



O.J. Simpson's Former Doctor Talks Possible CTE Symptoms

By Erin Biglow | February 12, 2016

Was O.J. Simpson suffering from a sports-related brain injury at the time of his 1994 arrest?

A former NFL physician who examined him after the murders of Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman says it's possible.

In an interview with Access Hollywood's Stephanie Bauer airing on Friday, **Dr. Robert Huizenga** explained why knowledge of CTE (Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy), the degenerative neurological disease found in many retired football players, might have played a role in Simpson's defense had it been available.

"I think it could have been important in the O.J. Simpson case and may have been part of the reason he was in a mindset to do things that doesn't really make sense, that someone else might not have done," he said.

Huizenga told Access that while Simpson did not experience an excessive amount of head injuries during his days on the field, his actions could be similar to those observed among CTE sufferers.

"He didn't have the classic head hits, but he did get multiple sub-concussive head hits and clearly he showed a number of ways -- lack of judgment and some other subtle signs -- that could have been consistent [with CTE]," he told Access. **"Not to mention other acts that may have been signs of incredibly erratic behavior and signs of aggression."**

The former NFL doctor and author of the book "You're Okay, It's Only a Bruise" testified in the 1995 criminal trial which found Simpson not guilty, and said he was tasked with assessing Simpson's physical and mental state.

"Aggressive behavior is one of the earlier symptoms [of CTE], sometimes before outright dementia. ... It was up to me to try to figure out what [Simpson's] medical health was and [if] were there any extenuating circumstances that might account for someone for being overly aggressive," he said.



When asked about a recent "Good Morning America" segment in which Simpson's former manager Norman Pardo said he "doesn't understand a lot of things" and is "like a child," Huizenga said that points to signs of Simpson's declining acuity.

"I think if that, in fact, is true then that would be further evidence of CTE, a progressive neurologic damage of his brain going basically to the third and fourth stage of dementia," Huizenga told Access.

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