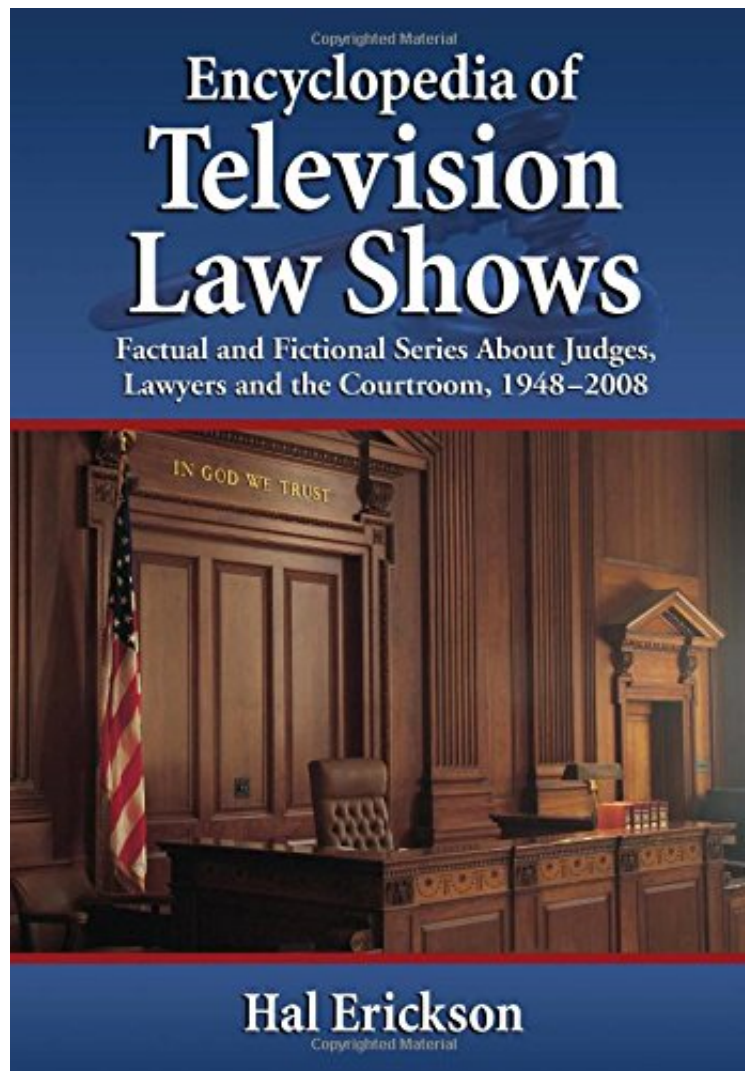


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## Encyclopedia of Television Law Shows: Factual and Fictional Series About Judges, Lawyers and the Courtroom, 1948-2008

*Hal Erickson*

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**Hal Erickson : Encyclopedia of Television Law Shows: Factual and Fictional Series About Judges, Lawyers and the Courtroom, 1948-2008** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Encyclopedia of Television Law Shows: Factual and Fictional Series About Judges, Lawyers and the Courtroom, 1948-2008:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Terrific Reference Book By Lee Goldberg Another great reference book from the always dependable Hal Erickson covering a unique, and overlooked aspect, of television series drama:

the legal series. Each series is examined in-depth and often includes interesting facts on the development, production, or demise of the shows. Highly recommended! Now I'm waiting for him to tackle TV Private Eyes and TV Doctors....

When media coverage of courtroom trials came under intense fire in the aftermath of the infamous New Jersey v. Hauptmann lawsuit (a.k.a. the Lindbergh kidnapping case,) a new wave of fictionalized courtroom programming arose to satiate the public's appetite for legal drama. This book is an alphabetical examination of the nearly 200 shows telecast in the U.S. from 1948 through 2008 involving courtrooms, lawyers and judges, complete with cast and production credits, airdates, detailed synopses and background information. Included are such familiar titles as Perry Mason, Divorce Court, Judge Judy, LA Law, and The Practice, along with such obscure series as They Stand Accused, The Verdict Is Yours Sam Benedict, Trials of O'Brien, and The Law and Mr. Jones. The book includes an introductory overview of law-oriented radio and TV broadcasts from the 1920s to the present, including actual courtroom coverage (or lack of same during those years in which cameras and microphones were forbidden in the courtroom) and historical events within TV's factual and fictional treatment of the legal system. Also included in the introduction is an analysis of the rise and fall of cable's Court TV channel.

From Booklist Fascination with the law has led to its presence on television for more than 60 years. Written by entertainment enthusiast Erickson, this volume is a welcome addition to television reference. As Erickson explains in the introduction, early TV programs simulated courtroom trials, but real-life proceedings such as the McCarthy hearings trumped fictional drama in terms of audience numbers (and helped convince the networks of the value of daytime programming). Courtroom shows evolved from those using actors to those using real litigants (for example, Judge Judy). Fictional legal programs sprang up, the longest-running ones being Perry Mason and Law and Order (a franchise at this point). The main portion of the book details these programs (in alphabetical order). Entries range in length from a quarter page to Law and Order's 10 pages. Each entry begins with vital data: broadcaster, debut date, producer, and cast. Erickson explains the premise of the show and provides the plotlines for the fictional programs. He also gives some background information about the shows production and popularity. Cross-references help the reader connect related shows. The writing is largely objective, but some quoted editorials and inside stories give the entries a little spice. A bibliography and name index complete the volume. Offering a unique lens to television viewing, this book is likely to interest both the genre viewer and the curious legalist and is recommended for television collections. --Lesley Farmer "unique...recommended"--Booklist; "entertaining reference...fascinating introduction"--Library Journal; "very well researched...a very fun read especially for trivia buffs...recommended"--ARBA; "this work represents decades of research and spans the entire history of television...the most comprehensive documentation of television series ever published"--New Books in the Communications Library. About the Author Hal Erickson is author-editor for AMG All-Movie Guide and is the author of numerous books about film, television and pop culture. A substitute special-education teacher in the Wauwatosa (WI) school district, he lives in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.