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**Body**

Legendary athlete, actor and millionaire: O.J. Simpson's murder trial lost him the American dream

LAS VEGAS — For a long time, O.J. Simpson was the man who had it all.

He lived the American dream as a sports legend, movie actor, commercial pitchman and millionaire. With his wildly successful career, startling good looks and a gorgeous wife, he became an image of success for Black Americans and was embraced by people of all races. It was safe for everyone to love Simpson, who inhabited a world of glamour and privilege available to few.

“I’m not Black, I’m O.J.,” he liked to tell friends.

It all came crashing down in the summer of 1994, when Simpson’s ex-wife, Nicole Brown Simpson, was found dead outside her condominium in Los Angeles. Her friend Ronald Goldman, a waiter who had come to her home to return a pair of eyeglasses left behind at a restaurant, was lying a few feet away, stabbed to death.

Simpson, who died Wednesday at 76 of prostate cancer, immediately came under suspicion amid talk of domestic abuse and jealousy.

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AP WAS THERE: OJ Simpson’s slow-speed chase

EDITOR’S NOTE: The first week of the O.J. Simpson case in mid-June 1994 moved quickly, with reporters racing to reach the news. The only thing that was slow was The Chase.

The football great had been accused of killing his ex-wife and her friend, and there he was on live television, in the back of his friend’s white Ford Bronco with a gun to his head. The freeway was like a parade — with the police, media and fans following “The Juice.” There were crowds on the overpasses, signs, cheers and fists punching the air as the pursuit unfolded.

In The Associated Press newsroom, editors and writers were riveted to small televisions. And that’s where many would stay for the next 17 months — glued to a TV as the so-called “Trial of the Century” unfolded.

After Simpson died Wednesday at 76, the AP is making available the story wrapping up all the developments from The Chase.

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The OJ Simpson saga was a unique American moment. 3 decades on, we're still wondering what it means

NEW YORK (AP) — A dog’s plaintive wail. A courtroom couplet-turned-cultural catchphrase about gloves. A judge and attorneys who became media darlings and villains. A slightly bewildered houseguest elevated, briefly, into a slightly bewildered celebrity. Troubling questions about race that echo still. The beginning of the Kardashian dynasty. An epic slow-motion highway chase. And, lest we forget, two people whose lives ended brutally.

And a nation watched — a nation far different than today's, where the ravenousness for reality television has multiplied. The spectator mentality of those jumbled days in 1994 and 1995, then novel, has since become an intrinsic part of the American fabric. Smack at the center of the national conversation was O.J. Simpson, one of the most curious cultural figures of recent U.S. history.

Simpson's death Wednesday, almost exactly three decades after the killings that changed his reputation from football hero to suspect, summoned remembrances of an odd moment in time — no, let's call it what it was, which was deeply weird — in which a smartphone-less country craned its neck toward clunky TVs to watch a Ford Bronco inch its way along a California freeway.

“It was an incredible moment in American history,” said Wolf Blitzer, anchoring coverage of Simpson's death Thursday on CNN. What made it so — beyond, of course, tabloid culture and the fundamental news value of such a famous person accused in such brutal killings?

In an era when the internet as we know it was still being born, when “platform” was still just a place to board a train, Simpson was a unique breed of celebrity. He was truly transmedia, a harbinger of the digital age — a walking, talking crossover story for multiple audiences.

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Muslim leaders are 'out of words' as they tire of the White House outreach on the war in Gaza

WASHINGTON (AP) — Osama Siblani was sipping his morning coffee at the office when his phone buzzed with a message from one of President Joe Biden's advisers. As publisher of the Arab American News in Dearborn, Michigan, Siblani serves as an occasional sounding board, and the White House wanted to know what he thought of Biden's recent call with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

After months of mounting concerns over the suffering of Palestinians in Gaza, Biden had publicly, albeit vaguely, threatened to cut U.S. assistance to Israel's military operations in the Hamas-controlled territory.

“This is baby steps,” Siblani said he responded. “What we need is giant steps rather than baby steps.”

The text exchange is an example of the behind-the-scenes communication that the White House has nurtured at a time of anger at the Democratic president over his support for Israel. Such informal contacts have become more important as some Muslim and Arab American leaders have turned down opportunities to talk with Biden or his advisers, frustrated by the sense their private conversations and public anguish have done little or nothing to persuade him to change course.

The White House says it is keeping an open door for difficult conversations, but it can be hard to get people to walk through.

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Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida addresses Congress amid skepticism about US role abroad

WASHINGTON (AP) — Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida addressed U.S. lawmakers at the Capitol on Thursday, urging them to consider the importance of global commitments at a time of tension in the Asia-Pacific and deep skepticism in Congress about U.S. involvement abroad.

Kishida is in Washington this week visiting President Joe Biden as the White House completes hosting each leader of the Quad — an informal partnership between the U.S. Japan, Australia and India that is seen as important to countering China's growing military strength in the region. Kishida highlighted the value of the U.S. commitment to global security and offered reassurances that Japan is a strong partner.

On Capitol Hill, his audience included many Republicans who have pushed for the U.S. to take a less active role in global affairs as they follow the “America First" ethos of Donald Trump, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee. The Republican-controlled House has sat for months on a $95 billion package that would send wartime funding to Ukraine and Israel, as well as aid to allies in the Indo-Pacific like Taiwan and humanitarian help to civilians in Gaza and Ukraine.

“As we meet here today, I detect an undercurrent of self-doubt among some Americans about what your role in the world should be,” Kishida told Congress.

He sought to remind lawmakers of the leading role the U.S. has played globally since World War II. After dropping two nuclear weapons on Japan to end the war, the U.S. helped rebuild Japan, and the nations transformed from bitter enemies to close allies.

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The Biden administration will require thousands more gun dealers to run background checks on buyers

WASHINGTON (AP) — Thousands more firearms dealers across the United States will have to run background checks on buyers at gun shows or other places outside brick-and-mortar stores, according to a Biden administration rule that will soon go into effect.

The rule aims to close a loophole that has allowed tens of thousands of guns to be sold every year by unlicensed dealers who do not perform background checks to ensure the potential buyer is not legally prohibited from having a firearm. Gun rights groups are expected to fight it in court.

It's the administration's latest effort to combat gun violence. But in a contentious election year, it’s also an effort to show voters — especially younger ones for whom gun violence deeply resonates — that the White House is trying to stop the deaths.

“This is going to keep guns out of the hands of domestic abusers and felons," President Joe Biden said in a statement. "And my administration is going to continue to do everything we possibly can to save lives. Congress needs to finish the job and pass universal background checks legislation now."

The rule, which was finalized this week, makes clear that anyone who sells firearms predominantly to earn a profit must be federally licensed and conduct background checks, regardless of whether they are selling on the internet, at a gun show or at a brick-and-mortar store, Attorney General Merrick Garland told reporters.

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Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg says Trump's hush money criminal trial isn't about ***politics***

NEW YORK (AP) — When he was elected two years ago as Manhattan’s first Black district attorney, Alvin Bragg spoke candidly about his unease with the job’s political demands. A former law professor, he’s more comfortable untangling complex legal questions than swaggering up to a podium.

But when the first of Donald Trump’s four criminal prosecutions heads to trial on Monday, about alleged hush money payments to cover up a sex scandal during the 2016 election, Bragg will be at the center of a political maelstrom with few precedents.

Even before announcing the 34-count felony indictment against Trump last year, Bragg was a lightning rod for conservative critics who said he wasn’t tough enough on crime. The upcoming trial will test the Democrat’s efforts to portray himself as apolitical in the face of relentless attacks from the Republican former president and his supporters, who say the prosecution is the epitome of partisanship.

Echoing the racist tropes he has deployed frequently against his legal adversaries, Trump has called Bragg a “thug” and a “degenerate psychopath,” urging his supporters to take action against the “danger to our country.”

Bragg, who declined to be interviewed for this story, has rejected that, comparing the prosecution against Trump to any other case of financial crime.

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More aid is supposed to be entering the Gaza Strip. Why isn’t it helping?

JERUSALEM (AP) — Under heavy U.S. pressure, Israel has promised to ramp up aid to Gaza dramatically, saying last week it would open another cargo crossing and surge more trucks than ever before into the besieged enclave.

But days later, there are few signs of those promises materializing and international officials say starvation is widespread in hard-hit northern Gaza.

Samantha Power, administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development, said this week she accepted “credible” reports that famine is now occurring in the area and urged Israel to take further steps to expedite humanitarian aid shipments.

Power's remarks echoed those of U.S. President Joe Biden, who said on Wednesday that Israeli efforts to increase aid were “not enough.”

While Israel says it has dramatically increased the number of aid trucks entering the territory, U.N. workers report only a slight uptick — possibly because they count trucks differently.

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Shohei Ohtani's ex-interpreter charged with stealing $16M from baseball star in sports betting case

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Federal authorities charged the former longtime interpreter for Los Angeles Dodgers star Shohei Ohtani on Thursday with federal bank fraud, alleging that he stole more than $16 million from the Japanese sensation to cover gambling bets and debts.

Interpreter Ippei Mizuhara, a constant presence beside Ohtani in baseball stadiums across the country since 2018, abused the two-way player's trust in him and exploited the language barrier to plunder a bank account that only he could access, prosecutors said.

U.S. Attorney Martin Estrada said Mizuhara was so intertwined in Ohtani's life and career that he became the star's “de facto manager." The role enabled him to withdraw money from the account — at times lying and impersonating Ohtani to bank employees — to finance his "insatiable appetite for illegal sports betting."

Thursday's announcement, at a packed news conference in downtown Los Angeles, ended weeks of speculation about Mizuhara's self-admitted gambling problems, the wide-ranging federal investigation and Ohtani's role in the scandal.

Estrada said that there is no evidence that Ohtani was aware of his interpreter’s actions, adding that Ohtani has cooperated with investigators.

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US measles cases are up in 2024. What's driving the increase?

Measles outbreaks in the U.S. and abroad are raising health experts' concern about the preventable, once-common childhood virus.

One of the world's most contagious diseases, measles can lead to potentially serious complications. The best defense, according to experts? Get vaccinated.

Here's what to know about the year — so far — in measles.

Nationwide, measles cases already are nearly double the total for all of last year.

The U.S. Centers of Disease Control and Prevention documented 113 cases as of April 5. There have been seven outbreaks and most of U.S. cases — 73% — are linked to those flare-ups.

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