

ER and The Pitt-falls of a Frozen Rights Provision

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Michael Crichton, author, director, and visionary created works that resonate today like *Jurassic Park*, *Twister*, *Westworld*, and *ER*. Now, his estate is suing the production team and leading actor of the newly released medical drama known as *The Pitt* for being a knock-off of *ER*. The lawsuit alleges a breach of contract action against Warner Bros. Television, claiming that the underlying concepts behind *The Pitt* mirror too closely to the original screenplay of the television series known as *ER*.

The original show, *ER*, aired on NBC with Noah Wyles as a lead actor playing Dr. John Carter. John Wells was hired as the initial showrunner on *ER*, later joined by R. Scott Gemmill in the series' sixth season who held the title of supervising producer.

After negotiations with the Crichton estate to reboot *ER* failed, Warner Bros. announced the debut of *The Pitt*, a medical drama based in a Pittsburgh emergency room, starring... none other than Noah Wyles. Wyles plays Dr. Michael "Robby" Rabinovitch, an entirely different character from his role in *ER*, but there are some noticeable similarities between *The Pitt* and *ER*. First, Wyles' character in *The Pitt* is a doctor in the emergency room but 30 years older and more experienced. Second, *The Pitt*'s production team is similar to that of *ER*. Wells holds the position of executive producer. Gemmill holds the title of showrunner and is also one of the executive producers.

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