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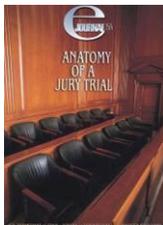
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## Anatomy of a Jury Trial

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**ISSUE-IN-FOCUS, JULY 14, 2009**



Juries — usually groups of 6 or 12 ordinary citizens — provide a crucial service for their fellow citizens: Just as in medieval England, where they got started, juries prevent government, even democratic government, from pursuing oppressive prosecutions.

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### Inside This Publication

#### From the Editors

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#### Feature Stories

##### [American Juries](#)

Fred Graham, truTV Anchor

The U.S. jury system derived from a British practice that aimed to protect subjects from tyranny by the king. It has evolved with changes in society and survived, still presenting a check on government.

##### [Jury Service in the United States](#)

### [A Juror's Role](#)

D. Graham Burnett, Professor of History, Princeton University

Proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt to jurors can be a stiff test. While a chance exists that a guilty man or woman might go free after a jury trial, the jury system still beats any other system.

### [A Judge's Role](#)

Ricardo M. Urbina, Judge, U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia in Washington

A judge needs to make jurors understand they are like deputized judges sworn to fairness.

### [A Prosecutor's Role](#)

Shane Read, Assistant U.S. Attorney

The prosecutor aims not only to persuade the jurors of the government's case that the defendant has committed a crime, but also to assure that no innocent person is wrongly convicted.

### [A Defense Lawyer's Role](#)

Barry Pollack, Attorney, Miller Chevalier Law Firm

For those defendants willing to take the risks of going to trial, an able defense lawyer can challenge even the extraordinary powers of the government.

## **Point-Counterpoint**

### [Jury Trials: In Favor](#)

Neil Vidmar, Professor of Law, Duke University School of Law

Jury trials not only give credibility within a community about verdicts reached in court cases, but also seem to turn jurors into better citizens.

### [Jury Trials: Opposed](#)

Peter J. van Kopp en, Professor of Legal Psychology, Maastricht University Law School

The jury trial system is so complicated and expensive that it forces most defendants to accept plea bargains. In the few cases that go to trial, jurors often consider technical issues beyond their aptitude.

## **Glossary**

### [Glossary of Terms for Jury Trials](#)

Jack King, Director of Public Affairs and Communications, National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers

## **Map**

### [Jury Systems Around the World](#)



## **Chart**

### [Typical Federal Criminal Prosecution](#)

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