OJ Simpson Case Summary

The Crime

In the 1970’s and 1980’s, Orenthal James Simpson or OJ Simpson was a well-known celebrity within North America. He was an all American Football player who turned to acting and sports casting after he retired from the National Football League. On June 12, 1994 Nicole Brown, OJ’s ex-wife, and her friend, Ronald Goldman, were found murdered outside Nicole’s residence. The scene of the crime took place outside Ms. Brown’s condominium complex, where two murdered bodies were discovered in the entrance pathway. The police scanned the scene of the crime carefully searching for evidence. They found crucial DNA evidence that supported their idea that Mr. Simpson had been involved in committing these murders. The LAPD issued a statement to the media saying that they were allowing OJ Simpson to turn himself in by June 17 at 11:00 a.m.

OJ Simpson did not report to the police station on June 11th, but his lawyer and close friend Robert Kardashian addressed the media with a note that Mr. Simpson had written to the public. In this note Mr. Simpson stated:

“To whom it may concern: First, everyone understand I have nothing to do with Nicole’s murder. I loved her, always have and always will. If we had a problem, it's because I loved her so much. I've had a good life. I'm proud of how I lived. My mama taught me to do unto other. I treated people the way I wanted to be treated. I've always tried to be up and helpful so why is this happening? I'm sorry for the Goldman family. I know how much it hurts. Don't feel sorry for me. I've had a great life, great. Please think of the real O.J. and not this lost person. Thanks for making my life special. I hope I helped yours.”

Mr. Simpson explained how he loved Nicole very much and he wished he had spent more time with his friends and family. Upon hearing this letter many people believed that OJ was planning to commit suicide and were correct in assuming so. Following the release of the letter, the infamous car chase took place while broadcasted on live television. OJ Simpson’s Ford Bronco was spotted driving down the interstate, being driven by his friend Al Cowlings. Mr. Simpson was located in the rear seat with a gun
pointing to his head stating that he was going to kill himself if any cop approach the vehicle. Within the video below detective Tom Lange talked to Simpson while the car chase was taking place. He pleads with Mr. Simpson to stop this chase and not to commit suicide. Every news station within the world broadcasted the chase as the police chased Mr. Simpsons white bronco at slow speeds down the highway. Citizens flocked to the overpasses to watch as the truck passed them while being followed by numerous cop cars and news helicopters. The chase finally concluded at Mr. Simpson's home and came to a dramatic end when Cowling parked in the driveway and cried to OJ to not to take his life. Mr. Simpson finally listened to his close friend, surrendered to the LAPD, and was arrested.

**The Trial**

The trial for OJ Simpson was given the name “the Trial of the Century”. It became the most publicized case of all time within the U.S. The state of California spent over twenty million dollars on this one case alone. It received more media attention than serial killers such as Charles Manson. OJ pleaded not guilty on both accounts of murder and on January 29, 1995 the trial people vs. OJ Simpson began. Even though the prosecution had no fingerprints, witnesses, or murder weapon, they were confident that they would convict Mr. Simpson. They relied on crucial DNA evidence to prosecute him. Some of the evidence the prosecution relied on was the:

- Bloody footprints of shoes that matched shoes Mr. Simpson owned.
- Hair Samples located on the bodies and crime scene
- Articles of clothing that were located at Mr. Simpson residence

The prosecution also called DNA experts to testify that blood found at the crime scene matched Simpson's blood and that blood from both of the victims. The experts explained that the blood sample obtained within the Ford Bronco and at Mr. Simpson residence were direct matches, leaving the jury to believe that OJ had tracked the blood back to his residence after he committed the murders. Although there was substantial DNA evidence against Mr. Simpson, the handling of this evidence by the LAPD was unprofessional in the least. The way it was handled by the police lead the courts and jury to believe that something was not right. The defense highlighted the faults of the LAPD and how Mr. Simpson was framed.
The defense team that represented OJ Simpson was called the “Dream Team”. The lawyers that were part of this team were:

- Robert Shapiro
- Johnnie Cochran
- F. Lee Bailey
- Alan Dershowitz

One of their main arguments was the police mismanagement of the case. The Defense focused on discrediting the Los Angeles police department. They claimed that the police failed to conduct a well-constructed, proper investigation. Johnnie Cochran addresses the court stating that main police involved within the case were racist. He argued that police Detectives tried to frame Mr. Simpson of the crime by planted crucial evidence like the bloody glove in his residence. This lead to the famous court act where OJ Simpson tried on the murder gloves discovered in his home and to much surprise the glove did not fit.

"If the glove doesn't fit, you must acquit" - Johnnie Cochran

After many months of deliberation and numerous witnesses within the criminal trial, 12 juries finally came to a verdict. Mr. Simpson was found not guilty in both counts of murder. Society was shocked by this verdict due to the DNA evidence presented and how obvious the evidence pointed towards Mr. Simpson. Many critics of the trial argued that the mishandling of the evidence by the police department was the reason for this verdict.

Directly after Mr. Simpson criminal trial concluded, a civil lawsuit was filed against OJ by the parents of Ronald Goldman. The outcome of this trial was different from that of the criminal. The lawyer for the Goldman family, Mr. Petrocelli brought crucial evidence into this trial which was not involved within the Criminal trial. A lie detector test that Mr. Simpson completed after the crime was examined, which showed how OJ had failed this test. This test involved questions asking if he had involvement within the crime. The jury within this trial awarded the Goldman family and the Simpson children 12.5 million dollars in compensation.