

# [***O.J. Simpson Dead At 76 Years Old; Simpson Trial Captivated Americans Across Nation; Examining Media Coverage Of O.J. Simpson's Death; Rural Voters Move Toward Republican Party; How The Trial Of the Century Changed Policing; Outrage Over Results Of California Homelessness Audit***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BSJ-YST1-F072-X1WK-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

GREG GUTFELD, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: They did. Out of time. Thank you, Roseanne, Jeff Dye, Emily, Tyrus, our studio audience. FOX NEWS @ NIGHT with dreamy Trace Gallagher is next. I'm Greg Gutfeld. I love you, America.

TRACE GALLAGHER, ANCHOR, FOX NEWS @ NIGHT: And good evening. I'm Trace Gallagher. Live in Los Angeles just a few blocks east from where Nicole Brown Simpson and Ron Goldman were brutally murdered 30 years ago, just a few blocks west of where 95 million people watch a white Ford Bronco make its way slowly down the 405 freeway. And where a football hero turned accused killer put on a glove that did not fit and found a jury that did acquit.

Tonight, we ask, where were you on that October day when O.J. Simpson was found not guilty in the trial of the century? It's 11 p.m. on the East Coast, 8:00 here in Los Angeles. And this is America's late news, FOX NEWS @ NIGHT.

And breaking tonight, one of the most famous and infamous Americans ever. O.J. Simpson dead tonight at the age of 76 after a battle with cancer. Chanley Painter is live with more on the death that gripped the nation. Chandley, good evening.

CHANLEY PAINTER, FOX NEWS OVERNIGHT ANCHOR: Good evening, Trace. O.J. Simpson rocking headlines one last time today with his family announcing the former celebrity athlete and infamous household name has died prompting memories for Americans of a certain age of where we were when we first heard this.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: We the jury in the above entitled action find the defendant Orenthal James Simpson not guilty of a crime of murder in violation of Penal Code Section 187A, a felony upon Nicole Brown Simpson, a human being as charged account one of the inflammation.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

PAINTER: Once a football Hall of Fame running back with endorsement deals and Hollywood cameos Simpsons, all American image was quickly overshadowed by a legacy he could never run from that of a suspected murderer. His highly charged trial seen by over 100 million Americans following this now infamous white Ford Bronco car chase. And to the shock of many, Simpson was acquitted in the brutal stabbings of his ex-wife, Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend Ron Goldman following a dream team defense attacking the Los Angeles Police Department for racially motivated corruption.

However, a couple years later, Simpson was found civilly liable when the Goldman and Brown families pursued a wrongful death lawsuit. He was ordered to pay more than $30 million in damages, most of which was never paid despite a generous NFL pension and his book. If I did it, but it was a Las Vegas armed robbery and kidnapping case in which he claimed he was just trying to retrieve his own stolen football memorabilia that sent Simpson to prison for nine years in 2008. He was paroled in 2017 where he still continued to put himself out there.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

O.J. SIMPSON, PRO-FOOTBALL HALL OF FAMER: -- a moment to say thank you to all the people reached out to me. My health is good. I mean, obviously I'm dealing with some issues. But hey, I think I'm just about over it. Now we back on that golf course, hopefully in a couple of weeks.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

PAINTER: And that video, of course, posted just a couple of months ago, the family of O.J. Simpson saying that their father and grandfather lost his battle with prostate cancer. He was surrounded by loved ones, Trace and O.J. was 76 years old.

GALLAGHER: Chanley, we're back to you in moments. Thank you, Chanley Painter live for us in New York.

Meantime, the FOX NEWS @ NIGHT Common Sense department was initially mesmerized by O.J. Simpson. His playing days at USC that led to a Heisman Trophy were magic. His playing days in the pros doubled the magic. And then we learn not only was O.J. a superb athlete, he was funny, starring in those goofy Naked Gun movies. He was also charming, whether it was in the broadcast booth on Monday night football selling orange juice or running through airports.

Then in June 1994, a rental James was suddenly accused of being Jack the Ripper. America's hero became the country's villain. Or did he? When O.J. jumped into a right Bronco taking 95 million of us -- million of us for a slow ride down the 405 people stood and cheered. Prosecutors laid out conclusive evidence, including a trail of blood from Bandita Rockingham and a jury acquitted.

Common Sense remember seeing O.J. at a boxing event in the late 1990s surrounded by people clamoring for an autograph. Even in death, NPR wrote "football great, a rental James Simpson has died." Did NPR not read the rest of the bio? The New York Times obituary said the murder trial "ruined his world." What about Nicole Simpson's world? Ron Goldman's world. It's true. A jury said O.J. was not a killer. Common Sense knows better.

And while it's fine to remember O.J. as a great athlete, let's not forget. He was also a very bad man. Let's bring in Chanley Painter back in along with an attorney who worked for Johnnie Cochran's law firm, Anahita Sedaghatfar and a Loyola Law professor the O.J. Simpson trial with us long time ago, long time friend of Fox News, Stan Goldman. Welcome to all of you.

To you first, Stan. It really is not hyperbole -- welcome back. It's been great to see you after a long time. Not hyperbole to say this O. J. Case changed everything, including the cases, how they were tried, how they were covered, Stan, it really did. It changed the landscape.

STAN GOLDMAN, LOYOLA UNIVERSITY LAW PROFESSOR: A prosecutor suddenly discovered they were not able to convict because they didn't have scientific evidence. One of the reasons why the jury convicted in this case, it was a very early case using DNA. You wouldn't get the same result today. Today, the jurors would hear the DNA evidence. They'd accept it. Back then, it was -- and I had tried cases in downtown L.A. for a decade.

It's just about the first case I'd ever seen in which they were trying to use DNA evidence and it didn't quite work with the jury. They were willing to accept the idea it was flawed.

GALLAGHER: Yes, it really was. And that was the whole thing is we were just kind of being educated about a lot of this stuff. Cameras in the courtroom and you name it. One of the famous parts of the trial, Anahita is Johnnie Cochran saying the glove doesn't fit. Here's that moment. Watch.

ANAHITA SEDAGHATFAR, ATTORNEY: Yes. Yes.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JOHNNIE COCHRAN, O.J. SIMPSON'S ATTORNEY: And if you look at O.J. Simpson over there and he has a rather large head, O.J. Simpson in a knit cap from two blocks away is still O.J. Simpson. It's no disguise. It's no disguise. It makes no sense. It doesn't fit. If it doesn't fit, you must acquit.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GALLAGHER: I mean, Johnnie Cochran had a strategy, Anahita, and listen, it worked for all intents and purposes.

SEDAGHATFAR: It worked great. Regardless of what you think about O.J. Simpson, his strategy resonated with the jury trace. He took the focus essentially off of O.J. Simpson and put the LAPD on trial. He threw out allegations of racism. He threw out allegations of police misconduct. The police were planting evidence and let's not forget the testimony of Detective Fuhrman. He perjured himself on the stand, said he never used the N word in these racial epithets.

And you know, on the heels of Rodney King, it was not surprising that there was a double acquittal in this case. He was a master trial attorney, Trace.

GALLAGHER: And Marcia Clark, one of the prosecutors, clearly was always a bit frustrated. She had this interview she gave to Fox back in 2016 and said the following. Watch.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

MARCIA CLARK, SIMPSON TRIAL LEAD PROSECUTOR: That trial was a nightmare for me every single day. The impact of race on the case, the impact of celebrity on the case, and surprisingly the sexism that no one talked about back then.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GALLAGHER: I mean, Chanley Painter, are you worked for Court T.V.? You know. I mean, you're a lawyer. You work for court T.V. This thing buoyed, it lifted Court T.V. and the rest of legal television. And this was kind of an issue of forces colliding.

PAINTER: Absolutely. Arguably, the O.J. Simpson trial launched Court T.V. into the iconic brand. It was and still is today covering trials. This was the first celebrity trial with a camera in the courtroom. So, millions of Americans all over the -- and all over the world could zoom in. They could watch it. They could see every piece of evidence unfold the defense so they can make their own opinions and decisions about the outcome, which is why it was so shocking.

And of course, here we are today with still cameras in the courtroom. It started it all the O.J. Simpson trial.

GALLAGHER: Yes. It's amazing because every time we would go and cover a trial that didn't have cameras in the courtroom, you're thinking, so how we're going to do this? We send a producer in and we have them bring out information just like in the old days. Alan Dershowitz, who was of course part of the dream team had this to say. Watch.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ALAN DERSHOWITZ, ADVISER TO SIMPSON LEGAL TEAM: It was a very dramatic time in American history. The country was divided along racial lines. And the evidence was divided. There was overwhelming evidence that might suggest that he did it. And then there was one piece of evidence that was tampered with. And so, the jury concluded that a very important piece of evidence was tampered with by the government. And that's the reason they acquitted.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GALLAGHER: Yes. I mean, some of the jurors, Stan, have come out and they said, look, this really wasn't about justice. This was about payback. I mean, Rodney King had just happened a year before that. So, there were a lot of emotions that were still bubbling up in this case.

GOLDMAN: Oh yes. And the prosecution made a mistake, I think, by trying to edit the jury after the fact so that they were kicking people off the jury, who they thought were pro-defense. The reality was, Lance Ito, the judge decided to be fair, he would have to grant defense motions to do exactly the same thing. By the time you got to the end, you'd probably taken off just about everybody on the jury who had strong personality.

And therefore, you ended up with the jury easily swayed by a couple of people who probably wanted this as an acquittal.

GALLAGHER: Yes. And it's interesting because when you talk about the acquittal, Anahita, you know, you look at the evidence and it was overwhelming. I said in Common Sense that it really was a trail of blood from Bundy to Rockingham and they followed it all the way there. And yet they really did create some doubt when the -- when the jury went into the room.

SEDAGHATFAR: That's all you need to do, Trace, you know that. All you need to do as a defense attorney is raise reasonable doubt. And I think that was very easy to do in light of the composition of the jury, the context of what was going on in the community at the time, and the brilliance really of the dream team. I mean, he had O.J. Simpson, enough money to hire the best experts, the best defense attorneys.

This was not something a typical defendant in a criminal case can do. And so, I think to the extent that the only need to prove reasonable doubt, you get an acquittal in the case.

GALLAGHER: Yes. And I think, Chanley, when you look at this in the totality of it, and you see and you look back to all these years later, do you see that things have changed or did change never went back to the old way?

PAINTER: Absolutely. This trial changed everything. It was the trial of this century and it formed how we watched trials, how we consumed true crime nowadays in this case. And it was, again, for O.J. Simpson in this case, and for, I think we need to mention the victim's family, the family of Nicole Brown Simpson and Ron Goldman still suffering from this acquittal. They firmly believe that he is the sole person responsible for their murders.

And they did, of course, win some money in that civil lawsuit, Trace, but have yet to be paid. It's unclear how they're going to continue to be paid now that he has passed away. I believe L.A. Times, that he still owes 114.2 million, including interest now in that civil verdict alone. So, this saga still continues today.

GALLAGHER: Yes. They're trying to go after the state, but it doesn't look like it's going to happen. Stan Goldman, Anahita Sedaghatfar, Chandley Painter. Thank you all. Meantime, it is no surprise that reaction to O.J. Simpson's death has varied greatly depending on who exactly is weighing in. Christina Coleman is live with that side of the story. Christina, good evening.

CHRISTINA COLEMAN, FOX NEWS CORRESPONDENT: Hi, good evening, Trace. Yes. Reaction pouring in tonight following the death of O.J. Simpson, a football hero who fell from grace after he was accused of stabbing his ex-wife Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend, Ron Goldman, to death.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: When some -- someone like this passes, my -- really my only thought is I hope it gives some peace to the family of the victims. They did win this civil suit after the fact because I agree I think it was a miscarriage of justice, but that doesn't make up for it. So, I hope that it helps them to find some peace.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

COLEMAN: Kato Kaelin was staying in a guest house on the Simpson's estate the night that Goldman and Simpson were killed. Here's his reaction to news that O.J. has died.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

Kato Kaelin, O.J. SIMPSON TRIAL WITNESS: On his deathbed, I don't know if he said opinions or not, but I really -- I really believe he is guilty and if he made peace with God or not.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

COLEMAN: Also, tonight ESPN star host Stephen A. Smith reacted to O.J.'s infamous trial, noting the intense racial division of the time. The trial started in 1994, just a few years after the Rodney King race riots in Los Angeles.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

STEPHEN A. SMITH, ESPN HOST: He's a double murderer in the eyes of most people in this country. White, black, Latino, African-American and everything else, but it was more important to folks at the time to indict the LAPD.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

COLEMAN: Again, that is some -- that is the opinion of some people. Ron Goldman's family also reacting on X saying in part, "the news of Ron's killer passing away is a mixed bag of complicated emotions and reminds us that the journey through grief is not linear for three decades. We tirelessly pursue justice for Ron and Nicole and despite a civil judgment and his confession and if I did it, the hope for true accountability has ended."

Now Goldman's family also said they will continue to advocate for the rights of all victims and survivors, ensuring our voices or their voices rather are heard both within and beyond the courtroom. Trace?

GALLAGHER: Very rough time for that family. Christina Coleman, live for us, Christina. Thank you. Before he was tried and acquitted of killing his ex- wife and her friend, O.J. Simpson had legendary college and professional football careers and went on to become a popular actor in movies and his trademark Hertz T.V. commercials.

The senior national correspondent Kevin Corke who also covered sports for many years is live with more on the legacy of O.J. Kevin, good evening.

KEVIN CORKE, FOX NEWS CORRESPONDENT: Great lead in, Trace. And evening to you. As you know for millions of Americans, O.J. Simpson was much more than just the murder or the chase or even the verdict for a period of time. His popularity in this country and perhaps even globally was unparalleled. Heisman Trophy over at Southern Cal, the NFL's first 2000 yard man, the face of the league in many ways and of course that culminated in the coveted Hall of Fame gold jacket.

And then of course there was also, you know, the pop culture running through airports for herds and even gracing the big screen.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Don't thank me. There's someone else here who wants to thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Nordberg.

SIMPSON: Hiya, buddy. The doc says I should be on my feet (INAUDIBLE) in a week.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: And back on the force.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Nordberg, that's wonderful.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

CORKE: More reaction pouring in tonight including this. RIP Nordberg. That was the name of his character in that particular film. His acting was a lot like his murdering and got away with it, but no one believed him. Wow. How about this from the Hall of Fame itself. O.J. Simpson was the first player to reach a rushing mark many thought could not be attained in a 14 game season when he top 2000 yards.

His on-field contributions will be preserved in the halls archives in Canton, Ohio. Now when he retired the juice as he was famously known had five NFL records to his credit Including most rushing yards in a single season and most 200-yard games. But his Hall of Fame career will no doubt be marred by the memory of what happened at Bundy and to the country thereafter, Trace.

GALLAGHER: Indeed, it will. Kevin Corke, stand by if you would. Let's bring in former ABC correspondent Bettina Gregory who covered the O.J. trial along with Kevin. Bettina, it's great to have you on the show. I mean, you look at the Bronco chase and the O.J. verdict. These things had Super Bowl size audiences. 95 million, 100 million. It really changed the face of television news, Bettina.

BETTINA GREGORY, FORMER ABC NEWS CORRESPONDENT: Well, starting with -- starting with the slow speed chase which galvanized Americans, it went on for an hour and nobody -- I mean O.J. Simpson holding a gun to his head driving on the 405 north. The police clearing the making room for his car and nobody knew where he was going. He had written some notes and people thought maybe he was going to kill himself because he refused to surrender to police on the day that he was supposed to.

And there he was with his friend Al Cowlings driving in that Bronco and it was -- it was the most dramatic thing that had occurred in this country for many, many years, Trace.

GALLAGHER: Yes, it really was. And it's interesting, Kevin, because, you know, you kind of go back and you played a little bit of this in your piece when then O.J. on the Naked Gun. I want to pay just a quick clip of this because if there's a point to it watch this.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

SIMPSON: Hiya, buddy. The doc says I should be on my feet (INAUDIBLE) in a week.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: And back on the force.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Nordberg, that's wonderful.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Of, Frank. Everyone should have a friend like you.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GALLAGHER: I mean, you throw that all together, Kevin with the Hertz commercials and the Monday Night football stuff and you hear him do interviews and stuff. And the reason that 95 million people watch the Bronco chase and that 100 million people watch the verdict is because O.J. was charming. He was captivating and everybody thought, man, this -- you could not write this.

CORKE: Yes. He was about as popular I think, Trace, in that time period as you could get. And even many years after he played the game and appeared in films and on T.V., he was incredibly popular as you pointed out. Very interesting side note. I was actually driving up to Estes Park to the Great Stanley Hotel shining to watch a friend Karina Nelson (PH) sing on the day of the chase. And I mentioned that because it's one thing to watch it, live on television.

It's something altogether different to listen to it being narrated and in my case I was listening to ABC Radio and it was being narrated by one Bettina Gregory.

GALLAGHER: Yes. That's fantastic. Now back to Bettina. Jim Gray had this to say about O.J., Bettina and I'll get your response.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JIM GRAY, SPORTSCASTER: It was one of those guys that had this magnetism that attracted everybody to him. And had a big smile had a tremendous career in commercials with Hertz Amongst others and running through airports and he was -- he was an icon in football.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GALLAGHER: Magnetic guy suddenly being accused of this Jack the Ripper type crime, Bettina.

GREGORY: Well, the outpouring of affection and love for O.J. during that low-speed chase, there were people on the overpasses waving and cheering to him. They were carrying signs free the juice outside his home on Rockingham and Brentwood. The crowds were being restrained by police and some were -- people were crying and saying free the juice, free the juice. I mean he was not only an icon, I mean, he was just a true -- at that point just a true American hero.

GALLAGHER: Yes.

GREGORY: Really had carved out a unique position in our psyche.

GALLAGHER: Yes. And listen, I covered all three trials. I mean -- and Kevin, you did. The whole concept here is, is this changed careers? It changed the face of what we do today.

CORKE: No question about it. Court T.V. and our fascination as a culture, Trace, with not just legal dramas the real-life dramas, but even crime and mysteries. I mean, that's changed so dramatically in the years since. I'll never forget that day and I think the country never will either.

GALLAGHER: No, I think you're exactly right on that. Kevin Corke, Bettina Gregory, thank you both.

Meantime, new polling once again shows key voting blocs moving toward former President Trump will break down the numbers as we get into ***politics*** on the other side.

And later in The Nightcap, O.J. Simpson's passing has people reflecting on his life and tainted legacy.

And a captivating topic of conversation once more gripping the nation. Where were you when O.J. Simpson was found not guilty in the trial of the century or where were you for the infamous Bronco car chase? What do you know about it? What do you remember? Let us know X and Instagram @TraceGallagher. We'll read the best responses in The Nightcap.

Meantime, 8:20 on the West Coast. Here's the FOX NEWS @ NIGHT trip across America. Live look, Roseburg, Oregon. Did you know that tater tots were invented in Oregon? You know, Ore-Ida. Next to Augusta, Georgia where the 88th edition of the Masters underway today. And finally, a live look Tampa, Florida. Home to the world's longest continuous sidewalk at 4.5 miles. If you cannot join us live, don't forget to set your DVR and watch us any time.

Up next, we're going to show you why rural voters are migrating toward conservatives.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

GALLAGHER: New evidence tonight that traditionally Democratic voting blocs are looking to former President Trump over President Biden to better handle America's economic and immigration crises. Back live now to the senior correspondent Kevin Corke. Kevin?

CORKE: Trace, the Biden campaign is keenly aware of the President's shortcomings. To be frank, his critics are arguing every single day pretty much that his vigor is questionable. His economic policies have hurt the working poor and middle class. And his border policies, they argue, have not only destabilized national security. They've in effect increased worker competition for many groups who generally have overwhelmingly supported Democrats and him specifically four years ago.

And that's especially so for Latino voters, at least according to the latest Axios survey, which found that Latinos believe President Biden is under water when it comes, say, a competition between him and former President Trump. 42 to 20. How about Latinos who wonder who's better on immigration? Well, according to Axios, seven percent more of them say, yes, former President Trump.

How about who's better for crime and public safety? No question. 31 to 20 again, the former president. But to hear the current occupant of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue describe it, you think everything's just fine. At least when compared to the possible alternative. You see, Biden says he stands for what Latinos stand for, not Trump.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JOE BIDEN, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: Let's look at the way Trump talks about Latinos, talks about them as Mexicans, rapists and criminals, murderers. He talks about how -- I mean, it's just -- look, there's not a fundamental difference in the value set between Irish Catholic neighbors I grew up and Latinos. It's about faith. It's about families, it's about togetherness. It's about having each other's back.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

CORKE: Now Biden did score higher marks than the former president on some issues, including abortion and handling democracy. But it remains to be seen, Trace, if those issues will Trump the others come November.

GALLAGHER: Still got a while to go, Kevin Corke again, live force in D.C. Kevin, thank you. Let's bring in J.L. Partners Post Director Scarlett Maguire. Scarlett, it's great to have you on. I'm kind of fascinated by this Axios/Ipsos poll. I'm going to put this up on the screen because the question is, Latinos who support shutting the borders, if too many migrants try to enter, 64 percent is a big number.

I mean, when you lose Latinos and you're talking about the border, it's a damaging issue for Biden and his campaign. What do you think?

SCARLETT MAGUIRE, J.L. PARTNERS POST DIRECTOR: This is something we've seen consistently, especially over the last few months, which is that the border is an increasing headache for Biden. In some ways, this shouldn't be a surprise. Important issues, bread and butter issues, are important to all voters, regardless of their ethnicity. And it's not just white voters that are concerned about the border.

And I think, you know, we saw in that clip that Biden is keen to talk about Trump's language when it comes to immigrants and immigration. But I think what voters care about is action rather than language.

GALLAGHER: Yes. Here's the latest poll from Quinnipiac. This is on North Carolina talking about the economy, talking about the favorite issues. We can put this up and you look over there, the economy, 14-point lead for Trump. Immigration, you got a 12-point lead for Trump. World conflicts, which really right now is hotter than it's ever been, six-point lead for Trump in North Carolina. And you think, OK, that's where you really need to narrow that gap to make North Carolina closer than it should be.

SCARLETT MAGUIRE, J.L. PARTNERS POLLS DIRECTOR: Yes, absolutely. So, North Carolina is one of the handful of states that will decide the next election. And it was the only one actually that went Trump in 2020. Biden needs to be doing well here. At the moment, he's not. And those numbers explain that headline voting intention and explains why Trump's ahead. Voters at the moment in these swing states seem to trust more, seem to trust Trump more on key issues that matter to them.

GALLAGHER: You know, it's interesting, Scarlett, because you see former President Trump when he's campaigning now, he has that empty podium and he's constantly taunting the president to debate him. The question was asked by Fox News polling Trump v. Biden on how important is the debate? Is it for them to debate? And you see extremely very all voters say 64 percent, yes, they should debate. It really is. You know, it's the other poll where it says if you don't debate, it's a weakness. It's kind of forcing both of them into the ring.

MAGUIRE: Absolutely, debate is hugely important for voters and it's important to Biden's voters as well as Trump's voters. I think it's actually especially important for Biden when people are so concerned about his age, they want to see, they want to see him demonstrate that he can cope with that sort of thing, that he's able to conduct himself. I think, you know, just to give you some perspective on this, we just did a poll that found four in 10 voters don't even expect Biden to be alive by the end of the second term. So, he's really going to need to debate to sort of allay those fears.

GALLAGHER: Yes, and I wonder, when you do polling like this, do you think that, because the networks are now pushing for this as well, the networks clearly want to have some of these debates on there. The question is, is it one debate, Scarlett? Are we going to get one big debate? Or do you think we might get a couple, maybe three debates before November?

MAGUIRE: I think at the moment that will hinder what Biden's team agree to do. I think there's no doubt at the moment that it looks like debate would favor President Trump unless Biden can pull something quite dramatic out of the bag that we've not really been seeing from him in the last few months. So, I feel like at the moment that rests with the White House.

GALLAGHER: Scarlett Maguire, great to see you as always. Thank you for coming on.

Meantime, let's talk now about how rural voters are moving toward the GOP with Boise, Idaho resident and former news anchor, maybe the best news anchor in the country, my former colleague, Dee Sarton. Dee, it's great to have you on. Before we get into this polling thing, Dee, I just want to get your take on this, because when O.J. Simpson, when the case came around, the murder case came around, I think I was gone from Boise for maybe a year, year and a half. You were anchoring a couple of shows a day then. How much impact did that trial, if you look back, and that entire case have on the direction and the tone and the tenor of television news?

DEE SARTON, BOISE, IDAHO RESIDENT: Well, you know, I've said very often that Desert Storm, a few years prior to that, really created this insatiable desire for live TV. Well, wow, that O.J. Simpson trial fueled that fire. I mean, live, live, live. And if you could go wall to wall live with that much drama and that much infusion of emotion, oh my goodness, it took over.

We were wall to wall with it, NBC affiliate, all the mainstream media were taking it pretty much wall to wall, so were we. And so, we sat there and watched it. And then of course, did all the local spins that we could on how people were reacting. And I'll tell you, as it progressed, it became very divisive. Kind of maybe set us up for some of the things we're dealing with today.

GALLAGHER: Yes, it really did. I mean, that's the whole thing is even as journalists, you're covering this and you're just fascinated. You're just so compelled by what was happening inside the courtroom that it was really amazing to cover. Moving on now to ***politics***, which is why we brought you on, Dee. Here's the Pew Research poll. It says the following, quoting here: "Changing partisan coalitions in a politically divided nation."

Going on to say, "In 2008, when Barack Obama sought his first term as president, voters in rural counties were evenly split in their partisan loyalties. Today, Republicans hold a 25-percentage point advantage among rural residents." And I wonder why the big swing? Is it the bashing? Is it the deplorable talk? Or is it just the agenda of the left that's just not that appealing? What do you make of this?

SARTON: Oh, Trace, I think it's pragmatism. I think people that live in rural America, I know people that live in rural Idaho and I can't speak for all of them, but after covering rural Idaho for 40 years, people that live in rural areas have to live practically and they look at things that way.

You know, they look at things, for example, if it didn't work, you fix it. You can't keep making the same mistakes over again and survive in rural America. And so, I think the things that you talked about earlier today, when you talk about our national debt, I think is a big concern for the people I talk to here. And the fact that we know from history you cannot continue to do that and not have major repercussions.

And immigration, you know, another field of concern for the people that I was talking to today when I was visiting with some of my friends on social media. They're very concerned about these things that we keep doing and not learning from, because that's not the way it works in real, real lives.

GALLAGHER: I want to just play this very quickly and then get your final response, Dee. This is some of the, the montage the media politicians bashing some of those who live in rural areas, you know the deplorables. Watch.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

HILLARY CLINTON, FORMER U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE: You can put half of Trump supporters into what I call the basket of deplorables.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Credulous boomer rube demo that backs Donald Trump, that wants to think that that Donald Trump's a smart one in there. Oh, yes, y'all elitist.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Well, you elitist with your geography and your maps and your spelling, even though --

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Your math and your reading?

CLITON: Maybe there needs to be a formal deprogramming of the cult members, but something needs to happen.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GALLAGHER: I think the laughing starts to end as we get closer to November, Dee, because you know, it's interesting -- I talked to some of these rural voters, they're like, I don't care what they call me, I care what they do for me and they've done nothing for me. Your final thoughts.

SARTON: Well, that's exactly it. You know, I was thinking about the deplorables earlier today and I think I'll coin a new word and I don't think it is a word, but the pragmaticals. I think pragmaticals don't want to be put in a box of being just Trump supporters. We are, you know, hearing from the people that I hear from are saying, hey, we are for making this country work again and starting to have, you know, some sense that we're headed in the right direction.

GALLAGHER: Yes, a little common sense. Dee Sarton, great to see you always. Thank you for coming on. We appreciate it.

SARTON: Thank you, Trace.

GALLAGHER: Coming up, how bad is the California crime crisis? Public librarians in San Francisco are pleading for added security because they're tired of handling potentially dangerous situations that can turn violent all by themselves.

Also still ahead, one man went to extremes to make sure he had the best view of the eclipse. And this horse decided he wanted to take the midnight train going anywhere. The day's best "VIRAL VIDEOS" are next.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

GALLAGHER: Well, this headline caught our eye. San Francisco librarians beg for security as crime takes over. Even librarians are scared to go to work because of California's crime crisis. Let's bring in former Los Angeles County Sheriff Alex Villanueva. Sheriff, we brought you on, of course, to talk about crime in California, but I want to get your take on the O.J. Simpson death today. And I know you've been in law enforcement for, for quite some time. How did this trial that was here in Los Angeles, how did it change law enforcement in your opinion?

ALEX VILLANUEVA, FORMER LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF: Well, setting the prosecution aspect aside and the failures, you look at the law enforcement side of domestic violence. In the old days, you had a dispute, you separated two parties, you told one party to bounce and come back later on, and that was it. You walked away. But now, after the O.J., a flood of new laws came on where you had to make a mandatory arrest if there were signs of physical trauma.

You had to take a report, even if it was a dispute that was verbal. And then, if someone showed up at a hospital with injuries where the nursing staff or the doctors believe it was as a result of domestic violence, they had to report to local law enforcement. So, all these things working to make it, you know, allegedly safer for victims of domestic violence.

GALLAGHER: And now, they're backing off of that stuff.

VILLANUEVA: And now, yes, they're rolling that stuff back in California, not in other states, but here in California.

GALLAGHER: Because being a victim is the wrong side. Wrong time to be a victim. Moving on, Sheriff, because this video of public library staff, they're actually out rallying, if we can put this up. Librarians, can you imagine, out and they are picketing because they want security.

The San Francisco Chronicle says the following, "Scared to death: S.F. librarians call for security guards at every branch." Goes on to say, "As San Francisco officials struggle to get a grip on the city's relentless homeless, drug, and mental health crises, librarians say the issues are spilling into their workplaces, forcing them to intervene in difficult situations without adequate protections."

I mean, I was telling you, we have guests on this show that will not drop their kids off at libraries anymore because it's not safe.

VILLANUEVA: Again, that public space has been invaded by the homeless population, and that interface has conflict. And there's conflict where there's an absence of law enforcement, and who's left standing all by themselves? A poor librarian, who will be all well-versed in where all the books go and all that stuff, but when you have some deranged psycho walking through the door throwing things around, that is really a big problem.

GALLAGHER: And a lot of times, Sheriff, it's not even the fact that you're afraid that you're going to go in there and there's going to be a criminal. It's the whole perception of having homeless people walk back and forth. And you think, I just think that maybe something could happen. And so, that's a lot of the fear of the librarians.

VILLANUEVA: Definitely. Remember, they're by themselves in this large, you know, building with so much hidden spaces and indefensible spaces, so to speak. And that really puts them in jeopardy.

GALLAGHER: Yes, it really does. The Wall Street Journal writes the following here, "Homeless Folly. California has spent $24 billion to combat homelessness over the last five years. And what did it get for its money? More homelessness, according to a new state audit that should embarrass Sacramento and infuriate taxpayers." $24 billion -- they have no idea where this money went. And you had Newsom and his team wanted to fight this audit because they knew they had no idea where the money went. And homelessness is up 31 percent.

VILLANUEVA: Not only were they fighting it, they were also telling voters, hey, vote for Proposition 1 because we want 6.4 billion more to throw down the same path of the other 24 that we don't know where that money went. Talk about insanity, and we do it over and over again. Somehow, we expect a different result.

GALLAGHER: But there's no consequences. It's not like somebody's going to go up and knock on Newsom's door and say, you owe us 24 bill. It is there's no recourse for the California citizens.

VILLANUEVA: When you have a deep blue state, one party state, they cover all bases and they can really, there's a buffer between them and being held accountable for their really bad policy decisions.

GALLAGHER: Sheriff, great to see you as always. Thank you.

First up in tonight's "VIRAL VIDEOS". We've seen people do crazy things to get a good view of the solar eclipse, but check this out. Content creator, Tucker Doss, decided to opt for a little daredevil view. He climbed a radio tower to get his view, and yes, I've got to admit, pretty cool video.

Well, not exactly your everyday commuter, right? This is Sydney, Australia and this man was caught horsing around Warwick Farm train station late Friday night. The lone horse didn't really stir up much trouble but the premier of New South Wales put out this statement, quoting here: "Didn't realize I needed to say, but horses are not allowed on the trains."

And if you have a viral video to share, share it with us @TraceGallagher or @FoxNewsNight on social media.

OK, here we go. Ready? O.J. Simpson passed away at the age of 76. Tonight, we want to know, where were you during the famous slow white bronco chase and the verdict, and or the verdict? Let us know. X in Instagram, @TraceGallagher. We'll read the best responses in the "NIGHTCAP". Coming up.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

GALLAGHER: We're back with the "NIGHTCAP" crew: Kevin Corke, Chanley Painter, Christina Coleman, Alex Villanueva, Steve Hilton, and Scarlett Maguire. Tonight's topic, throwback Thursday. A captivating question once more, gripping the nation after O.J. Simpson's death. Where were you when O.J. Simpson was found not guilty in the trial of the century, or where were you in the infamous Bronco car chase? What do you remember about it, Christina Coleman?

COLEMAN: Well, I was 10 years old. I was in the living room, and I just kept thinking, Mommy, this car goes for so long. The gas, how could this car drive for so long? And I remember I wanted a white Bronco, so that's my weird --

GALLAGHER: Wow. Weird, because I was 13, I was outside actually covering the courthouse, so -- Sheriff, where were you?

VILLANUEVA: Well, one, I was working patrol to East L.A., and if you're running away from the cops, we assume, OK, that's a guilty person who's running away. And we got messages on the radio and on our computers, do not get involved.

GALLAGHER: And then you didn't.

VILLANUEVA: We didn't.

GALLAGHER: Kevin Corke.

CORKE: I mentioned the drive when I was listening to Bettina Gregory, but when the verdict came in, I was actually at home with my brother Michael, and I bet him that he'd be found guilty, and I lost.

GALLAGHER: And you lost. Chanley Painter.

PAINTER: I also was only 10 years old, but I grew up in a home where the news was on 24/7. So, I remember watching the Bronco chase. I remember the verdict. I remember everyone being surprised by the verdict. It was like, you couldn't look away, it was the ultimate reality show back then before reality shows were a thing.

GALLAGHER: Yes.

CORKE: Yes.

GALLAGHER: Scarlett Maguire.

MAGUIRE: Yes, I mean, I was barely in this world and firmly in Britain but I do remember when I was becoming conscious of it more when I was growing up, when I was a teenager, when the saga was still unfolding, that it just seemed like something that America was tearing itself apart over that sort of Brits just couldn't understand.

GALLAGHER: Yes, it really was one of those things that was kind of crazy. That's everybody. So, here we go, we ask social media, do you remember where you were? Oh, Steve Hilton!

HILTON: There you are. How could you forget?

GALLAGHER: Sorry.

HILTON: So, listen, Trace, obviously I was 10 years old as well at the time, just like everybody else. I have the most unhelpful answer. I was the furthest away. I was actually in Hong Kong working, barely paying attention to it. The thing I really want to do, though, is watch the chase as if it was live. It's such an incredible event. If there was some way of getting the tape and watching it now, I'd love to do that.

GALLAGHER: Chris says, "I was 23 and had just gotten all four wisdom teeth removed. When I awoke from anesthesia, my first question was, is he guilty?"

CUI, "Watching it live on TV. The trial was so central in our home that my 4-year-old son named his black molly fish, Johnnie Cochran."

Raquel, "I was a bartender in South Texas. Everyone, patrons and staff, huddled around the television in the restaurant to watch."

And Kathy Marklusky, "I was in labor with my three child, third child, we were waiting both our son to be born and the verdict to drop."

Thank you all for watching America's late news. We'll see you all back here Friday night.

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