

# OPINION

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## **The essential difference**

I watched with interest a CBS report and interview with O.J. Simpson which aired recently. I would like to offer Simpson a point of view which I believe to be shared by a majority of us so-called "white folks" who believe this case has nothing to do with racism.

When I watched you play football for USC, and later, with the Buffalo Bills, I didn't see a black man, I saw a great athlete. And I admired you.

When I watched you broadcast football games with great personality and a player's zest for the game, I didn't see a black man, I saw a competent sportscaster. And I liked you.

When I watched you run and jump for cars in Hertz commercials, and play various bit movie parts, I didn't see a black man, I saw a funny actor. And I laughed with you.

When I watched your trial for the murders of your ex-wife, Nicole Brown, and another innocent victim, Ronald Goldman, I didn't see a black man, I saw a remorseless murderer. And I despised you.

When I listened to you speak about your hitting Nicole, and she hitting you, and then rationalizing that the public's condemnation was simply a matter of "a black man being ridiculed while a white woman is revered," I didn't see a black man, I saw a violent and incessant excuse-maker. And I wanted to tell you that the issue isn't about a black person hitting a white person, it's about a man hitting a woman.

And when I saw you stand in church with an apparently loving and sincere black congregation, one to which you had been a stranger until your recent acquittal, and I heard you preach before God, I didn't see a black man, I saw a phony. And I pitied you.

This isn't about black or white, Mr. Simpson, it's about right and wrong.

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*This article was the topic on Larry Elder's Program on KABC Radio on December 11, 1996 and republished in several other newspapers throughout the country. It is also included in Larry Elder's book, "The Ten Things You Can't Say In America."*