

Mary Jeanne Wilson

“Make Them Wait”

Fan Manipulation of the Soap Opera Narrative Structure through Elimination and Compilation of Storylines

Due to the lack of availability of past soap opera texts through syndication or commercial sales, many soap fans have taken it upon themselves to record their favorite soaps and create their own fan archives. These video collections are a rare commodity in that they allow fans to revisit particular moments and storylines that were once an inaccessible part of their television-viewing memories. These collections not only open up the possibility of re-watching programming that was thought to be a lost part of television history, they also allow fans to manipulate the complicated narrative structure of the soap opera genre in order to maximize their pleasure in revisiting these programs.

Tapes and DVDs from these fan collections are often offered for trade or sale to other fans categorized by storyline or character rather than by actual episodes or specific air dates. Most of the tapes that these fans offer for trade or sale are meticulous compilations of a particular character, couple or storyline.¹ Instead of attempting to create new storylines, these re-edits “speed up” the development of a storyline by eliminating all other storylines and compiling months worth of scenes onto one tape or DVD. These edited tapes no longer have the structure of constant delay or interruption associated with earlier theories of the soap opera genre. Instead of re-experiencing the often excruciatingly slow development of soap storylines, fans can watch compressed versions that feature only the particular character or story that they favored during the original broadcasts. This

“instant gratification” model is almost antithetical to the original narrative structure of the soap opera.

While much of the academic literature on fan cultures focuses on the fan as author or producer, I hope to discuss these soap collectors in terms of how their re-editing challenges the structure of the soap opera rather than the content of the narrative and thus challenges ideas surrounding the structural appeal of the genre for female audiences. How does this structural manipulation differ from fan practices that rework narrative outcomes, such as slash fiction or videos? I want to consider how this change in generic structure may change the source of fan pleasure and how this relates to the idea of pleasure in fans’ roles as historians/guardians of a soap opera’s lengthy and complicated narrative.

The Structure of Soaps: Playing the Waiting Game

One of the fundamental tenets of the soap opera and of virtually all serial narratives is the constant delay of narrative resolution. Narrative resolution would signal the end of the serial. The soap opera could be considered the most extreme example of the serial. Except in the case cancellation, the soap narrative is never-ending. Any resolution is a mere respite in the world of soaps. Happiness is always is always fleeting and even death can be a temporary setback. In order to continue to hold viewers’ attention, the development of any storyline is excruciatingly drawn out and fraught with constant delay and interruption, both within



the diegesis of the narrative and through the structural format of the broadcast. Delay is built into the story as well as into the arrangement of sequences between commercial breaks and between daily episodes. Agnes Nixon, creator of *All My Children* and *One Life to Live*, references nineteenth century British serialist Wilkie Collins in saying: “Make them laugh, make the cry...and make them wait.”²

The idea of waiting and interruption is therefore a key element in early feminist academic work on soap operas. Tania Modleski’s “The Rhythms of Reception: Daytime Television and Women’s Work,” uses this element of interruption to highlight the way soap opera structures address female patterns of work and their role in the domestic sphere. Modleski also theorizes that soaps construct a maternal position for their viewers, that of the “ideal mother,” with multiple identifications to different characters. Her work in this piece attempts to specify a feminine viewing position in response to feminist film theory’s arguments of classical Hollywood cinema’s construction of a masculine spectator position.

Much of the early academic work on soap operas is influenced by this foundational work on soap operas and Modleski’s concept of the soap opera as a “feminine narrative form.” One of the pioneering elements of Modleski’s work is her specific attention to the narrative structure of soaps, which diverges from earlier work on soaps that primarily focused on content. In the introduction to the second edition of her book *Loving with a Vengeance: Mass-Produced Fantasies for Women*, Modleski explains part of her goal in the original project was to “dig beneath the surface of supposedly escapist fare, to go beyond mere content analysis and to look at the formal properties of the text.”³ The narrative format of soaps offers a unique structure that Modleski links to their popularity with female viewers. According to Modleski, structure of a soap opera suited the daily rhythms of women working in the home and the emotional demands of viewers who were wives

and mothers:

Thus the narrative, by placing ever more complex obstacles between desire and fulfillment, makes anticipation of an end and end in itself. Soap operas invest exquisite pleasure in the central condition of a woman’s life: waiting—whether for her phone to ring, for the baby to take its nap, or for the family to be reunited shortly after the day’s final soap opera has left its family still struggling against dissolution.⁴

Modleski proposes that a woman’s work in the home is one fraught with interruption and the choppy, repetitious structure of soap operas allows viewers to follow the storyline even while being constantly interrupted. As a feminist scholar, Modleski argues that concurrent with mimicking a woman’s work in the home daytime television also aids in habituating women to this mode of distraction and interruption.⁵

Louise Spence also warns that the interrupted nature of daytime soaps may create the atmosphere of interruption as much as they actually mirror the nature of women’s work in the home:

The rhythms of housework should not be seen as inevitable or even self-generating. The way we conceptualize our work, our time, our pleasure—and our gender—is intricately linked to our cultural environment and must be interpreted in relation to the social contexts in which these conceptualizations occur. Daytime television helps to create or sustain that rhythm as much as it reflects it.⁶

Spence cautions that as much as the narrative structure of soaps may indeed mimic the disjointed nature of work in the home, it also reinforces the idea that this work is essentially interruptible, and therefore some how less important. So by making

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these tapes do fans resist the habituating nature of interruption in daytime television and demand one that necessitates concentration and commitment to the program they are viewing? Modleski claims that the interrupted narrative is both annoying and pleasurable to the female viewer, but that this structure of interruption denies viewers “total and prolonged absorption.”⁷

In her study of the development of the serial narrative form, Jennifer Hayward contends that the narrative structure cannot be linked with a specific gendered audience, but rather the development of the economics of the serial format:

(The lack of closure) was not developed in response to the desires of a particular gendered audience but is an essential quality of the serial form itself...(the serial genre) its intimate focus, emphasis on interpersonal relations, melodramatic tropes, and deferred closure—among other qualities—have been erroneously labeled “essentially female” by association with the serials most visible contemporary incarnation, soap opera.⁸

Thus, according to Hayward, the soap opera structure is due to the economic necessity of keeping fans watching day after day rather than their particular correlation to female viewers’ daytime schedules. Whether it is a gendered address or an element of economic strategy, the interruption and delay in the serial format always appears as an essential element of soap operas.

If interruption is such an essential part of the soaps, what happens when fans diverge from this format when making their own compilation tapes? By compressing a particular storyline into a compilation tape, the result changes the structure, rather than the content, of the story. The concepts of deferred closure and delayed fulfillment get lifted out of the original content. In looking at these fan videos, they eliminate much of the structure that Modleski and other critics discuss. There is

no waiting, there are no multiple storylines, and viewers are not required to divide their attention when watching these tapes. How does viewer reading change when all the interruptions of multiple storylines and multiple identifications are edited out? How will this change the terms of viewer engagement with the text? Are these viewers somehow claiming that this structure no longer suits their needs? If waiting is supposedly an essential part of soaps’ structure and women’s daily lives, perhaps these fan tapes signify the changes in who is watching soaps and new possibilities for pleasure that fans have created in restructuring the original broadcast format.

Fan Compilation Tapes: Producing a New Narrative Structure

Fan videos and fan archives are not a new phenomenon. From Henry Jenkins and Camille Bacon-Smith’s early discussions of *Star Trek* fan tape circulation and slash videos to the explosion of fan material now posted on web video outlets such as YouTube, television fans have consistently been active in collecting and circulating copies of their particular fan object. So why take a second look at soap opera fan archives and their particular brand of fan videos and DVDs? Much has been made of fan attempts to rewrite their favorite narratives or insert stories or relationships where the original creator might not have intended them, but the focus has mostly been on reworking content rather than the particular narrative structure of a particular television series/episode. In addition to examinations of the genre’s narrative content, there has been significant academic discussion of the importance of interruption as built into the narrative structure of the soap opera. Rather than rework the narrative content of their favorite soaps, soap opera fans often create their own compilation tapes, featuring one particular storyline, couple or actor/actress. These tapes allow fans to rewatch these stories and re-experience some of the pleasure they felt during their first viewing, but without





the constant interruption from other storylines, commercial breaks, etc.⁹ While these compilations do not change the content and, thus, a particular reading of the original story, the restructuring of the daily episode's format defies this ritual of interruption and delay so closely associated with the soaps.

By looking at several examples of these compilations, I explore how these videos disrupt the narrative structure that was such a key element in Modleski's early theories of the soap opera and its relationship to women's work in the home. The first example is a set of four DVDs I received from an extensive collector of ABC's *General Hospital*.¹⁰ These follow the popular love triangle of Robert Scorpio, Anna Devane, and Holly Sutton through a four month period in the summer of 1985. This particular collector has a complete archive of *General Hospital* episodes from 1993 to the present and large holdings for several other periods in the show's history. Each DVD contains a full eight hours of clips featuring all the scenes that featured these three major characters. While following the story of this love triangle, several other of the major characters of the soap come into play (most soap storylines tend to involve as many characters as possible), but scenes from other major concurrent storylines are absent from the videos. Obviously, this speeds up the viewing time required to follow the evolution of this love triangle. Disc four of the *General Hospital* DVD set covers the time period of July 26th to August 28th, 1985. This time span covers twenty-four actual one-hour episodes of *General Hospital* and thus eliminates approximately sixteen hours of screen time featuring other characters.¹¹

By condensing weeks or even months of a storyline, fan compilations eliminate the sense of interruption and constant delay that is so crucial in the original broadcast format. While the cliffhanger scenes (those before each commercial break, those at the end of each episode and at the end of each broadcast week) are all included in these compilations, the editing eliminates all the

interruptions and waiting that follows each of them. As a result, it is difficult to pinpoint when one episode ends and the next begins and/or to tell the difference between the end of a daily episode and the end of a Friday episode. The fan who created the *General Hospital* compilation eliminated the daily markers such as the opening title sequence or the "scenes from the next episode" bumper that often follows each episode's final cliffhanger. The viewer can move through episodes or even weeks' worth of episodes without ever having to engage with *the* original episode structure and all of the time they would have spent waiting for the next episode to air. Gone are the excruciating weekends waiting to find out if your favorite character is really dead or if the virtuous wife will finally catch her cheating husband in the act. While most of the fans who order these compilations have already watched these storylines play out when they were originally broadcast, viewing these compilations removes all that time spent waiting in anticipation, thus making it a decidedly different viewing experience.

These fan compilations create a new viewing experience that significantly contrasts earlier theorizations of how and why viewers watched daytime soaps. When watching these compilations, the viewer now only watches the storyline they have specifically selected without interruption. It can be assumed that if a fan goes so far as ordering and watching one of these fan videos featuring their favorite character or story, he or she will undoubtedly watch the video with more attention and concentration than earlier conceptions of the "distracted housewife," who watched while multi-tasking through her day. These compilation tapes are most likely watched in some sort of dedicated time period, and therefore not while performing other daily tasks. If this is the case, both the narrative structure of the compilation tape and the viewing experience no longer mimic the distracted and interrupted nature of women's work in the home.¹²

So, if these fan compilation videos change the

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rhythm of daytime soaps, are these fans challenging earlier concepts of fan pleasure and its relationship to ideologies of gender? If this new narrative structure no longer reflects the discontinuous nature of “women’s work” (primarily that of homemaker and caregiver), it may represent fans’ desire to break from this simplistic image of the soap viewer as just homemakers, whose lives center around delay and interruption. The continuous nature of these compilations express soap fans’ wish to watch these intimate stories, so often gendered feminine, with the singular attention and focus that has usually been associated with primetime programming or film. One fan offering clips for a popular couple on *One Life to Live* described her compilation tapes as more akin to a feature film:

These are NOT clips.... they are edits from the show and tell the whole story of their relationship. It’s like a J&N Major Motion Picture, featuring primarily John and Natalie, but also their interactions with others. While watching you will not wonder when something happened, or why.... it’s the whole story.¹³

C. Lee Harrington and Denise Bielby’s study of soap fans includes a short mention of fan attempts to preserve their favorite moments or stories from soap history by saving daily episodes or by creating these edited collections. Their study quotes one fan’s description of her collection and the difference in watching the scenes of just one particular storyline from a daytime soap:

I have saved every scene with Matthew Ashford and Melissa Brennan [actors on *Days of Our Lives*] that has aired since April 1990! I became so captivated by these actors and their storyline that I didn’t want to tape over their scenes....Some of their episodes have become “classics” to me and my friends...Our tapes are like one long, continuous...movie.¹⁴

While Harrington and Bielby note that these tapes allow fans the pleasure of re-watching or re-capturing a previous favorite story, there is little discussion of the change in the viewing experience because of the change in narrative structure.

I must point out, however, that this new structure does not necessarily question the ideological content of the narrative, but may change some of the ideological implications that the traditional soap opera narrative structure has held in television studies. In her introduction to the second edition of *Loving with a Vengeance*, Modleski emphasizes that, “The fact that in much (not all) fan writing many of the ideologically troubling aspects of the source texts remain unquestioned and unchallenged is disregarded.”¹⁵ These new tapes do not take on the ideological content but rather play with the ideologies implied in the form. I will leave the content that these tapes still contain for separate consideration, which is outside the scope of this article.

Modleski argues that the reception of films and nighttime programs require a degree of concentration for comprehension that is unnecessary in the repetitious, interrupted world of the daytime soap, but there are obviously viewers who want to watch soap opera stories outside of this interrupted structure that was thought to address women’s lives so well.¹⁶ Not only have soap opera viewers’ lives and patterns of work changed drastically since Modleski first published her early work on soaps, but these fans have taken it upon themselves to recreate a structure which creates the kind of focused attention on their favorite story or characters that was denied them in the original broadcast format.

The compression of a particular storyline from a soap into one continuous viewing experience mirrors the classically structured narratives that Modleski cites in opposition to that of the soap opera structure: “[S]oap opera is opposed to the classic (male) film narrative, which with maximum action and minimum, always pertinent dialogue, speeds its way to the restoration of order.”¹⁷ These





fan videos expel all the extraneous narratives that do not affect their main focus (be it storyline or couple) and then tend toward this model of maximum action and minimum wasted time by not delving into other stories.¹⁸ The distracted viewer, whom the soaps were supposedly so well-suited for, is not the targeted viewer for these compilation tapes. The compilations upset the careful balance of soap's multiple storylines, which are specifically designed to satisfy different groups of viewers varying interest levels and to unfold at different rates so that each is in a varying degree of crisis or resolution, thus keeping viewers' interest level high day after day.¹⁹ These fans have distilled the soap text to a singular storyline that may have a different tone from the story in its original context, without other lighter/darker storylines for balance. This distillation also creates a much more rapid pace. So changed from their original narrative structure, these videos also require a completely different viewing style.

These videos are most definitely not made to be watched in bits and pieces. They indicate a high investment by both the viewer and the producer. The production of the tapes requires extensive watching and cataloguing of each and every scene of the couple or storyline. The viewer who purchases the tapes does so for the purpose of rewatching/watching these scenes specifically. Thus, a distracted viewing would be antithetical to their reason for buying the tapes in the first place.

Web sites offering these videos often indicate the huge amount of time and labor involved in making these tapes. These producers are intensely dedicated to creating a version of soaps in which they can focus on one singular storyline or another; clearly there is a desire for a format that the broadcast version is not giving its viewers. Included on the website where I acquired the *General Hospital* compilation were long descriptions of each DVD available; all of the DVDs on the site are advertised with a 6000-8000 word descriptive summary, usually scene- by-scene. The *General Hospital* compiler also has detailed listings as to how her tapes are created,

whether they are original edits from first-generation copies or are copied from other sources. She is very upfront about describing the quality of the edits that the customer might be ordering. I have not been able to determine exactly how many tapes she has available, but if it was a major storyline or couple on *GH*, she probably has it. This collector clearly takes her role in preserving these stories seriously and the desire from fans for these types of compilations is evident by her continued enterprise.

"Just the Juicy Bits": Fan Pleasure in This Condensed Structure

As an interesting analogy to these compilations, Modleski discusses a new series produced by Harlequin Publishing and Dark Horse Publishing to produce a Harlequin *manga*, closer to the explicitly pornographic *manga* known as *yaoi*, which Matt Thorn has discussed as "not fully developed stories" but "only the yummy parts." Modleski writes,

Certainly, paring the stories back to only the yummy parts and then adding a visual dimension changes the nature of the product significantly. Not only is the sex more prominent but elemental feelings of betrayal, revenge, loss and despair come more starkly to the fore, especially given the delicacy and pathos of the graphics.²⁰

It is interesting to try to think about these compilation tapes in these new terms. While not pornographic, they often feature just the scenes of a building romantic coupling. These new narratives embrace the detail of the story without the having to abide by the slow progression and delay in the broadcast narrative. These fans still desire the intimate or overtly romantic content of traditional daytime soaps, but seem to have more aggressive desire to consume these stories on their own terms in a more concentrated form with faster payoff. This "just the yummy parts" analogy seems to fit what

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these fans are seeking, and thus challenges the notion that waiting and interruption are always part of the essential pleasures of soaps. These compilations bring up alternatives to the traditional pleasures associated with soaps and, as such, should force us to re-examine earlier theories surrounding why fans continue to watch soaps.

Another set of compilation videos I acquired featuring the romantic pairing of the characters Rafe and Allison from the cancelled series *Port Charles* provide a good example of this condensed, yummy parts model. *Port Charles* was ABC's *General Hospital* spin off which ran from 1997-2003. The show was only a half an hour long and attempted to incorporate supernatural storylines and a thirteen-week, telenovela-like format in hopes of attracting new and younger viewers. The "Rali" (a fan acronym for Rafe and Allison) compilation I ordered consisted of three two-hour videotapes. The first tape follows Rafe, an angel sent back to earth, trying to reunite all the townspeople with their true loves, especially Allison and her long time boyfriend, Jamal. While trying to help the struggling couple, he inevitably falls in love with Allison, as does she with him. Allison fights her feelings, but Jamal breaks up with her and she finally admits her love for Rafe. The second tape begins with the consummation of their relationship. They make love in an abandoned barn and profess their feelings for each other. The consummation of any romantic relationship in a soap opera is a big event for fans that have been patiently following a burgeoning couple. Rali fans had waited through the six weeks worth of scenes compiled on the first tape and the scale of their love scenes matched the couple's high popularity with fans. The first twenty-four minutes of the second two-hour compilation tape is basically one long love scene. The two characters never leave the barn and are always in varying states of undress. Aside from a brief fantasy sequence, where they imagine themselves on a tropical beach, the characters are always snuggling under a blanket, kissing, or

declaring their love for one another. While their actual lovemaking scenes and nudity are tame enough to pass daytime censors, the length of all the scenes compressed on a compilation tape by far out lasts any love scenes from prime-time shows and even most feature films. Much in the way Modleski describes yaoi, by eliminating all the other storylines these compilations bring not only the sex, but the intense emphasis on feelings of love, lust, passion, etc... to the forefront. These compilations express fan desire to indulge in these drawn out intimate sequences and the emphasis on purely emotional rather than action based content. Again, the fan that creates or consumes these compilation tapes seems far removed from earlier theories of female soap fans who watched from a maternal or 'ideal mother' spectator position.

Rather than have their attentions divided between multiple storylines, fans enjoy the power of selection through these compilation videos. They can choose the individual storyline which suits them or which they particularly enjoyed the first time they watched. The choice of tapes from a particular soap or storyline reflects a fan's personal emotional investment or taste preferences, thus reflecting their own sense of self. Much of the work on soaps tends to treat different soaps and storylines as interchangeable. The structure and conventions of the genre often overshadow any narrative specificity: "The conventions of soap opera storytelling are so strong that we can hardly say that we are watching to see what will happen. Rather, we watch anticipating what we know will happen one again and to see how it will happen this time."²¹

The historical specificity of the certain stories or moments that viewers attach themselves to are not interchangeable with the repetition of familiar storylines or narrative tropes. While storylines may be very formulaic, their singularity means something to these fans. *General Hospital's* Luke and Laura fans would not necessarily be interested in *Days of Our Lives'* Bo and Hope, even if their love stories followed similar paths.²² There is something





that differentiates these stories for fans so much so that they seek out these compilation videos to revisit a particular storyline. With the production of these compilations fans do not have to settle for a similar storyline that may be broadcasting currently, but can actually revisit a past storyline in its entirety.

The ability to revisit past storylines is another element of fan pleasure that these compilation videos provide that was unavailable when soaps were only available to watch during their original broadcast. Daytime soap operas occupy a unique position in the television landscape in that they are one of the few genres which has not been available to fans in the form of reruns until very recently. For a genre that is so dependent on its own narrative history, the lack of reruns has made it impossible for fans to review that history, either for their own pleasure or to better understand a current narrative by tracing its origins. Jennifer Hayward discusses this problem of “serial ephemerality” in her examination of the serial form in both daily comic strips and soap operas:

The sheer volume of textual production virtually negates the possibility of re-experiencing earlier installments. Unless we save each day’s strip or videotape or buy one of the histories created and marketed as a solution to exactly this problem of serial ephemerality, there is no way to perform the kind of reality check we often run on novels, glancing back through the text to see what we have missed or forgotten.²³

These compilation videos serve as the commercial histories that are rarely available for soap operas, as opposed to the reruns or commercial DVDs available for most other narrative television programming. By acquiring these compilations, fans can exercise a kind of authority over a particular text that was previously unobtainable for soap fans. The fans can now own a physical copy of the text

rather than having to rely on their memories when watching or discussing a particular storyline or program. The existence of this material evidence can put soap fans in a position to judge current storylines and characters for narrative continuity. Because of the extreme length of the narrative and its inaccessibility to fans, soap opera producers have begun to rely on the impermanence of the text in order to revise the narrative history without fear of confusing most viewers.²⁴ It becomes much easier to bring a character back from the dead if there is no chance of viewers accidentally coming across his or her elaborate death scene airing in reruns. These compilation videos allow fans to function as a kind of historical watchdog, often becoming very vocal when writers and producers violate the narrative history too egregiously or without a plausible enough explanation. Possessing this material evidence can give a fan a sense of power that daytime fans are denied, in both their low cultural status as soap viewers and their inability to access the show in reruns. While fans don’t actually have any real power of a soap’s production, they can still find pleasure in gaining the status of “expert” on a particular storyline or show. Even if a fan’s power can only be wielded within a particular fan community or in conjunction with others in a fan campaign attempting to influence a show’s writers and producers, the possession of these compilation videos still allows him or her to occupy a position of authority that would be impossible without them.

The significance of fan authorship of soap opera compilation tapes might not be immediately obvious in comparison to other fan practices and productions. Though these videos don’t create alternate narratives or attempt to subvert the dominant reading of the content, the soap fans who produce these compilations express desires that have been consistently frustrated by soap opera’s low cultural status. While these fans still desire the intimate, emotional content of the soaps, they resist the interruption and waiting that they have had to endure in order to consume these narratives. These fans protest the notion that these stories don’t

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warrant the focused attention that is assumed during prime-time programming. Refusal of this constant interruption reflects the way these fans view their own daily lives and schedules, one that is not longer constantly interruptible and at the mercy of others' needs. Being able to revisit soap operas' past through these compilations also places value on stories that no one thought anyone would want to watch again,

much less be financially profitable in rerun form. By creating these compilation videos, soap opera fans protest the idea that these stories are all basically the same and are therefore disposable. These tapes allow soap opera fans to express the fact that not only are these stories still of value to them, but also that soap opera fans are still a valuable audience upon which television producers have failed to capitalize.

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Notes

1 These fan compilations are available on videocassettes or DVD and sometimes both depending on the fan and the extent of their archive/compilation production. I will often refer to "fan videos" throughout this article, but I use the term generically to refer to compilations that may exist on actual videotapes or on DVDs.

2 Louise Spense, *Watching Daytime Soap Operas: The Power of Pleasure* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2005), 92.

3 Tania Modleski, *Loving with a Vengeance: Mass-Produces Fantasies for Women*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2008), xvi.

4 Modleski, 80.

5 Modleski, 92.

6 Spense, 64.

7 Modleski, 93.

8 Jennifer Hayward, *Consuming Pleasures: Active Audiences and Serial Fictions from Dickens to Soap Opera* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 1997), 141.

9 Soap operas are one of the few television genres in which it is usually impossible to rewatch particular episodes in reruns. Until the recent creation of the SoapNet cable channel, soap opera reruns were virtually nonexistent.

10 I will not use any names or online identities/web addresses of the fans discussed here for both privacy and legal reasons.

11 This does not include the screen time that would be devoted to commercials during each original broadcast. The fan that creates the compilation would still have to review the original broadcasts of twenty-four hours to create the compilation tape, but the actual screen time for *General Hospital* would not equal the full twenty-four hours.

12 There are certainly both male and female soap fans who create and watch these compilation videos, but female viewers still make up the majority of daytime soap fans. The idea that soap fans are exclusively female is almost always assumed by both soap opera marketing and, unfortunately, by most academic work on soap operas as well.

13 Private correspondence.

14 C. Lee Harrington and Denise D. Bielby, *Soap Fans: Pursuing Pleasure and Making Meaning in Everyday Life*. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995), 27.

15 Modleski, xxix.

16 Modleski, 94.

17 Modleski, 91.

18 I do not include the idea of minimum dialogue, as scenes from any particular soap opera storyline still rely heavily on dialogue.

19 Hayward, 149.

20 Modleski, xxxi.

21 Spence, 77.

22 These two storylines/couples are actually vastly different.

23 Hayward, 135.

24 Hayward, 138.