, it's what you determine to be the facts that is going to be important, and all of us can live with that. You are empowered to do justice. You are empowered to ensure that this great system of ours works.

One of my favourite people in history is the great Frederick Douglas. He said shortly after the slaves were freed, quote, "In a composite nation like ours as before the law, there should be no rich, no poor, no high, no low, no white, no black, but common country, common citizenship, equal rights and a common destiny." This marvellous statement was made more than 100 years ago. It's an ideal worth striving for and one that we still strive for. We haven't reached this goal yet, but certainly in this great country of ours, we're trying. With a jury such as this, we hope we can do that in this particular case.

And you are the ones who are empowered to determine what is the right thing. Let me ask each of you a question. Have you ever in your life been falsely accused of something? Have you ever been falsely accused? Ever had to sit there and take it and watch the proceedings and wait and wait and wait, all the while knowing that you didn't do it? So that's another reason why we are proud to represent this man who's maintained his innocence and who has conducted himself with dignity throughout these proceedings.

In this case, the victims' families had an absolute right to demand exactly just that [justice]. But it was clear, unfortunately, that in this case, there was another agenda. From the very first orders issued by the LAPD so-called brass, they were more concerned with their own images, the publicity that might be generated from this case than they were in doing professional police work. That's why this case has become such a hallmark and that's why Mr. Simpson is the one on trial…So it seems to us that the evidence shows that professional police work took a backseat right at the beginning. Untrained officers trampled--remember, I used the word in opening statement--they traipsed through the evidence.

You've seen this house. You've seen this carpet. If he went in that house with bloody shoes, with bloody clothes, with his bloody hands as they say, where's the blood on the doorknob, where's the blood on the light switch, where's the blood on the banister, where's the blood on the carpet? That's white carpet going up those stairs. Where is that blood trail they've been ranting about in this mountain of evidence?

You will see it's little more than a river or a stream. They don't have any mountain or ocean of evidence. It's not so because they say so. That's just rhetoric. We this afternoon are talking about the facts. And so it doesn't make any sense. It just doesn't fit. If it doesn't fit, you must acquit. 

As I started to say before, perhaps the single most defining moment in this trial is the day they thought they would conduct this experiment on these gloves. You don't need any photographs to understand this. I suppose that vision is indelibly imprinted in each and every one of your minds of how Mr. Simpson walked over here and stood before you and you saw four simple words, "The gloves didn't fit."

You will recognize some of the people in this videotape after awhile. Mr. Simpson kissing Denise Brown, Miss Juditha Brown, Mr. Louis Brown. Talking to a friend. That is his son Justin who he kisses, smiling and happily waving. Mr. Brown is happy. Laughing and falling down and laughing again, bending over laughing. You see that. You see that with your own eyes. You will have that back in this jury room. How does that comport with this tortured, twisted reasoning that he was angry in some kind of a jealous rage?

Question: "Have you used that word, referring to the `n' word, in the past 10 years?

Fuhrman answers: "Not that I recall, no.”

Question: "You mean, if you call someone a Nigger, you had forgotten it?

Answer: "I'm not sure I can answer the question the way it's phrased, sir."

Question: "Well, I want you to assume that perhaps at some time since 1985 or `86, you addressed a member of the African American race as a Nigger. Is it possible that you have forgotten that act on your part? "

Answer: No, it is not possible.

Question: "Are you saying that you have not used that word in the past 10 years, Detective Fuhrman?”

Answer: “Yes. That is what I'm saying.”

Question: And you say under oath that you have not addressed any black person as a Nigger or spoken about black people as niggers in the past 10 years, Detective Fuhrman?

Answer: "That's what I'm saying, sir.”

And she [a witness who has watched the Fuhrman tapes] tells us that this man over the time of these interviews uses the "N" word 42 times is what she says.

He [Mark Fuhrman] goes around the side of the house, and lo and behold, he claims he finds this glove and he says the glove is still moist and sticky. Now, under their theory, at 10:40, 10:45, that glove is dropped. How many hours is that? It's now after 6:00 o'clock. So what is that? Seven and a half hours. The testimony about drying time around here, no dew point that night. Why would it be moist and sticky unless he brought it over there and planted it there to try to make this case? This man cannot be trusted.

We live in a society where many people are apathetic, they don't want to get involved, and that is why all of us, to a person, in this courtroom, have thanked you [the jury] from the bottom of our hearts. Because you know what? You haven't been apathetic. You are the ones who made a commitment, a commitment toward justice, and it is a painful commitment, but you've got to see it through. Your commitment, your courage, is much greater than these police officers.

Fuhrman could have been off the force long ago if they had done their job, but they didn't do their job. People looked the other way. People didn't have the courage.

One of the things that has made this country so great is people's willingness to stand up and say “that is wrong. I'm not going to be part of it. I'm not going to be part of the cover-up.” That is what I'm asking you to do. Stop this cover-up. If you don't stop it, then who? Do you think the police department is going to stop it? Do you think the D.A.'s office is going to stop it? Do you think we can stop it by ourselves? It has to be stopped by you.