

with co-counsel Christopher Darden, who was black, was believed by some observers to have been alienating to the black women on the jury. The jury itself—sequestered in isolation for the duration of the trial—was paralyzed by infighting, some of which involved racial issues, even during the testimony phase.

The announcement of the final verdict polarized the country along clear racial lines. Blacks cheered for what they regarded as a repudiation of racially driven police misconduct; whites were stunned to silence over what they regarded as the exoneration of a brutal killer.

In a civil trial for wrongful death brought by the families of the two victims, Simpson was found liable in February 1997 and ordered to pay \$33.5 million in damages. The reversal of outcome was widely explained by the lower standard of proof required to find against the defendant in a civil case (“a preponderance of the evidence”) than in a criminal case (“beyond a reasonable doubt”) and by differences in nuance, if not substance, in witness testimony.

A new controversy erupted in late 2006 after ReganBooks announced that it would publish a book by Simpson—prospectively titled *If I Did It*—in which he offered an account of how he “might” have carried out the murders. In response to public outrage, Rupert Murdoch, the owner of the publishing house, stopped the project. Simpson denied that the book was a confession to the crime, but he did concede that he was trying to capitalize on it—reigniting the outrage of those who believed he got away with murder. In August 2007, a Florida court awarded publication rights to the family of Ron Goldman as partial payment for Simpson’s unpaid civil judgment. The book was finally published later that year under the title *If I Did It: Confessions of the Killer*, with comments by the Goldman family.

In September 2007, Simpson was arrested for leading a raid and armed robbery at a casino hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada. Simpson claimed that he was retrieving stolen sports memorabilia that belonged to him. Later, a jury found him guilty of twelve felony counts. In December 2008, a Clark County District Court judge sentenced Simpson, then age sixty-one, to a prison sentence of nine to thirty-three years. Jackie Glass, the presiding judge, publicly stated that neither the jury nor the court had been influenced by the 1995 murder trial.

Tony L. Hill and Roger Chapman

See also: Morrison, Toni; Murdoch, Rupert; Race.

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Operation Rescue

Operation Rescue, a Christian Fundamentalist direct-action organization, uses graphic imagery, civil disobedience, and intimidation tactics in a campaign to prevent abortion in America. Between 1986 and 1994, the group’s “rescues” were some of the most high-profile examples of militant civil disobedience by the Religious Right. Operation Rescue argues that they are doing God-inspired work to prevent a “holocaust of unborn children.” They regard abortion as a perversion of God’s law that is indicative of a catastrophic diminution of biblical morality in society.

Randall Terry, a born-again charismatic Christian, founded the group in 1986 in Binghamton, New York, and led it through its most controversial early years. Operation Rescue protesters used confrontation, intimidation, and physical harassment to prevent women and doctors from entering abortion clinics. Terry was arrested several times, once for arranging to have an aborted fetus delivered to presidential candidate Bill Clinton at the 1992 Democratic National Convention. A *Washington Post* report estimated that over 40,000 people were arrested in Operation Rescue demonstrations between 1986 and 1990, one of the highest incarceration rates of any social movement organization in American history.

After the mid-1990s, deep internal dissent, mounting legal costs, prison sentences, and leadership strife led to organizational splintering. Some members began to employ increasingly violent tactics. Several were convicted in the slayings of abortion clinic doctors, nurses, employees, and volunteers. Finally, Congress passed the 1994 Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act, which prohibits the use of intimidation or physical force to discourage people from gaining access to reproductive health care facilities.

Renamed Operation Save America (to distinguish it from various local Operation Rescue splinter groups, the organization carries on with a lower profile, maintaining an active Web site, producing exposés on abortion providers, and organizing prayer vigils outside clinics. In 1995, Norma McCorvey (“Jane Roe” in the 1973 Supreme Court case upholding a woman’s right to have an abortion, *Roe v. Wade*) became a member of Operation Save America and was baptized by its leader, Reverend Phillip Benham.

Operation Rescue has had critics across the political

spectrum. Within the anti-abortion movement, some fear that the group’s inflammatory statements and illegal tactics have drawn too much negative attention to the pro-life cause. Pro-choice critics argue that the group’s ranks are filled with dangerous zealots whose tactics create a climate of fear that severely compromises women’s legal right to obtain a safe, medically supervised abortion. Both sides agree that Operation Rescue’s protests and tactics created a chilling effect on the available pool of medical personnel willing to perform abortions. Social and cultural analysts of abortion in American politics tend to focus on Operation Rescue’s seminal role in pushing Christian Fundamentalism into national politics and contributing to a “culture of violence” and a highly polarized discourse between pro-life and pro-choice camps.

Steve G. Hoffman

See also: Abortion; Clinton, Bill; Evangelicalism; Family Values; Fundamentalism, Religious; Religious Right; *Roe v. Wade* (1973); Rudolph, Eric.

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Oppenheimer, J. Robert

The American nuclear physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer directed the Los Alamos National Laboratory for the Manhattan Project during World War II and oversaw the production of the atomic bombs dropped on Japan in August 1945. During the Cold War in the early 1950s, in response to Oppenheimer’s prior communist affiliation, his open opposition to development of the thermonuclear weapon (hydrogen bomb), and his support for international controls of atomic weapons, a federal “loyalty” board stripped him of his security clearance.

Julius Robert Oppenheimer, born on April 22, 1904, in New York City, graduated from Harvard University (1925), did postgraduate work at the Cavendish Laboratory in Cambridge, England, and received his PhD in physics from the University of Göttingen (1927) in Germany. There, he studied under the prominent physicist Max Born and met Werner Heisenberg, later the director

of the Nazis’ short-lived nuclear weapons program at the Kaiser-Wilhelm Institute. Oppenheimer taught at the University of California, Berkeley, and the California Institute of Technology (1929–1947), taking leave to serve as director at Los Alamos in New Mexico (1943–1945). After the war, Oppenheimer served as director of the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton University (1947–1966). For his role in developing the weapons that forced the Japanese surrender, Oppenheimer was given the Army-Navy Excellence Award (1945) and the Presidential Medal of Merit (1946).

As director of the Manhattan Project during the war, Oppenheimer was decisive in recruiting scientists and engineers, acquiring materials, and developing the neutron-splitting fission weapons that would dramatically escalate the destructive capacity of America’s weapons. Despite his postwar antinuclear activism, while at Los Alamos he believed scientists should implement government directives and avoid influencing policy. He disallowed the circulation of physicist Leo Szilard’s petition recommending vaguely defined conditional-surrender terms prior to using uranium- or plutonium-based weapons in the Pacific War. Within months of the end of the war, however, Oppenheimer acknowledged the “sin” of the physicists who had developed the atomic bomb. In a 1965 television broadcast, Oppenheimer repeated the lamentation from the Hindu *Bhagavad Gita* that he had uttered after the initial atomic-test explosion: “Now I am become death, the destroyer of worlds.”

During the McCarthy era, Oppenheimer became a target of national security elites advocating modernization of America’s nuclear arsenal and a confrontational containment policy. Oppenheimer was serving as chair of the General Advisory Committee of the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) in October 1949 when he advised against development of the hydrogen bomb. That recommendation, as well as previous associations with the Popular Front and Communist Party (though he was never a member), led to speculation—stoked by FBI director J. Edgar Hoover—that he was a security risk. When President Dwight D. Eisenhower asked him to resign, Oppenheimer requested a formal hearing. Based in part on the testimony of physicist Edward Teller, a chief advocate of the hydrogen bomb, the AEC Personnel Security Board ruled in 1954 to revoke Oppenheimer’s security clearance, despite finding him “a loyal citizen” who had violated no laws. A catalyst of the nuclear age, as well as one of its most controversial figures, Oppenheimer died of throat cancer on February 18, 1967.

Peter N. Kirstein

See also: Cold War; Communists and Communism; *Enola Gay* Exhibit; Hiroshima and Nagasaki; LeMay, Curtis; McCarthyism; Nuclear Age; Science Wars; Teller, Edward.