

## **Effect of the O.J. Trial on the Access to Justice \***

*by Eric C. Johnson*

Abstract

*People v. Simpson* was an expensive court case that taxed Los Angeles County's coffers. As a result many creative, and occasionally unconstitutional, proposals were suggested to lessen local hardship, but none have been implemented at this time. While the Simpson case may have captured the nation's attention, it is an oddity in the legal system and poor justification to radically alter how the courts' costs are distributed. The concern over *Simpson's* costs touches upon the complex issue of how the state funds the trial courts. Now, the state in theory is responsible for funding a specific percentage of local costs but is actually appropriating much less. Furthermore, none of the solutions proffered after the *Simpson* case address the basic funding mechanisms, and are often not viable alternatives for California. Full funding by the state, also, is not likely as it would place an extraordinary burden on the state in an era of shrinking government budgets.

\* This is one of two papers by the same author discussing the legal fallout from the O.J. Simpson trial. Please see also, *Proposed Reforms to the Criminal Justice System as a Reaction to the Simpson Verdict* in this volume.