

# Justice and Racial discrimination in *The Merchant of Venice and Othello*

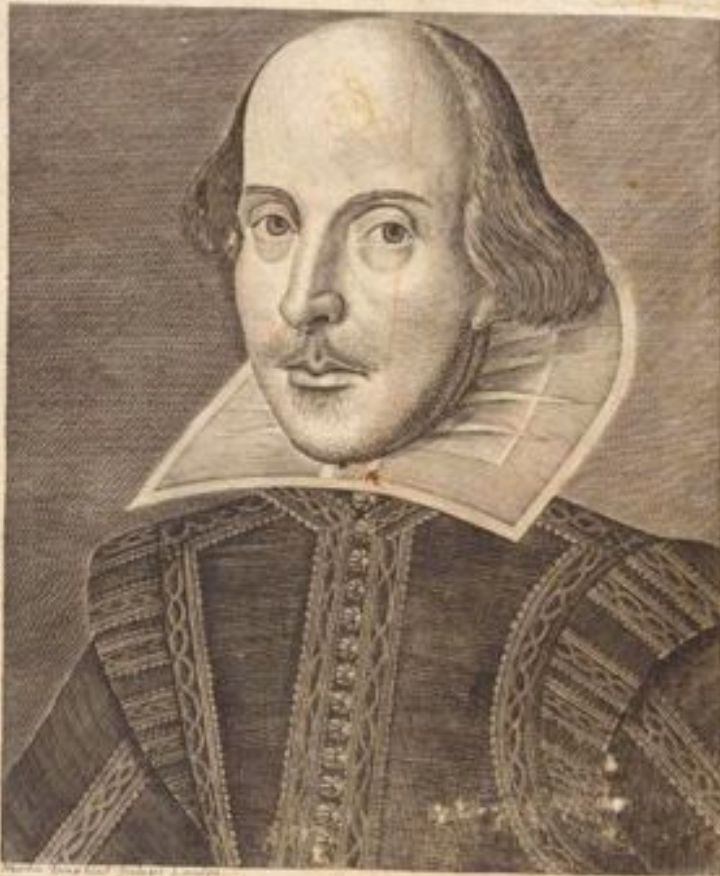
Arturo Cattaneo



Mr. WILLIAM  
SHAKESPEARES

COMEDIES,  
HISTORIES, &  
TRAGEDIES.

Published according to the True Originall Copies



LONDON

Printed by Isaac Iaggard, and Ed. Blount. 1623

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# Shakespeare, *First Folio* (1623)

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# William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

The BARD

# William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

The BARD

Beyond

# William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

The BARD

Beyond

Any

# William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

The BARD

Beyond

Any

Reasonable

# William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

The BARD

Beyond

Any

Reasonable

Doubt



**The Merchant of Venice**, far from being the paean to Equity that many commentators have described, engages both with the elevation of conscience in late Elizabethan contract law and the symbolically-charged mutual promise in commercial arrangements. The offstage trial of Claudio in **Measure for Measure** and the spectacular trial scene at the end of the play raise highly topical issues of the relevance of religious belief to the initiation and resolution of the criminal trial. Finally, the trial for adultery and High Treason of Hermione in **The Winter's Tale** raises significant constitutional issues concerning the imposition of the King's Imperium and the subsequent diminution in the jurisdictional power of the courts of common law.

**Paul Raffield,**

*The Trials of Shakespeare: Courtroom Drama and Early Modern English Law*

The most excellent  
Historie of the *Merchant*  
of *Venice*.

VVith the extreame crueltie of *Sbylocke* the Iewe  
towards the sayd Merchant, in cutting a iust pound  
of his flesh: and the obtainning of *Portia*  
by the choyse of three  
chests.

*As it hath beene diuers times acted by the Lord  
Chamberlaine his seruants.*

Written by William Shakespeare.



AT LONDON,  
Printed by *I. R.* for Thomas Heyes,  
and are to be sold in Paules Church-yard, at the  
signe of the Greene Dragon.

1600.

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# *The Merchant of Venice,* Frontispiece

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# Tragoedy of Othello,

The Moore of Venice.

*As it hath bene diuerse times acted at the  
Globe, and at the Black-Friers, by  
his Maiesties Seruants.*

*Written by VVilliam Shakespeare.*



L O N D O N,

Printed by N. O. for Thomas Walkley, and are to be sold  
shop, at the Eagle and Child, in Brittaines Burie

1. 6. 2. 2.

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## *Othello,* Frontispiece

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**Canaletto,  
*Venice***

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***Canaletto, *The Thames and the City of London from Richmond House, 1747****

.....





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**Gentile  
Bellini,  
*Procession of  
the Relic of  
the True  
Cross before  
the Church of  
San Marco,  
1496***

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**Gentile Bellini, *Saint Mark Preaching in Alexandria*, 1507**





*“Prima di ogni cosa indagate sempre scrupolosamente, per stabilire la verità con giustizia e chiarezza. Non condannate nessuno, se non dopo un giudizio sincero e giusto. Non giudicate nessuno in base a sospetti, ma ricercate le prove e, alla fine, pronunciate una sentenza pietosa. Non fate agli altri quel che non vorreste fosse fatto a voi”.*

*Avogaria, Palazzo Ducale, Venezia*





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**Herbert Beerbohm  
Tree as Shylock.**

**His Majesty's Theatre,  
1908**

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**Charles Macklin e  
Mrs Pope in *The  
Merchant of Venice*,  
Covent Garden  
Theatre, 1792**

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# ACT I, scene iii

SHYLOCK

Three thousand ducats. 'Tis a good round sum.  
Three months from twelve, then let me see, the  
rate—

ANTONIO

Well, Shylock, shall we be beholding to you?

SHYLOCK

Signior Antonio, many a time and oft  
In the Rialto you have rated me  
About my moneys and my usances.  
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug  
(For suffrance is the badge of all our tribe).  
You call me misbeliever, cutthroat dog,  
And spet upon my Jewish gaberdine,  
And all for use of that which is mine own.  
Well then, it now appears you need my help.  
Go to, then. You come to me and you say  
“Shylock, we would have moneys”—you say so,  
You, that did void your rheum upon my beard,  
And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur  
Over your threshold. Moneys is your suit.  
What should I say to you? Should I not say  
“Hath a dog money? Is it possible  
A cur can lend three thousand ducats?” Or  
Shall I bend low, and in a bondman's key,  
With bated breath and whisp'ring humbleness,  
Say this: “Fair sir, you spet on me on Wednesday  
last;  
You spurned me such a day; another time  
You called me 'dog'; and for these courtesies  
I'll lend you thus much moneys”?

# ACT I, scene iii

ANTONIO

I am as like to call thee so again,  
To spet on thee again, to spurn thee, too.  
If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not  
As to thy friends, for when did friendship take  
A breed for barren metal of his friend?  
But lend it rather to thine enemy,  
Who, if he break, thou mayst with better face  
Exact the penalty.

# ACT I, scene iii

SHYLOCK

This kindness will I show.

Go with me to a notary, seal me there

Your single bond; and **in a merry sport,**

If you repay me not on such a day,

In such a place, such sum or sums as are

Expressed in the condition, let the forfeit

Be nominated for **an equal pound**

**Of your fair flesh, to be cut off** and taken

In what part of your body pleaseth me.

# ACT III, scene iii

SHYLOCK

Jailer, look to him. Tell not me of mercy.  
This is the fool that lent out money gratis.  
Jailer, look to him.

ANTONIO Hear me yet, good Shylock—

SHYLOCK

I'll have my bond. Speak not against my bond.  
I have sworn an oath that I will have my bond.  
**Thou call'dst me dog before thou hadst a cause,  
But since I am a dog, beware my fangs.**  
The Duke shall grant me justice.—I do wonder,  
Thou naughty jailer, that thou art so fond  
To come abroad with him at his request.

ANTONIO I pray thee, hear me speak—

SHYLOCK

I'll have my bond. I will not hear thee speak.  
I'll have my bond, and therefore speak no more.



## ACT II, scene vi

SALARINO

Here comes Lorenzo. More of this hereafter.

LORENZO

Sweet friends, your patience for my long abode.  
Not I but my affairs have made you wait.

**When you shall please to play the thieves for wives,**  
I'll watch as long for you then. Approach.  
Here dwells my father Jew.—Ho! Who's within?

# ACT IV, scene i

*Enter the Duke, the Magnificoes, Antonio, Bassanio, Salerio, and Gratiano, with Attendants.*

DUKE What, is Antonio here?

ANTONIO Ready, so please your Grace.

DUKE

I am sorry for thee. Thou art come to answer

**A stony adversary, an inhuman wretch,**

Uncapable of pity, void and empty

From any dram of mercy.

# ACT IV, scene i

*Enter Shylock.*

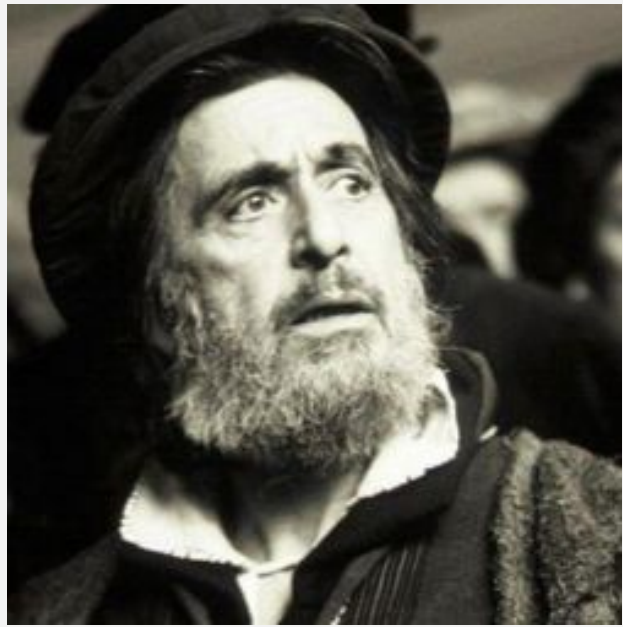
DUKE

**Make room**, and let him stand before our face.—

**Shylock**, the world thinks, and I think so too,  
That thou but ledest this fashion of thy malice  
To the last hour of act, and then, 'tis thought,

**Thou 'lt show thy mercy.** [...]

We all expect a gentle answer, **Jew**.



**[Shylock] "I want justice..."**



**[Shylock] "I want justice..."**



**[Portia] "Show mercy instead..."**



**[Shylock] "I want justice..."**

**"I want justice..."**



**[Portia] "Show mercy instead..."**



**[Shylock] "I want justice..."**

**"I want justice..."**



**[Portia] "Show mercy instead..."**

**"Then you'll have justice..."**



**[Shylock] "I want justice..."**

**"I want justice..."**



**[Portia] "Show mercy instead..."**

**"Then you'll have justice..."**

**"You shall have your bond, but..."**





**[Shylock] "I want justice..."**

**"I want justice..."**



**[Portia] "Show mercy instead..."**

**"Then you'll have justice..."**

**"You shall have your bond, but..."**

**"No bond, instead..."**



**[Shylock] "I want justice..."**

**"I want justice..."**



**[Portia] "Show mercy instead..."**

**"Then you'll have justice..."**

**"You shall have your bond, but..."**

**"No bond, instead..."**

**"You'll be tried for attempted murder, so..."**



**[Shylock] "I want justice..."**

**"I want justice..."**



**[Portia] "Show mercy instead..."**

**"Then you'll have justice..."**

**"You shall have your bond, but..."**

**"No bond, instead..."**

**"You'll be tried for attempted murder, so..."**

**"Death sentence and confiscation  
of all you have"**

# ACT IV, scene i

ANTONIO

So please my lord the Duke and all the court  
To quit the fine for one half of his goods,  
I am content, so he will let me have  
The other half in use, to render it  
Upon his death unto the gentleman  
That lately stole his daughter.  
Two things provided more: that for this favor  
He presently become a Christian;  
The other, that he do record a gift,  
Here in the court, of all he dies possessed  
Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter.

[...]

PORTIA, as Balthazar Clerk,

Art thou contented, Jew? What dost thou say?

SHYLOCK

I am content.

PORTIA, as Balthazar Clerk,

Draw a deed of gift.

SHYLOCK

**I pray you give me leave to go from hence.  
I am not well. Send the deed after me  
And I will sign it.**





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# Bear baiting

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HECATOMMITHI,

OUERO

# CENTO NOVELLE

DI M. GIOVANBATTISTA

GIRALDI CINTHIO

NOBILE FERRARESE:

Nelle quali, oltre le dilettevoli materie, si conoscono moralità utilissime a gli huomini per il ben vivere; & per destare altresì l'intelletto alla sagacità.

*POSSIBILI DA ESSER CON FACILITÀ  
apprese il vero modo di scrivere Italiano.*

ET VI SONO TRE DIALOGHI DELLA VITA  
Civile, li quali a gli huomini mostrano come deo-  
no ammaestrare i loro figliuoli, & a Giovaui co-  
me ben reggerli.



Parte

Prima

IN VENETIA,

Appresso Fabio, & Agostin Zopini Fratelli.

M D L X X.

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# Giraldi Cinthio, *Hecatommithi*

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*“Un capitano moro piglia per mogliera una cittadina Venetiana, un suo alfieri l'accusa di adulterio al Marito; cerca, che l'Alfieri uccida colui, ch'egli credea l'Adultero; il Capitão uccide la Moglie, è accusato dall'Alfieri, non confessa il Moro, ma essendoui chiari inditii, e bãdito; Et lo scelerato Alfieri, credendo nuocere ad altri, procaccia à se la morte miseramente.”*

Giraldi Cinthio, Hecatommithi, III-7



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# The Moorish Ambassador to Queen Elizabeth, 1600-1

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**Laurence  
Fishburne  
as Othello in  
Oliver Parker's  
*Othello*, 1995**

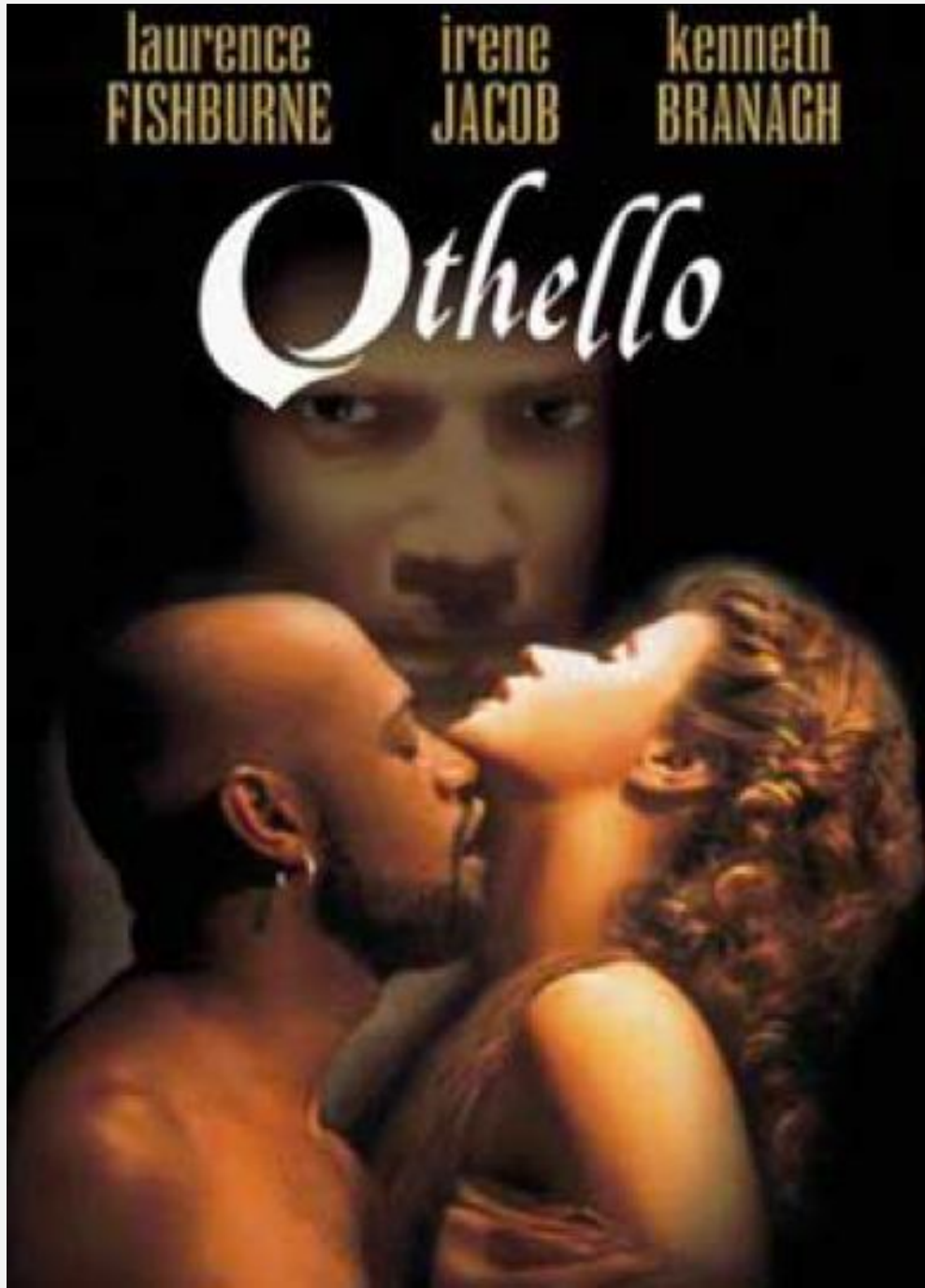
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laurence  
FISHBURNE

irene  
JACOB

kenneth  
BRANAGH

# Othello





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**Othello  
(Laurence  
Fishburne)  
and Iago  
(Kenneth  
Branagh)**

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# O.J. Simpson in court, 1994

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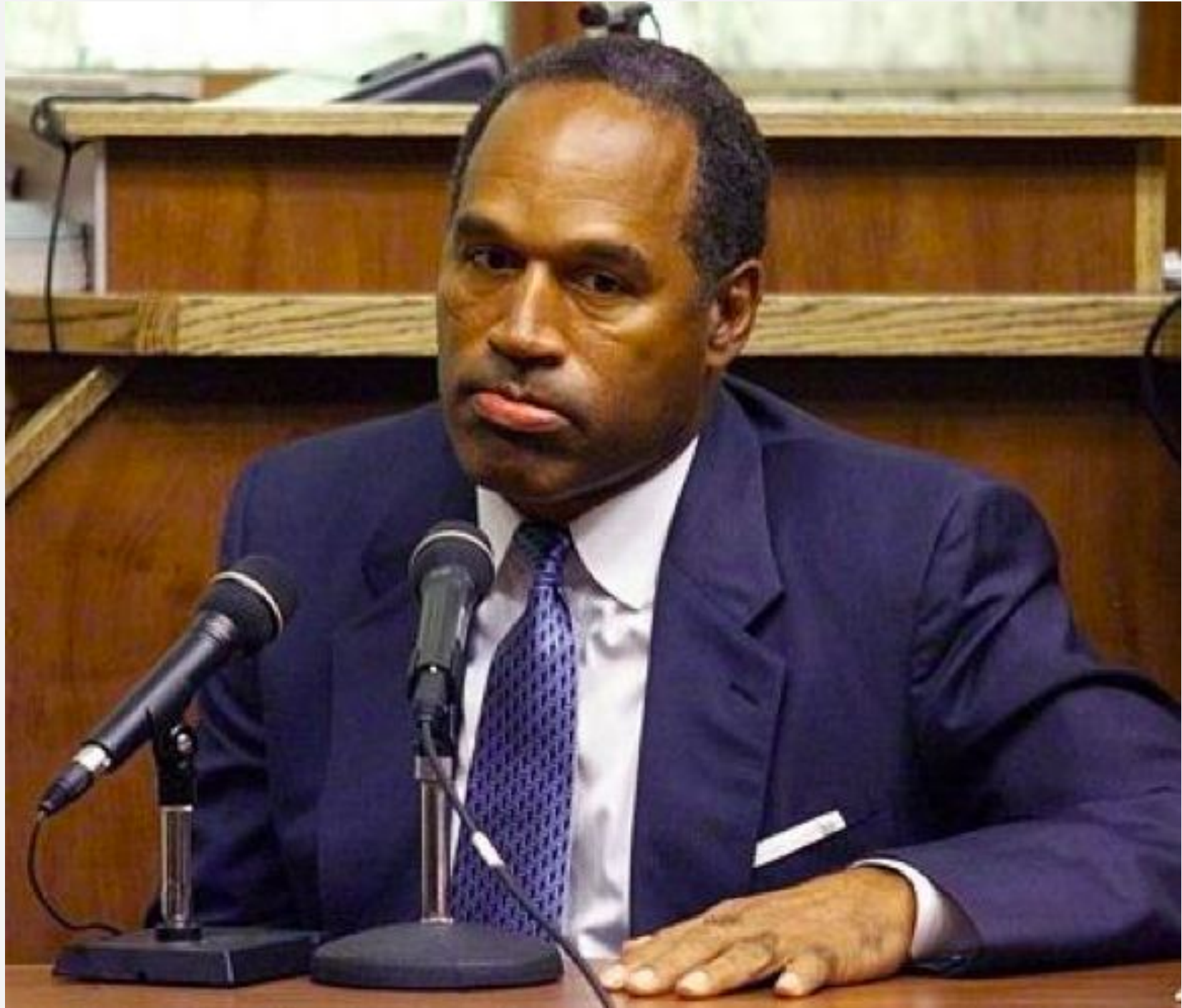


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# O.J. Simpson and wife Nicole Brown

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# IAGO IN BRENTWOOD



If the shoe fits...In the case of Mark Fuhrman,  
everything fits—including the shoe.

## HOW MARK FUHRMAN GOT AWAY WITH MURDER

JASPER GARRISON

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