



Soap Opera

Dorothy Hobson

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The soap opera is a major form of media art and popular culture. Revered and reviled by fans and critics, its history spans and reflects social change and plays a vital role in the development of broadcasting. This book traces the genre from its beginnings on American radio in the 1930s to the international television genre it has become today. While concentrating on British soap operas, it also discusses the influence of their American and Australian counterparts.

This is the first book to consider the soap opera within the economy of broadcasting; it includes a chapter based on interviews with leading broadcasting executives who give their analysis of the importance of the soap opera to their industry. The perspective of television producers as well as the views of audiences are also taken into account.

Accessibly written, Soap Opera links the genre to both its media and its literary heritage, and argues that soap operas cross international boundaries through the universal appeal of their characters and their stories. It will be of particular interest to students of media and cultural studies, literary studies, sociology and television production courses, as well as to professionals in the television industry.

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