

# Fox bets on 'You the Jury' a primetime court show where viewers decide the verdict



By **DON KAPLAN**

NEW YORK DAILY NEWS |

APR 07, 2017 | 6:00 AM



New York City attorney Joe Tacopina (l.) argues his case on Fox's "You The Jury."(Tyler Golden)

If Fox has its way, twelve angry men will be replaced by 12 million riveted viewers. "You the Jury" is a new reality show featuring a rogue's gallery of America's most high profile defense lawyers trying civil cases on national TV. At the end of each episode viewers vote on the verdict in real time.

The show, hosted by Fox News Channel's Jeanine Pirro (Friday, 9 p.m.) aims to decide cases ripped from the headlines that tackle topical issues like wrongful death, online trolling and the limits of free speech.

"I can't tell you that arguing a case on this show felt any different than trying any of the other big trials that I've done," said New York City-based defense lawyer Joe Tacopina. "And once we got started, I forgot about the cameras and the 300 people in the (live) audience," said the attorney who once secured the improbable acquittal in the rape case against ex-NYPD Officer Kenneth Moreno, and favorable rulings for accused cop-killer Lillo Brancato, Alex Rodriguez, and alleged girlfriend-bashing politician, Hiram Monserrate.

Tacopina was also the lawyer who once sprung Natalee Holloway murder suspect, Joran van der Sloot — so it's not surprising that he'll be arguing another high-profile Aruba-based case on "You The Jury," the much publicized death of Robyn Gardner, 35, who vanished while on vacation in 2011.

Two days after she disappeared, her travel companion, Gary Giordano tried to collect on a \$1.5 million insurance policy he'd recently taken out on Gardner. Aruban authorities never charged the Maryland businessman with a crime, although he was locked up there for months.

"Yeah, I have a little experience with Aruban law," said Tacopina who argues against Giordano.



Legal eagles Benjamin L. Crump, Charla Aldous, Joe Tacopina, Jeanine Pirro, LaDoris Cordell, Areva Martin, Jose Baez and Mike Cavalluzzi.

The show aims to argue cases well beyond small claims issues that pop up on "The People's Court" and "Judge Judy," said Tacopina. Once the audience makes a decision, both parties have to live with it.

"It's binding, it's not like this is a scripted thing — these people signed documents agreeing to take their cases out of a court room and waive all claims. You've got a document here that's pretty bullet proof, so if someone is unhappy with the results here, they can't pick up and go back to State or Federal court and file a complaint," Tacopina said.

Some other high profile lawyers appearing on "You the Jury" include Jose Baez, who defended Casey Anthony and Nick Gordon in the death of Whitney Houston's daughter, Bobbi Kristina and civil rights lawyer Benjamin L. Crump, who represented the families of Trayvon Martin and Michael Brown.

Retired Superior Court of California judge LaDoris Cordell is the show's judge. The final verdict will not be determined until after the West Coast votes.