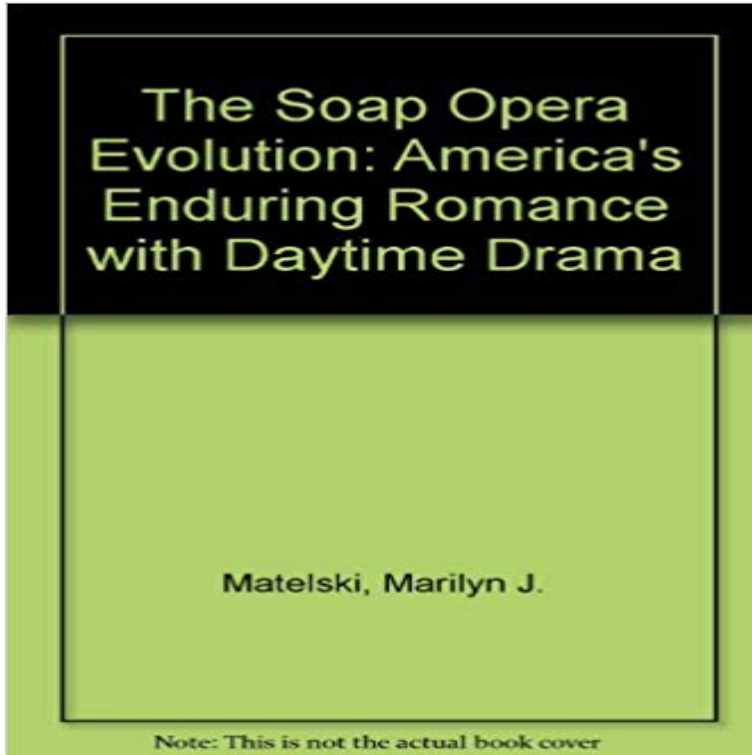


# The Soap Opera Evolution: Americas Enduring Romance with Daytime Drama



The first daytime dramas began as early as 1930, with Painted Dreams. Programmers soon discovered that housewives often controlled the purse strings, and soaps become an advertisers gold mine. They now generate more than \$900 million in network revenues annually. Around 50 million people (reportedly including congressmen and rock stars as well as two-thirds of all American television-watching women) tune in each weekday afternoon for a dosage of love, loss and libido via the soaps. This scholarly study examines the soap phenomenon from a sociological point of view. Included in the analysis is classic research by Rudolf Arnheim, Herta Hartzog and Helen Kaufman as well as contemporary studies and previously unpublished research. The evolution of popular plotlines and characters, as assessment of reality in todays plots, which people watch soaps and why, specific plotlines for the 13 soaps presently aired, 40+ family trees illustrating program changes, the future of soaps--all are covered.

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