

Split decision set in Jackson cash trial

SANTA MONICA, Calif. (AP) - In a split decision Friday, a civil court jury awarded a former Michael Jackson adviser \$900,000 — far less than he claimed in the money dispute — and awarded the pop star \$200,000 in his cross-complaint.

F. Marc Schaffel originally sued for \$3.8 million, but his claims were later reduced to \$1.6 million, and his attorney ultimately asked the jury for \$1.4 million in commissions, unpaid loans and expenses before deliberations began Thursday.

"Obviously, I'm very

happy," Schaffel said outside court. "We got less than I asked for but considering all the factors on what we were able to present, I'm pleased."

Jackson's attorney had said Schaffel owed the pop star \$660,000 before the pop star fired the associate in November 2001 after learning of his past as a producer of gay pornography.

"What bothered Michael Jackson the most about this trial," the singer's spokeswoman Raymone K. Bain said, "was that from the onset F. Marc Schaffel tried turning a bookkeeping matter into something more and

he willfully tried impugning Michael Jackson's character with false and unsubstantiated claims."

The trial delved into claims involving work Schaffel did to produce two videos aired on Fox that were intended to rehabilitate Jackson's image in the aftermath of a damaging documentary, and claims involving "What More Can I Give," an ill-fated Jackson song intended to raise funds for victims of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

Jurors said they came to the figure of \$900,000 by accepting Schaffel's claims that

he was owed commissions from the two videos and for some other expenses.

Jackson attorney Thomas Mundell said he had always conceded that Jackson owed Schaffel a percentage of funds earned from the Fox videos, and court documents showed that Schaffel turned down a settlement of \$500,000 a month before trial.

Jurors said that after much arguing they accepted Schaffel's claim that he spent \$300,000 of his own money on a secret mission to South America for Jackson. Schaffel claimed he gave the

money to a "Mr. X."

"We fought a lot over that," said juror Irma Beard, a retired law office worker. She and jury foreman Roy Shimogaki said they were troubled by the claim.

Jackson's lawyer had focused on Schaffel's past in gay adult movies, and Schaffel had blurted out on the witness stand that Jackson once wanted him to go to Brazil to find boys for him to adopt. He later modified that statement to "children" to expand Jackson's family.

Beard said none of that came up in deliberations, and the jury tried to focus on fi-

nancial figures.

Both laughed when asked if they considered Schaffel a credible witness.

"We wouldn't go that far," Shimogaki said.

The jury had to answer multiple questions. All the verdicts for Schaffel were unanimous while three for Jackson were not unanimous. But only nine of the 12 jurors needed to agree.

Superior Court Judge Jacqueline Connor plans to hold a separate specific accounting phase of the trial to look at the claims. The result of that could lead to adjustment of the awards.

Women

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Defense and Educational Fund."

The NAACP was founded on Feb. 12, 1909, the 100th birthday of Abraham Lincoln, by a multiracial group of men and women, including journalist and anti-lynching activist Ida B. Wells Barnett. Neither the NAACP nor the National Urban League, established in 1910, has ever had a Black woman as national president. Of the NAACP's 14 regular or acting presidents, sometimes called executive secretary or executive director, 12 have been males. Two have been women, both of them White.

Of the NAACP's 12 board chairmen, two of them —

women would represent only 24 percent of the leaders.

Interestingly, modern-era civil rights leaders seem to have more problems acknowledging the accomplishments of Black women than pioneering Black male leaders of a less enlightened era. Frederick Douglass was an outspoken advocate of women's rights during the 19th century and W.E.B. Du Bois was one of its primary advocates in the early 20th century.

In his 1920 essay titled, "The Damnation of Women," Du Bois wrote: "The uplift of women is, next to the problem of the color line and the peace movement, our greatest modern cause. When,

former chair of the NAACP board of directors, has an explanation for why Black men find it so difficult to share power with Black women.

"I truly believe there is a perception that it is a job that only a man should and can hold... It's about power — perceived power. As I was told during one of the pre-meetings before the chairmanship election, 'You are only Medgar's widow.'"

Evers-Williams was never merely "Medgar's widow." When he was appointed Mississippi state field secretary for the NAACP in 1954, she worked as his secretary, helping organize protests and voter registration drives. After her husband was murdered in front of their Jackson, Miss., home in 1963, she moved to California and cared for their three young children. She later earned her B.A. degree in sociology from Pomona College, served as director of planning and development at Claremont College, worked as national director of consumer affairs for ARCO, Atlantic Richfield Oil Corporation, and became the first African-American woman to serve as a commissioner of the Los Angeles Board of Public Works, helping oversee a budget of nearly \$1 billion.

That's why she didn't let others dismiss her as only Medgar's widow.

"I challenged them to read some of the things that I had done on my own, my bio," she said. "The name Medgar Evers may have opened a couple of doors for me, but once you step in, you have to be prepared in every way possible to be a success or you'll get booted right out."

And once women step into leadership roles, just as Dorothy Leavell did when

she became president of the NNPA, National Newspaper Publishers Association, in 1994, they find their struggle is not over. As the organization's top leader, she automatically became a member of the Black Leadership Forum, an umbrella group of 28 Black leaders.

"I had to fight and claw my way every day when I was a participant with the Black Leadership Forum," said Leavell, who was elected chair of the NNPA Foundation last month.

"Frankly, I really did feel very put down by men that participated in that. That's all the top Black leadership. There are still a large number of men who are intimidated and not supportive of women in leadership posi-

"They have to be willing to speak their mind, but do it in a respectful way, and we have to continue doing it."

— Dorothy Height
President Emeritus,
National Council of
Negro Women



tions. It is just a fact of life."

Rev. Willie T. Barrow, a long-time member of the Rainbow/PUSH board of directors, said she has had to push her way to respectability — literally.

"The preacher told me that I couldn't stand behind the pulpit at the big rally. I just took my arm and pushed

him out of the way, and I said, 'What do you mean?' I thought he thought there was a bomb or something. He said, 'No, we don't allow women.' Dr. King was just assassinated, and the buildings are burning and the young people are in the streets, and I just pushed him out of the way."



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— Myrlie Evers-Williams
Former Board Chair NAACP

Margaret Bush Wilson (1975-1983) and Myrlie Evers-Williams (1995-1998) — have been Black women. Rainbow/PUSH, headed by Jesse Jackson, and the National Action Network, established by Al Sharpton, have had only one leader in their history.

Black women comprise 61.1 percent of America's Black population. Yet, of those listed on *Ebony* magazine's 100 Most Influential Black Americans and Organizational Leaders list last year, only 35 were women, including 11 members of Congress. If the female members of Congress were excluded, Black

now, two of these movements — women and color — combine in one, the combination has great meaning."

Today, Black women are not allowed to lead major civil rights groups, though they have proven to be excellent leaders of other organizations, such as the National Bar Association, the National Medical Association, the National Association of Black Journalists, the National Black MBA Association, the National Dental Association and the National Conference of Black Political Scientists.

Myrlie Evers-Williams, widow of slain civil rights leader Medgar Evers and

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