

# Prosecutor: Simpson trial damaging to image

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Six years after the killings of Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman set off the nation's most watched legal drama, a prosecutor said he believes O.J. Simpson would have been better off if his trial hadn't been televised.

Former Deputy District Attorney Christopher Darden, appearing on CNN's "Larry King Live" with his trial opponent Johnnie Cochran Jr., said Monday he believes that without TV "people in this country would have accepted the verdict."

The public's opportunity to view the trial from beginning to end bred skepticism and disagreement when Simpson was acquitted of killing his ex-wife and her friend, Darden said. A jury in a civil case later found Simpson liable for the deaths and ordered him to pay a \$33.5 million judgment.

But Cochran said the televised trial presented a civics lesson for the public.

"People now understand the roles of the parties and the role of the judge," he said.

In a non-confrontational joint appearance, both men said they held no grudges toward one another or Superior Court Judge Lance Ito, who they agreed tried to run the trial fairly.

Darden said he holds no ill will for anyone except former police Det. Mark Fuhrman, who lied on the witness stand when he said he had not used a racial epithet to describe black people in 10 years.

After a tape recording of him using the word was produced to discredit him, Fuhrman pleaded no contest to perjury, was fined \$200 and was sentenced to probation.

Darden said he never believed Fuhrman planted a bloody glove at Simpson's home to try to frame him for the killings, as defense attorneys charged.

"But when you get a cop up there on the witness stand and he lies it undermines the whole case," he said.

During the broadcast, a film clip showed Nicole Brown Simpson's family visiting her

grave to mark the anniversary of her death on Monday.

Earlier in the day, a judge refused to order the release of telephone records to a new Simpson lawyer. Attorney Douglas McCann says the records, of a conversation between Ms. Simpson and her mother on the night of the killings, will prove that Simpson had already left on a business trip when the killings occurred.

The Brown family has refused to relinquish the records and, at a hearing Monday, Deputy District Attorney William Hodgman said the defense had an opportunity to examine them during Simpson's trial.

Superior Court Judge Larry P. Fidler said he saw no basis for releasing the records. A similar request has already been rejected by a federal judge.

Also Monday, in an appearance in Des Moines, Iowa in connection with a wrongful death suit there, Cochran said he thought Simpson should abandon plans to take a lie-

detector test about the killings.

"Everybody's views have been so set on this case. If he passes the lie-detector test with flying colors, and it was administered by people who he went out and selected, it's not going to change anything at this point," Cochran said.

Defense attorney F. Lee Bailey said last week that Simpson would take a lie detector test if someone put up a \$3 million reward to catch the killer.

Simpson later told the Fox News Channel that he plans to answer questions from the public through the Internet on publiccrossing.com, with some of the proceeds going to charity.

Cochran said Simpson would have nothing to gain by taking the test.

"People feel so strongly about this one way or the other," Cochran said. "That would be my advice to him: It's not going to make any difference. He should try to go on with his life and keep raising those children."

## Roker

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principle that an adopted child is no less "natural" to its parents than a child to whom they gave birth.

He gets downright indignant at the idea that Dad can't play the parent game with the versatility displayed by any mom.

Al Roker wants you to know he sure as heck doesn't shrink from changing diapers.

Fatherhood, he declares with mock machismo, "is full-contact sport."

And it's the real national pastime, Roker contends.

"I think most of us are prewired to be parents," he says.

"For some of us, the switch is hidden behind some sheetrock. But once you have the baby, that sheetrock comes off and you flip the

switch, and you go, 'Oooh, I love this!'"

Of course, sometimes biology throws up certain obstacles.

Roker takes readers through the gantlet of fertility treatments he and his wife endured.

At first, Deborah had been reluctant to try: What if it didn't work? Al, by contrast, writes that he is "used to fail-

ure. After all, I'm a weatherman."

Their perseverance paid off. Next up: Lamaze class. A private class, that is. As Roker writes, "All I needed was some joker next to me, kidding me about blowing Deborah's due-date forecast."

Now 19 months old (almost grown!), Leila is walking and she's talking — pref-

erably on Dada's cell phone.

"It's her favorite toy," Roker says forebodingly, perhaps thinking of Courtney at that age, stuffing Lorna Doones in the slot of the family VCR.

Courtney, meanwhile, is a blossoming teen-ager interested in boys, Harry Potter books and Britney Spears, and full of questions ("Why does Bugs Bunny wear

gloves?") that even Daddy, in his wisdom, can't answer.

On the other hand, when Roker is asked to explain why fatherhood is so great, his response is swift.

"It's an adventure," he says, smiling brightly, no clouds in his forecast. "They can drive me crazy. But I look in Courtney's eyes, or Leila's eyes, and I feel like I'm the king of the world."

## Economy

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proper drag, and a huge gap between imports and exports, and without automatic stabilizers. Back to the basketball analogy, it would be like playing a game with two starters not playing because they were suspended for one game, and the team had no time-outs.

Now, enter Federal Reserve Board policy. In an economy, already designed to slow because of fiscal policy, and a record trade deficit, the Federal Reserve which controls the nation's money supply, and the cost of borrowing money has set out to slow the economy even more. And, the Fed has raised interest rates more recently than near any other major election in the Fed's history.

The result was a disastrous labor market report for May. In the private sector, practically every major industry group reported drops in payroll.

The risk is that with fewer people working, consumer spending will fall.

With interest rates higher, the cost of business investment will also rise.

So the two parts of the economy that were keeping growth up are threatened.

It is too early to tell if the Fed has overplayed its hand, and pulled the economy into a recession. But, clearly, the economy should not be pulled back any more.

Just as people have wondered how investors who had not seen the stock market fall would react to drops in stock prices, policy makers need to think about how consumers will react when the labor market "falls."

Workers who have gotten used to this push to full employment have acted with the confidence needed to consume-by taking on debt for cars and homes.

How will consumers react if they think the labor market has turned on them? Will they remain confident enough to continue buying homes and cars? How will they react when there is no safety net, as the millions of new workers who fled welfare to jobs may have to face? There may be too much celebrating that the Fed has slowed the economy to a slower rate of growth.

William E. Spriggs is director of research and public policy for the National Urban League, Inc.

BECAUSE NO  
ONE GETS INTO  
BARBECUE  
LIKE YOU, DAD.



Happy Father's Day!