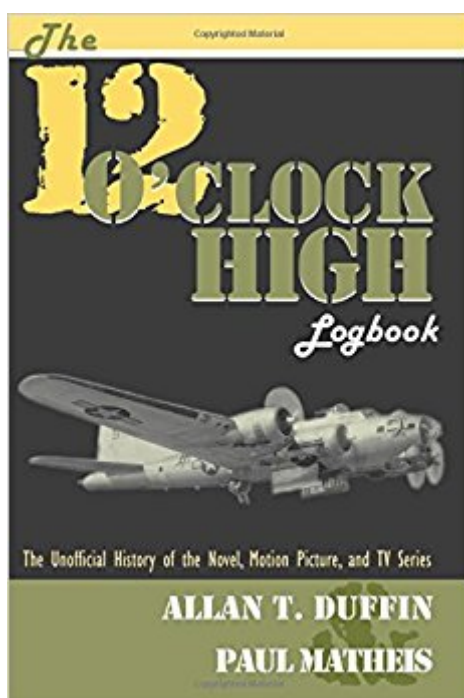


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# The 12 O'Clock High Logbook: The Unofficial History Of The Novel, Motion Picture, And TV Series



## Synopsis

Since its original release The "12 O'Clock High" Logbook: The Unofficial History of the Novel, Motion Picture, and TV Series has been a consistent seller among WWII buffs, lovers of aviation, and fans of Hollywood TV and movies. The book, a labor of love for co-authors Allan T. Duffin and Paul Matheis, is a detailed, comprehensive look at a media phenomenon. Army Air Force officers Beirne Lay, Jr., and Sy Bartlett wrote the novel 12 O'Clock High as a somewhat fictionalized record of their experiences in England during World War II. Twentieth Century-Fox optioned the book and produced the 1949 movie version starring Gregory Peck as tough-as-nails Brigadier General Frank Savage. In 1964, prolific producer Quinn Martin (The Untouchables, The FBI) brought 12 O'Clock High to television as a weekly series on ABC, starring Robert Lansing as Savage. Packed with fresh interviews, rare photographs, and behind-the-scenes stories published for the first time anywhere, The "12 O'Clock High" Logbook is the definitive history of this unique tale of heroism in World War II.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

ALLAN T. DUFFIN is a writer/producer based in Austin, Texas. A veteran of the U.S. Air Force, he is the co-author of Catch the Sky: The Adventures and Misadventures of a Police Helicopter Pilot and author of History in Blue: 160 Years of Women Police, Sheriffs, Detectives, and State Troopers. His website is [aduffin.com](http://aduffin.com).

Allan T. Duffin and Paul Matheis has done an excellent job with this book as it the complete history

of the 12 O'Clock High story. It covers the novel, the movie and the TV series.

**THE NOVEL:** Beirne Lay Jr. and Sy Barrlett were the co-authors and was published by Harper Brothers in 1948. Based on the 306th Bombardment Group which was one of the American units stationed in England during World War 2. After the war there was a fierce debate between Lay and Barrlett because of different ideas, but they decided to write a novel with a title of 12 O'Clock High. The idea for the novel came from Barrlett's wife when she heard the two authors discussing German fighter tactics. When published in 1948, the novel was hailed as "a mixture of nostalgia, sorrow and pride" and an "authentic record of the men and operations of a typical heavy bomber group." Barrlett and Lay believed that truth would strengthen the drama of the book, so it is no surprise that 12 O'Clock High was lauded for its grit and authenticity.

**THE MOVIE:** Before the movie was produced there was another film called "Command Decision", which starred Clark Gable and Walter Pidgeon, and had a similar theme as 12 O'Clock High. Sensing a good deal Fox and Paramount Studios started fighting Lay and Barrlett for the story rights. Darryl F. Zanuck of Fox finally won, by the tune of \$100,000. Zanuck's job started by asking Bud Lighten to be producer and William Wellman as director. The Air Force was called in as technical advisors and also to lend support along with military equipment to the studio. On 3 November 1947 a synopsis had to be submitted to the Pentagon for the Air Force to review. After a long back and forth battle, Col. John deRussy was assigned as technical advisor on 15 February 1949. He had a 90-day stint as liaison officer-technical advisor and was in charge of obtaining equipment and personnel for the film. Zanuck got rid of Lighten and Wellman, took over as producer and hired Henry King as director. The final script was complete on 30 March 1949. Casting director, Jim Ryan, had selected a large list of actors for the role of actors, and Gregory Peck was cast as Brig. Gen. Frank Savage and Dean Jagger, Milland Mitchell, Hugh Marlowe, Paul Stewart, Bob Patten and Lee MacGregor were cast for the film. 12 O'Clock High was rapped up on 1 July 1949, a rough preview on 20 October and a world premiere was on 21 December 1949 at Grauman's Chinese Theatre, Hollywood.

**TV SERIES:** In 1962, Twentieth Century-Fox faced crises in leadership, finances and creativity which nearly saw the studio go under. This happened because of decreasing sales at the cinema from the introduction of television in the 1950s, and all the Hollywood studios were going broke. Fox introduced CinemaScope which was a radical change to the way people viewed films. After much soul searching the studios started to do shows for television. Quinn Martin (television producer and entrepreneur) formed his own company in 1960, calling it QM Productions. Still holding the rights to the novel, he had the idea that 12 O'Clock High would make a good series, but Twentieth Century-Fox had the money and property, so a relationship was formed between the two. In 1963, the pilot for the show began, and when the

script was sorted out the title was 12 O'Clock High - The Series. The cast was Robert Lansing as Brig. Gen. Frank Savage with John Larkin, Frank Overton, Lew Gallo and Barney Phillips. Friday, 18 September 1964, was a great day in television as 12 O'Clock High had its debut, but it was not the pilot film that got top billing. It was the third episode. Because of Quinn Martin's dislike of Robert Lansing, he was dropped after the first series, and later Martin wished that Lansing had not be replaced. The show became Fox's renaissance and in the second season Paul Burke took the lead in 1965 as Major Joe Gallagher. Chris Robinson, Andrew Buggan and Robert Dorman were also signed up. By 1967 the show had gone the same way as many before it and was re-assigned to the dustbin, after four seasons. This is a terrific book for all 12 O'Clock High fans as it has the complete history, all in one book, with a complete episode guide, an extras for the book information and collectibles, and the photos throughout the book are quite welcomed. It is one of those books that gets the respect it deserves, so I will give it five stars and recommend it to all fans, and to those people who wish to get a taste of what 12 O'Clock High was all about. I only hope that the series is not too long coming to dvd as well.

The cover says its the "unofficial" history of the book, movie and TV series. Don't believe it. This is about as official as it gets! This book is the final word on the subject. A vast amount of research and primary interviews have brought the story behind the story to vibrant life. It might not have gotten the stamp of approval from the studio, but it will get one from 12 O'clock High's fans! If you love the story of the 918th Bomb Group's missions above Nazi Germany, this book is like finding a Toby Mug at an antique shop. Great book on a great series!

Fascinating look at the classic book, film and TV series, with tremendous background, interviews and behind-the-scenes stories, plus jaw-dropping background on the real life men that the reel heroes were based on. Highly recommend this book. A delightful, exciting, detailed book. The terrible irony, however, is that the original novel is long out of print. And unfortunately, the TV series is not commercially available, good as it is.

I have been a fan of 12 O'Clock High since I was 12 years old and caught the re-runs on Saturday afternoon TV on the local independent station. Even then, I did not know there was a movie, an earlier season (season 1) with Robert Lansing in the lead role, and even black and white episodes with Paul Burke. I finally saw the movie when I was 22, and when I was 49 I finally for the first time in my life was able to see the complete series from beginning to end thanks to it re-running on

MeTV. The Logbook in my opinion was a brilliant look at the backstory behind the movie and ultimately the series. As one reviewer has said it isn't as much a "making of" book as much as it is told from the studio management point of view. Still, it's a very good read - I read it in its entirety last night in fact. Why I didn't give this a five star rating is because I would like to have read more impressions of the cast and people that actually worked on the front lines of the series so to speak. It would have been nice for example to have found out what the stars' favorite episode was and why? who they liked working with (some of it is there but not enough) and who they didn't. However, I think that one reason that there is a dearth of that material is that most of the cast of the TV show and the film had probably died by the time it was written. This is a MUST HAVE for any fan of 12 O'Clock High. Also that the author was able to do this as a PhD dissertation - awesome!

The 12 O'clock High Logbook was well researched and a joy to read. So many great back stories. I just could not put the book down. I often wondered was anyone as much a fan as I was of the show. The authors of The 12 O'Clock High Logbook answered that question. Thanks to the authors, Salute!

I read this book thoroughly. The first half of the book discussing the making of the motion picture in 1949 and the making of the TV series in the mid sixties was fascinating. I kind of lost interest with the last half of the book which consisted of screenplay notes of each TV episode. That got kind of dull though I'm sure it is of historical interest for TV buffs.

I had hoped for an in depth discussion of the film, but what I got was a superficial discussion of the film and an in depth discussion of the television series, including plot lines and biographical information about every actor (or so it seemed) who ever appeared on the show. Needless to say, I was very disappointed, but happy that I had used the Kindle version instead of trying to track down a hard copy.

Excellent item.

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