

## **Proposed Reforms to the Criminal Justice System as a Reaction to the Simpson Verdict \***

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Abstract

As a result of the October 3, 1995 not guilty verdicts in *People v. Simpson*, numerous proposals to reform the criminal justice system have been put forward. The suggestions have primarily targeted on the structure and role of the jury, quickening the pace of trials, changing evidence rule to focus on "the law" rather than tangential or emotional issues, and retaining the dignity of the courts through restrictions on the lawyers and cameras in courtrooms.

The judiciary and the Legislature have both begun to explore reforms in the wake of the trial. For, the Judicial Council of California discussed altering the jury system by reducing the number of jurors in civil cases to eight, eliminating unanimous verdicts in some criminal cases, increasing juror pay, and banning cameras from the courtroom. Other proposals being taken under consideration include curtailing sequestration and limiting lawyers' statements during closing arguments.

\* This is one of two papers by the same author discussing the legal fallout from the O.J. Simpson trial. Please see also, *Effect of the O.J. Trial on the Access to Justice* in this volume.