



High Noon: The Hollywood Blacklist and the Making of an American Classic

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From the *New York Times*-bestselling author of *The Searchers*, the revelatory story behind the classic movie *High Noon* and the toxic political climate in which it was created.

It's one of the most revered movies of Hollywood's golden era. Starring screen legend Gary Cooper and Grace Kelly in her first significant film role, *High Noon* was shot on a lean budget over just thirty-two days but achieved instant box-office and critical success. It won four Academy Awards in 1953, including a best actor win for Cooper. And it became a cultural touchstone, often cited by politicians as a favorite film, celebrating moral fortitude.

Yet what has been often overlooked is that *High Noon* was made during the height of the Hollywood blacklist, a time of political inquisition and personal betrayal. In the middle of the film shoot, screenwriter Carl Foreman was forced to testify before the House Committee on Un-American Activities about his former membership in the Communist Party. Refusing to name names, he was eventually blacklisted and fled the United States. (His co-authored screenplay for another classic, *The Bridge on the River Kwai*, went uncredited in 1957.) Examined in light of Foreman's testimony, *High Noon*'s emphasis on courage and loyalty takes on deeper meaning and importance.

In this book, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Glenn Frankel tells the story of the making of a great American Western, exploring how Carl Foreman's concept of *High Noon* evolved from idea to first draft to final script, taking on allegorical weight. Both the classic film and its turbulent political times emerge newly illuminated.

High Noon: The Hollywood Blacklist and the Making of an American Classic Details

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From Reader Review High Noon: The Hollywood Blacklist and the Making of an American Classic for online ebook

Patty says

I don't tend to read a lot of non-fiction so the subject matter really needs to appeal to me and in the case of High Noon – it did. It's got Hollywood, politicians behaving badly and a movie I remember watching with my father when I was a child. One of the first things I did after finishing the book was to go back and watch the movie again. It would have been nice to have had my father here to watch it with me again but I'm sure he was with me in spirit.

The book focuses on the movie High Noon but it's really the retelling of how the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) went on its witch hunt throughout Hollywood to route out members of the Communist Party. Many had joined not out of any deep seated loyalty to Russia or "the Party" but rather as a rejection of policies that didn't favor the working man. Many drifted out of the party without giving it a second thought not realizing the impact it would have on them later.

Then the Cold War politics of fear began and as history tells us common sense went out the window. In Hollywood the HUAC started calling in people to testify and they had limited choices if they wanted to keep working; admit they were once in a member of the Party, say they no longer were and name the names of others they knew. It was a system that survived on fear; the fear of being called, the fear of having to name the names and the fear of being named. It was a horrifying time in American history. There were no checks and balances. Even the press failed to provide a counter; the journalists of the time went along with whatever the Committee put out.

From the initial concept to the final cut I found the story of the making of High Noon to be fascinating. It almost didn't get made and it changed as the screenwriter, Carl Foreman felt the impacts of the HUAC on his life and on Hollywood overall. He was a man committed to his ideals in a very difficult time.

Mr. Frankel's writing style is very easy to read and I never felt like I was in a textbook. It is deeply researched and footnoted. I think it's an important book to read so we don't forget what can happen when things get out of control. Anyone who loves movies and is interested in the political history of the country will find this to be a fascinating book.

Tony says

HIGH NOON: The Hollywood Blacklist and the Making of an American Classic. (2017). Glenn Frankel.
****.

Fortunately, I was able to get a copy of this film from our library before reading this book. Although I had first seen this movie when it was released in 1952, the edges were a little blurry. This book really didn't have to be about "High Noon," but could have been about several others from that time that had involved movie people who had tangled with the House Unamerican Activity Committee. That was a sorry time in our nation's history, where segments of our government pursued individuals who were suspected of having Communist loyalties. At the height of the Cold War, this was of prime concern to our government, and they spared no time or expense in seeking these people out and essentially destroying their lives and careers. The film, High Noon, was produced and directed by several men in that industry who had such activities, and

they suffered the judgement of the Committee. In essence, this work is a fine example of the how the HUAC worked. The author obviously did his research. I remember running home from school to watch the hearings on TV. Everybody was watching. I don't claim that I understood them at the time, but it made for good drama. It introduced America to such men as Richard Nixon and Joe McCarthy and the rest of their ilk. If you are not familiar with this era, I can highly recommend this book to provide you with all the information you will need to understand it.

Kevin says

Film buffs and history aficionados will be delighted and riveted by Glenn Frankel's insightful and intimate look at the making of the classic 1952 western *HIGH NOON*. Most remember the unconventional and left-leaning western as the film that won Gary Cooper a Best Actor Academy Award. Few remember that it was made at the height of the Red Scare in Hollywood, when hundreds of studio employees were blacklisted out of jobs because of their liberal politics. Carl Foreman's award-winning screenplay was an allegory about American foreign policy during the Korean War and a swipe at the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) and Senator Joseph McCarthy.

Frankel (*THE SEARCHERS*) rightfully focuses on Foreman as the hero behind *HIGH NOON*. He wrote the script after his 1947 appearance before HUAC, where he refused to name suspected Communists. Foreman was labeled an uncooperative witness and, after the release of his film, was blacklisted from films until 1961. His presence on *HIGH NOON* strained relationships with its producer (Stanley Kramer) and director (Fred Zinnemann). It also made the film a target of some of the loudest right-wing hawks in Hollywood--like columnist Hedda Hopper and actor John Wayne.

Frankel's saga presents a gripping and coherent picture of the corrupt politics, paranoia and fear mongering that drove Hollywood studio heads to capitulate to anti-Communist witch-hunters. *HIGH NOON* is an important and compelling history of a great film made during one of the U.S.'s worst periods.

Glenn Frankel creates a fascinating and definitive portrait of the left-leaning western *HIGH NOON* during the height of the McCarthy blacklist era.

Jean says

The award winning western movie has been considered a morality play or a masterpiece of the psychological western. Frankel tells the story of the conflict intertwined with screenwriter Carl Foreman who was under fire for not "playing ball" with the McCarthy committee and later blacklisted, and director Fred Zimmermann. Frankel also goes into depth about the acrimonious split with producer (and owner of United Artists) Stanley Kramer and Foreman. Frankel tells of the activities of the House Un-American Activities Committee and the industry politics that made the blacklist possible and its effect on the making of the movie "High Noon". Frankel provides a most interesting background history of the innerworkings and politics of the movie industry particularly during the change over from silent to talking movies. The author paints a devastating picture of a powerful force crumbling under oppression. Kramer also hints that it was not only communism the committee was targeting but it was riddled with anti-Semitism.

Frankel makes extensive parallels of then and now particularly when he lays the blame at the feet of the press for their willingness to print the phony or exaggerated allegations of public officials and friendly witnesses without holding them up to scrutiny or challenging the assumptions. The author claims this gave Senator McCarthy a veneer of legitimacy. He then goes on to demonstrate how this effected Hollywood and the making of this movie.

The book is well written and meticulously researched. Frankel combed through the vast amount of testimony, depositions, and correspondence to document his findings. The author also describes the decades long battle for credit in the movie resulting from the effects of the McCarthy committee. This book is made more interesting considering today's political activities.

I read this as an audiobook downloaded from Audible. The book is about fourteen and half hours long. Allan Robertson is a new narrator for me. He does a good job narrating the book.

Rama says

The dark hours of "High Noon" (five stars)

This is a fascinating book about the impact of McCarthyism and the investigation of the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC) on Carl Foreman, the screen writer for the movie "High Noon." This turbulent time had serious influence on the life and works of some of the best in Hollywood. The HUAC prepared a long list of names and asked them to testify regarding their alleged communist party activities. Some assisted the committee, many refused, and few relented. Many left the country and found home in Mexico, Europe and Latin America rather than sell out their principles and beliefs. They simply rejected the thought of naming their friends as communist party members. Carl Foreman was one of them. Having been blacklisted in Hollywood, Foreman moved to England where he wrote scripts under pseudonyms. In 1956 he co-wrote the screenplay for the acclaimed film, "The Bridge on the River Kwai" with fellow blacklisted writer Michael Wilson.

This book tells the story how moderate and conservative members of Hollywood assisted McCarthyism penetrate deep into the movie making business. The life of Carl Foreman is illustrated as a shining example. When Foreman wrote for "High Noon," he had something very specific on his mind. A simple moral, social and a political idea, in short an allegory for McCarthyism. It was a practice of making accusations of subversion and treason without proper evidence. Hollywood was especially targeted because of its influence on American society. Making unfair allegations and using questionable investigative techniques, fueling the fear of espionage by Soviet agents, the anti-communist pursuit was reinforced by Senator Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin. For Carl Foreman, the lead actor, Gary Cooper as Marshall Will Kane of the small town named Hadleyville in New Mexico territory is in fact Carl Foreman himself. The gunmen coming to kill Marshal Kane were none other than members of HUAC, and the citizens of Hadleyville were like the elite of Hollywood who stood passively and betrayed him as the forces of repression bore down on him. Foreman recalled years later that "As I was writing the screenplay, it became insane, because life was mirroring art and art was mirroring life."

It is one of the most iconic images of the American cinema. One lone cowboy walking down the street of a deserted Western town for a showdown with four killers. "High Noon" is embedded in American culture and the national memory. It is a favorite film for many presidents, political movements, journalists and movie

fans. Shot in just 32 days on a shoestring budget with some of the most notable movie stars working at a fraction of their regular salaries. It was a rush job to fulfill an old contract. A powerful story, top-notch screen writing, superb performance and climatic shootout made it an instant classic. It won four Academy Awards including one for Gary Cooper in the best actor category.

I did not take time to verify the veracity of all the historical details given in the book but I did come across two instances that was different from what I read in other books. Despite this observation, this is a fascinating account, and the Pulitzer Prize winning author Glenn Frankel describes the history beautifully. This book (356 pages) reads flawlessly and makes a wonderful reading for readers interested in the history of Hollywood, the history of making the film “High Noon” and how HUAC influenced Hollywood studios to blacklist uncooperative witnesses.

Nancy says

You know the film. Sheriff Kane has married a Quaker beauty and is hanging up his gun and turning in his badge to run a shop. Then Kane learns that a gang is out to get even--Kane's life to pay for his arrest of their leader, now out of jail.

Get out of town, everyone advises. This two-bit town wasn't worth dying for.

Kane knows you can't escape the past. He had to face the danger and end it once and for all. As he tries to form a posse Kane discovers he is alone; everyone else in town justifies retreating into their protective shells.

Clocks tick off the minutes until noon when the train carrying his nemesis arrives. Kane is left alone on the empty street of a town without moral conviction, friendless; even his pacifist wife is leaving town without him. It is Kane alone against four armed men bent on murder.

The simple song with the hoofbeat rhythm tells the story, and its melody morphs and evolves, becoming menacing and persistent, until it is High Noon.

Stanley Kramer owed United Artists one more film to fulfill his contract, then he could get on making movies under his own studio. Screenwriter Carl Foreman had been working on an idea for several years, High Noon. They secured the over-the-hill but still box worthy actor Gary Cooper to play the lead, and newbie Grace Kelly to be his wife.

No one thought the film would amount to much. Cooper's acting lacked oomph, Kelly was too young, and, used to emoting to the back row in the theater, over-acted. The early film version was deemed awful and needed cutting and remaking.

I was thrilled to read Glenn Frankel's book High Noon: The Hollywood Blacklist and the Making of an American Classic. High Noon is a favorite film in my household. I know it scene by scene. Frankel's account of how the film was made was fascinating and exciting. Frankel portrays Gary Cooper as a handsome Lothario, also described as one of the nicest, greatest guys; Carl adores Coop. Frank Cooper was the son of a Montana lawyer who wanted to be an artist but could not afford art school. He went to Hollywood after learning they needed stunt artists. He was a quick study. His handsome good looks caught the eye of Clara Bow for her famous movie It. Gary Cooper was born.

What really makes this book relevant and important is learning how the Cold War fostered an era of fear that allowed wholesale persecution.

Before *High Noon* was complete Carl Foreman's name was given to the House Un-American Committee as a member of the Communist Party. Carl had been a member, drawn to its Anti-Fascism and promotion of the rights of minorities, Jews, immigrants, and unions. Carl had signed an oath in 1950 saying he was not (then) a member of the Communist Party.

The Communist Party of the early 20th c attracted progressive liberals and intellectuals who supported such 'un-American' ideals as unionizing and workers rights; their agenda did not include the overthrow of the United States. The Communist Party was seen as a social club, a place for making connections. When Russia became an ally against Hitler and Hollywood was called upon to portray positive images in films like *Song of Russia* and *Mission to Moscow*.

The House Un-American Committee 'quizzed' accused Communists, rewarding those who cooperated with reprieve, but not always forgiveness. Milton Berkeley gave the Committee 150 names and was their darling; yet when his son graduated from Yale he was denied acceptance into the Navy's Officer Training Program, blacklisted because his father had once been a Communist!

Carl could have played their game, admit his sins and name several Communist party members they already knew about. He'd be off the hook, perhaps with his career damaged, but not over. Carl would not bend his convictions; he'd rather go to jail. Alone and afraid he faced the tribunal. They were not pleased.

Carl was a liability. Kramer fired Carl; no studio could afford to be associated with Communism. Cooper, a Republican anti-Communist, believed in and supported Carl and wanted to help him start his own company; the deal fell through. Even Cooper couldn't defeat the HUAC and stand up to the threat of blacklisting. Foreman went to England and went on to write *The Bridge on the River Kwai*, *The Guns of Navarone*, *The Mouse that Roared*, *Born Free*, and *Young Winston*.

The HUAC's abuse of power was finally addressed by the Supreme Court in an a1957 ruling, stating that "There is no general authority to expose the private affairs of individuals without justification in terms of the functions of Congress. Nor is the Congress a law enforcement or trial agency." Senator Joseph McCarthy's fall also damaged the HAUC's credibility.

Carl Foreman had lost his job; his name was expunged in the credits of *High Noon* and *The Bridge on the River Kwai*; his passport had been revoked; and his marriage damaged. And yet years later, back in America, he ran into John Wayne, an ardent anti-communist. They embraced as old friends. When Carl asked how he could accept an old enemy so nicely he replied that Wayne was a patriot and had only been doing what he thought was right.

In times of national stress fear manifests in attacks against perceived threats, which in hindsight are seen as ill-advised, unconstitutional, and morally suspect. The red-baiting witch hunts of the 1950s were such a time. Frankel's book reminds us of the cost of allowing our fear to negate the rights guaranteed by our laws and warns against the misuse of power.

I received a free ebook from the publisher through NetGalley in exchange for a fair and unbiased review.

ALLEN says

Although Glenn Frankel's *HIGH NOON: The Hollywood Blacklist and the Making of an American Classic* portrays star Gary Cooper on the cover, this book is really more about Carl Foreman, who wrote the HIGH NOON screenplay. Perhaps a third of the book is concerned with the "making of" aspects of that celebrated 1952 film, and what's there is solid enough, particularly the creative tensions that brought independent producer Stanley Kramer to undertake the movie, hire Foreman to write its screenplay and Fred Zinneman to direct it, and to hold the production together despite bad weather and shaky finances. Gary Cooper's acting career, which had already peaked and had begun to decline, is treated sympathetically.

Most of the rest concerns the life and hard times of Carl Foreman, who struggled for opportunity in Depression-era Hollywood and crafted the HIGH NOON screenplay just as some early connections sympathetic to American Communism came to the fore, threatened to destroy his career, and almost did. For the real antagonist in this book is not the powerful, entrenched studios like MGM, Paramount or Warners, nor the hot weather, nor the inroads of commercial television, but the political polarization of the country to the point where most conservatives were seen by the Left as automatically dangerous, and liberals were equated with socialists and communists by the Right. (Add to that the virtual industry of anti-communism, the 'hunters' of Reds, the 'exposers,' and perhaps most despicable of all, the 'fixers' who could restore a reputation under the right circumstances and at the right price, and this country had an explosive situation to be sure. But this book can only touch on that.)

HIGH NOON reads well, but much of this has been covered before. The mechanics and ethics of "investigating" those in the Hollywood community with an eye to blacklisting them has been covered quite well in Victor Navasky's *Naming Names* (1980), nor has "Coop's" career gone uncelebrated in other books. It is Carl Foreman's life, in which full opportunity as a screenwriter was taken away from him just at the time he was most able to exercise it, that provides the drama, irony and tragedy of this book. If you're a film fan or specialize in the early McCarthy period, do not foresake this book: it isn't perfect but it's a pretty good read.

Joe Kucharski says

The weight of Glenn Frankel's second book in looking at the historical Hollywood is truly outlined in *High Noon's* sub-title: *The Hollywood Blacklist and the Making of an American Classic*. Frankel does provide a deep-dive directorial-style narration into the making of the Gary Cooper/Grace Kelly Western classic *High Noon*, but this account's true showdown occurs as Congress and HUAC play the men in black with the artist as the white hat, fading hero pressed into one more battle.

And the weight this book carries is impressive. Frankel intensely presents meticulous research into the time and era of the Red scare, its affect on the Hollywood engine, and the turmoil brought on by the ensuing witch hunts. However, such intensity often comes off with the academia stylings of a research paper that pulls away from the historical narrative of the film's origin. For a quicker, compelling view into the times of the notorious Hollywood blacklist, one needs only to view the well-done 2015 film *Trumbo*.

When the eponymous film is in focus, Frankel creates compelling, compassionate characters out of writer Carl Foreman, producer Stanley Kramer, director Fred Zinnemann, editor Elmo Williams, and star Gary Cooper. Each of these men's desires, and especially fears, are triumphantly captured and endowed with a

humanizing sense of wanting no less than to be free and create. Their stories are strong and wonderful and flawed and real with the end result, the film *High Noon*, becoming an enduring classic. Frankel's read, *High Noon*, unfortunately, becomes so enraptured with the history, that the magic of Hollywood is forgotten for long, dry spells.

Historian purists will certainly applaud Frankel's research. Fans of film might find this book cumbersome. The lawman might finally get his hand at justice, but the sun has already set.

Many thanks to NetGalley and Bloomsbury for the chance at this advance read.

George says

I COULDA BEEN A FASCIST.

"The Communist Party was for years the best social club in Hollywood..." (p. 28).

In the early 50s, when *High Noon* was released and I was on the cusp of adolescence, I remember thinking what a proud and patriotic thing the House Committee on Un-American Activities was doing: ridding Hollywood of all the subversive, '*Commie rat bastards*' they could find.

I was an idiot.

In his excellent, well researched book, *High Noon: The Hollywood Blacklist and the Making of an American Classic*, Glenn Frankel expertly illuminates the evil, harmful, and lasting impact that the HUAC had on real people—mostly sincere and caring Americans who thought freedom was a good idea. Witch-hunts and inquisitions are rarely noble; just self-righteous, and vicious.

With *blacklists*, and *graylists*, and actual jail terms meted out for contempt of Congress—I can't believe that even reopening the Japanese-American concentration camp at Tule Lake to house dissidents was considered—*Tinsel-Town's* paranoia was more than justified.

And, at the height of it all comes an American screen classic, a metaphorical tale of a reluctant hero, a man of integrity, abandoned by the friends from whom he'd expected better, who stands tall and faces evil on his own at, *High Noon*: screenplay by, soon to be blacklisted, Hollywood screenwriter, Carl Forman.

Recommendation: For me: a painfully reminiscent story about more innocent times, and the tale of the making a great movie. For you: a bit of history, and a closer look at today's world. For us: a cautionary tale well worth reading.

"It is a story that bears a clear relation to things that are happening in the world today, where people are being terrorized by bullies and surrendering their freedom out of senselessness and fear." (p. 259)

Bloomsbury Publishing. Kindle Edition, 380 pages.

Michael says

Good films are a product of their time. And sometimes understanding not only what went into making a film but also the time in which it was made can lead to a deeper and richer viewing. That's the case with one of the greatest films ever committed to celluloid as examined by Glenn Frankel in his latest book *High Noon: The Hollywood Blacklist and the Making of an American Classic*.

Frankel brings together many of the threads that led to the making of the film -- from the events leading up to the infamous Blacklist and naming names to the casting decisions for the film. Walking away from the book, you'll marvel at how many times things could have gone wrong for one of the iconic films of American cinema, but how they all lined up to produce a film that is as taut, entertaining and fascinating today as it was upon its initial release.

Picking up this book will give you a new respect for *High Noon* and also leave you wanting to view the film again with the new insights gained from Frankel's thorough account about the making of this celebrated classic.

The story of Will Kaine, a man deserted by his supposed friends in his hour of need, becomes even more gripping knowing what the screenwriter and many of those behind the scenes were putting on the line to make this movie.

Frankel moves easily back and forth between giving us the micro and macro view of events unfolding to create this classic Western. If you're a fan of cinema, this is an absolute must read. Think of it as a printed version of the best DVD extra features you've ever seen.

Kasa Cotugno says

In-depth, well researched study of the story behind High Noon, everyone who went into its creation and resulting metaphor against the backdrop of the McCarthy Era.

happy says

This is the second book I've read by Mr. Frankel on the making of a classic American Western and like *The Searchers: The Making of an American Legend*, *High Noon* is excellent. In this narrative, Mr. Frankel not only looks at the making of one of Hollywood's great Westerns, but at what was going in American at the same time, the post war Red Scare.

In telling the story of the film, the author uses the screen writer's (Carl Foreman) experiences to tell that story. Like many left leaning people in Hollywood before the war, he drifted into the Communist Party and when it didn't live up to his expectations, he drifted out of it. Mr. Frankel tells of Forman's time in the Army during WWII. His having been a member of the Communist Party didn't seem to matter to the military.

The author also looks at Forman's career path after the war as he tried to become reestablished as a top flight screen writer. He eventually joins with Stanley Kramer and they form a production company. At this point he takes a germ of a story and writes the screen play that becomes "High Noon."

In writing about the production, the author looks at the various aspect of producing an independent production – budget, casting, scheduling shooting and how the budget affects the sequence a movie is shot, hiring the people to do the music and even the editing process. Some of this is great reading, including the story of the composing of the theme song and the person to perform it were chosen.

In telling the stories of the actors, Gary Cooper comes across as both a charming and a decent man. Mr. Frankel retells the scope of his career to that point. He tells where he came from and how he became Hollywood biggest draw during the late 30's and 40s. However at this point of his career he was starting to get too old to be a leading man and he wasn't sure where to go with his career. He took about half of his normal fee and was still by orders of magnitude the highest paid member of the cast , plus a percentage of the profits to appear in the film. He also tells of Cooper's, who was very conservative politically, support of Foreman when Foreman runs into trouble with the Hollywood movers and shakers after his appearance before HUAC and his unwillingness to name names.

Mr. Fankel also looks at the casting a novice actress to play Cooper's love interest in the film, Grace Kelly. She was less than half Cooper's age at the time of shooting. Their affair on and off the set and the affect it had on Cooper's marriage is related.

Interspersed with the movie making, is the story of the Red Scare, the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), and how it affected Hollywood. Mr. Foreman was called to testify before the committee and while fully admitting his involvement with the Communist Party in the '30s, refused to name others who were also affiliated with party during that time frame. Just how this affected him is very well covered. The author also looks at how others reacted and the pressures on them to "cooperate" fulling with HUAC. Some did, some didn't and those who did not where blacklisted – Foreman included.

The author follows Foreman after his black listing and his moving to England to get work. While continuing to work in film most of his contributions were uncredited at the time, including his work on the classic film "Bridge Over the River Kwai".

Overall this is a great read. In telling the human cost of the black list, Mr. Frankel does the reader a great service. This is definitely a 5 Star read.

Howard says

This is the story of a movie and a man. The movie is *High Noon* and the man is Carl Foreman, its screenwriter.

THE MOVIE.

High Noon(1952) is one of the most famous and best liked westerns ever made. Practically everybody is familiar with the plot (and if you aren't, what's your excuse?) of town marshal Will Kane (Gary Cooper), who is not only deserted by the rest of the town (Hadleyville), but also by his brand-new Quaker bride (Grace Kelly), who of course is a pacifist who abhors violence.

*Do not forsake me, oh, my darlin',
On this, our wedding day.
Do not forsake me, oh, my darlin',*

Wait; wait alone.

But as a man of courage and integrity, “he does what a man’s gotta do.”

Will Kane (Cooper) to Amy Kane (Kelly): *"I've got to, that's the whole thing."*

And so single-handedly, he is forced to take on a gang of four murderous gunmen (Ian McDonald, Lee Van Cleef, Robert J. Wilke, Sheb Wooley), with only one person finally coming to his aid.

Three Republican presidents – Eisenhower, Reagan, and George W. Bush – and one Democrat – Bill Clinton – named it as their favorite movie. That shouldn’t be surprising. Will Kane was a leader who was deserted by his followers. Nevertheless, he attempted to rally them in order to deal with the evil the town faced. When that failed, he did not cut and run, for he knew that the gunmen could and would track him down no matter where he fled.

So he made a stand. Presidents can’t cut and run either; they must make a stand (well, should anyway).

*I do not know what fate awaits me,
I only know I must be brave,
Or lie a coward, a craven coward;
Or lie a coward in my grave.*

John Wayne and director Howard Hawks hated the film. Wayne was quoted as saying that it was “the most un-American thing I have seen in my whole life!” He objected to the fact that the marshal showed fear and he stated that it was unbelievable that real pioneer settlers would have failed to come to the aid of their marshal. But his greatest complaint concerned the final scene when Marshal Kane removed his badge and dropped it to the ground. No lawman portrayed by John Wayne would ever show fear and he wouldn’t ask for the assistance of the town’s citizens, though they would be willing to come to his aid if he asked. And he sure would not have thrown his badge into the dirt.

Hawks and Wayne made *Rio Bravo* (1959), and two re-makes, as their answer to *High Noon*. But Brian Garfield in his book, *Western Films: A Complete Guide*, wrote: “[*Rio Bravo*] is overrated, overripe, and overlong ... Hawks and Wayne insisted it was their ‘answer’ to *High Noon* ... but that is like answering a serious poem with a nursery-rhyme verse.” Ouch!

*Do not forsake me, oh my darlin'
You made that promise as a bride
Do not forsake me, oh my darlin'
Although you're grievin', don't think of leavin'
Now that I need you by my side.*

*Oh, to be torn 'twixt love an' duty.
S'posin' I lose my fair-haired beauty.*

*Look at that big hand move along,
Nearing high noon.*

THE MAN.

During the film's production, scriptwriter and associate producer Carl Foreman was summoned to appear before the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) which was investigating communist influence in the film industry. In his appearance he took the Fifth and refused to name names as requested by the committee. This was tantamount to admitting guilt as far as the committee was concerned. Consequently, Foreman was branded an "unfriendly witness" and his name was placed on a blacklist, one that either destroyed or badly damaged the careers of those who had failed to co-operate with the committee.

It also meant that because of the fear of association that few people were going to come to the "accused" person's defense. In fact, producer Stanley Kramer wanted Foreman to be more forthcoming with the committee and when he wasn't, the producer feared Foreman's association with the film would doom it at the box office. As a result, he did receive credit for the screenplay, but Kramer removed Foreman's name from the associate producer's credit.

So it is no wonder that Foreman saw the film as an allegory for the evils of the witch hunt. His life had become exhibit no. 1. As far as he was concerned, he was Will Kane trying to do what was right, and having to do it alone, because the fears of guilt by association that others felt had the effect of isolating him, just as it did Will Kane.

" Though Frankel began this sumptuous history long before the latest election, he ends up reminding us that 2016 was far from the first time politicians trafficked in lies and fear, and showing us how, nonetheless, people came together to do exemplary work. " -- John Domini, The Washington Post

This is the second book in which Frankel skillfully interweaves film making and American history. The first was *The Searchers: The Making of an American Legend*. That classic western, starring John Wayne in his best performance, is inspired by the real-life kidnapping of Cynthia Ann Parker from her frontier Texas home by Comanche raiders. As he does in *High Noon*, Frankel gives the reader insights into both the making of the film and the history upon which it is based. Both books are well-written and thoroughly researched, but then that is what one would expect from a Pulitzer winning journalist. I recommend them both.

You can watch the opening of High Noon and the singing of the film's Oscar winning theme song by Tex Ritter here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QKLvK...>

And the exciting conclusion of the film here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qZil7...>

Paul Franco says

Subtitled: The Hollywood Blacklist and the Making of an American Classic. That's an important distinction, lest you make the mistake of assuming this is just a behind-the-scenes of the making of the popular Western film.

It starts with a fantastic bio of Gary Cooper, but then shifts to a long history of American communism during WW2. The Cooper stuff is the best part of the first half; the Red scare hearings drag things down, slow the

pace, though once in a while there's a gem, like the news that Ayn Rand had a big part in this that no one knew about.

There's an interesting take by one of the lawyers representing someone "asked" to testify: "He would not represent anyone who took the Fifth Amendment, arguing that if they were former Communists, as all of his clients claimed to be, they had not broken any law and therefore did not need the amendment's protection."

The best job description ever written has to be "the industry expert in frying producers."

This is a difficult read, both emotionally and . . . reading wise. Thankfully there's some optimistic moments, such as the part at the end that tells about the movie's—or at least the poster's—role in helping Solidarity overcome the Communist government in Poland. Another fun fact is that this movie has the distinction of being the most requested by American presidents. But the most heartwarming has to be the story of detective work that unearthed the original manuscript of the screenplay for *The Bridge on the River Kwai*, leading the author of *High Noon* to receive credit for the Oscar-winning work just in the nick of time.

Acknowledgements, notes, and bibliography take up the last 12%.

As can be perceived by my previous comments, the parts about the movie were so much more interesting than the hearings. 4.5 for the movie stuff, 2.5 for hearings, so according to old math that comes out to: 3.5 pushed up to 4/5

Doubledf99.99 says

Great book and a scary book about Hollywood in the 50s, how a movie comes about and how it is made.

Great bios' on Cooper, Kramer and Foreman and the other's who made *High Noon*, one thing that caught me by surprise was the main musical theme.

The stuff on HUAC is scary enough as it is, there are heroes and villains, and should one survive the HUAC testimonies they may be blacklisted by Hollywood, it was a vicious cycle.
