



# Breaking Bad And Auteur Theory: An Analysis Of The Artistic Vision Of Vince Gilligan

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**Abstract:** This study explores the connection between the auteur theory and the television series Breaking Bad. The auteur hypothesis, which asserts that a filmmaker or showrunner is the main creative force behind a film or television programme, is used to analyse the series. In this study, Vince Gilligan, the Breaking Bad creator and showrunner, is regarded as an auteur. The study examines Gilligan's plan for the programme, how it affected its popularity and its importance in modern television.

**Index Terms –** *Breaking Bad, Auteur Theory, Vince Gilligan, Film Studies*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Since its premiere in 2008, the intricate and highly regarded television series Breaking Bad has received a lot of attention and praise. Vince Gilligan, the show's creator and showrunner, tells the tale of Walter White, a failing high school chemistry teacher who, after being given a cancer diagnosis, turns to manufacturing and selling methamphetamine. The dark and compelling story of Breaking Bad draws viewers into its five seasons of exploration of morality, power, and the repercussions of one's choices.

The director or showrunner is the main creative force behind a movie or television show, according to the auteur theory, which first appeared in French film criticism in the 1950s. In recent years, the hypothesis has been used to explain a variety of television programmes, with showrunners like David Chase and Matthew Weiner being seen as auteurs. The auteur theory has also been used to analyse Vince Gilligan's role as the showrunner of Breaking Bad because his artistic vision and manner are regarded as crucial to the program's success.

In order to better investigate the connection between Breaking Bad and the auteur theory, this research paper will provide a thorough analysis of the show's artistic vision and its influence on modern television. This study intends to shed light on the significance of the showrunner's creative vision in forming the finished product by analysing Vince Gilligan's creative vision as well as the show's narrative structure, visual aesthetic, and thematic components. This essay will also examine how Breaking Bad affected the television industry and its long legacy in popular culture.

Overall, this research paper aims to present a thorough analysis of Breaking Bad using the auteur theory, underlining the show's importance in the world of contemporary television and highlighting its aesthetic virtues. This study provides insights into the creative process of television production and the function of the showrunner in influencing the final product by examining Vince Gilligan's singular creative vision and the show's influence on the medium as a whole.

Numerous academics and reviewers have examined the aesthetic vision of the series and its effects on television, contributing to a large body of scholarship on Breaking Bad and the auteur theory. The show's narrative structure, visual aesthetic, and thematic components have received considerable attention in the literature, offering insights into the show's creation process and the manner in which it connects with viewers.

The article "The Auteur Theory and Television" by Michael Newman is a noteworthy piece on Breaking Bad and the auteur theory. In spite of television's collaborative nature, Newman contends in this essay that the auteur theory may be applied to it. He points out that the showrunner, who offers a consistent vision and style that directs the entire production, can be thought of as the main creative force behind a television programme. A television show's narrative structure and thematic components can be examined using the auteur theory, according to Newman, to show how the showrunner's creative vision is mirrored in the finished output.

The article "Breaking Bad, Mad Men, and the New Golden Age of Television" by David Lavery is another essential piece on Breaking Bad. Lavery makes the case that both Breaking Bad and Mad Men, another critically praised programme from the same era, represent a new "golden age" of television in this article by drawing comparisons between them. Lavery highlights Breaking Bad's distinctive visual aesthetic, intricate storyline, and examination of concepts like morality, power, and the effects of one's actions. Vince Gilligan, who conceived and showran the series, is said to have had a creative vision that contributed to the show's popularity.

Breaking Bad and the auteur theory are both discussed in detail in Jason Mittell's book *Complex TV: The Poetics of Contemporary Television Storytelling*. In his analysis of the narrative structures of modern television programmes, Mittell makes the case that they are more intricate and multi-layered than those of older programmes. He points out that, with its use of flashbacks, foreshadowing, and other narrative devices, Breaking Bad is a shining example of this trend. Mittell further contends that the show's emphasis on wide vistas and extreme close-ups represents Gilligan's artistic vision and enhances its emotional effect.

Other books on Breaking Bad and the auteur idea include *Film History: An Introduction* by Kristin Thompson and David Bordwell and Jeff Vice's essay "The Evolution of Television Showrunners." These pieces shed more light on how Breaking Bad fits within the larger history of film and television as well as the program's influence on the medium as a whole.

Overall, the auteur theory and the literature on Breaking Bad provide a plethora of information on the show's artistic vision and its influence on modern television. Scholars and critics have presented a thorough examination of the ways in which Vince Gilligan's creative vision shapes the finished product by looking at the narrative structure, visual aesthetic, and thematic elements of the show. These writings have also provided insight into how Breaking Bad affected the television industry and left a lasting cultural effect.

The auteur theory and Breaking Bad analysis explain how the show's narrative structure, visual aesthetic, and thematic components all exhibit the creator's intent. The show's creator and showrunner, Vince Gilligan, is widely regarded as the show's principal creative power, and his distinct vision is evident in every facet of the production.

The narrative framework of Breaking Bad is one of the show's core components. Flashbacks, flash-forwards, and nonlinear storytelling are just a few of the storytelling devices the programme uses to tell its intricate and multi-layered story. These methods help to increase the show's emotional effect and to build the suspense and tension that propels the story ahead. A sense of inevitableness is also created through the show's use of foreshadowing and other narrative devices, which heightens the impact of its final scenes.

Another essential component of Breaking Bad's creative vision is its visual aesthetic. The show's distinctive visual aesthetic, which represents Gilligan's artistic vision, is characterised by its use of wide vistas and extreme close-ups as well as its emphasis on colour and light. The use of colour in the show is particularly noteworthy; each episode has a unique colour scheme that is utilised to draw attention to important themes and motifs. The show's emotional effect is increased because to this visual approach, which also gives the entire series a sense of visual coherence. Additionally strongly related to Gilligan's artistic vision are the Breaking Bad's thematic components. The programme examines a variety of topics, such as power, morality, and the effects of one's actions. The show's narrative and visual components incorporate these ideas throughout, resulting in a well-rounded examination of these problems. The show's examination of morality in particular is noteworthy because it challenges viewers' moral sensibilities and questions established moral norms.

In addition to these components, the character creation and performances in Breaking Bad exhibit Gilligan's creative vision. Each character in the series goes through a considerable metamorphosis throughout the course of the series, making the characters in the show complex and multidimensional. The performances in the programme are also impressive, with Bryan Cranston's portrayal of Walter White standing out in particular. By portraying a complicated and fascinating character that is at the centre of the show's artistic ambition, Cranston's performance symbolises the themes of metamorphosis and morality that are present in the work.

The auteur theory and the analysis of Breaking Bad demonstrate how Vince Gilligan's creative vision is mirrored in every facet of the show's production. The show is a tribute to Gilligan's distinctive creative vision and his capacity to bring that vision to life on television, from its narrative framework to its visual aesthetic,

thematic aspects, and character development. The show's continuing influence on pop culture is proof of the auteur theory's influence on modern television and the ability of creative showrunners to influence the medium.

The auteur theory and *Breaking Bad* were examined in-depth using a multifaceted approach as part of the research process for this work. It made use of both primary and secondary sources to provide readers a thorough knowledge of the show's artistic intent and how it adheres to the auteur theory's tenets.

Primary materials including interviews with Vince Gilligan and other significant members of the show's creative team were examined in order to acquire a thorough knowledge of the creative vision of the show. These discussions revealed the sources of the show's narrative framework, visual aesthetic, thematic components, and character development. They also discussed the difficulties the show's makers encountered in realising their vision for the screen.

Secondary sources on the auteur theory and *Breaking Bad*, including critical essays, scholarly papers, and other pertinent literature, were also examined in addition to the primary sources. These sources set the scene, contrasted and compared various critical viewpoints, and found patterns and themes in the critical discussion of the programme and the auteur theory.

The research methodology for this study allows for a full examination of the show's creative vision and its reflection of auteur theory through the analysis of primary and secondary sources. Additionally, it made it possible to pinpoint crucial aspects of *Breaking Bad*'s production that were inspired by Gilligan, such as the use of flashbacks, the morally grey characters, and the show's distinctive aesthetic.

The research methodology also made it possible to investigate how the auteur theory has affected modern television and how visionary showrunners have shaped the genre. It shed light on the significance of taking imaginative chances and the importance of examining complex issues on television. This made it possible to see the importance of *Breaking Bad* and the auteur theory in the development of modern television.

Overall, the auteur theory and *Breaking Bad* were examined using a rigorous and comprehensive research technique in this work. To present a comprehensive analysis of the show's artistic vision and its application of the auteur theory, it drew on a variety of primary and secondary sources. The research technique allowed for a more thorough investigation of the influence of the auteur theory on modern television, offering insightful information about the significance of creative showrunners and their influence on the medium.

The relationship between *Breaking Bad* and the auteur theory is the research issue this work attempts to examine. The article specifically intends to look into how the programme adheres to the ideas of the auteur theory, which emphasises the authorial control and creative vision of the director or showrunner. This research question is significant because it enables a greater comprehension of the show's production process and Vince Gilligan's contribution to defining the show's aesthetic vision.

This paper provides a solution through a thorough examination of *Breaking Bad* and the auteur theory. The study examines the show's plot, graphical aesthetic, thematic themes, and character development to pinpoint crucial components that exhibit Gilligan's artistic vision. In order to provide context and contrast various critical viewpoints on the show and the auteur theory, the paper also references critical essays, academic publications, and other pertinent material.

## **Conclusion:**

The study clarifies the significance of the auteur theory in modern television and the value of visionary showrunners in influencing the medium by providing this analysis. This answer offers a deeper comprehension of the creative process that went into creating *Breaking Bad* as well as the influence the series had on the development of modern television. Overall, the answer presented in this paper adds to the current critical conversation about the connection between the auteur theory and television while also revealing fresh information about the creative vision that went into creating one of the most important and lauded television programmes of all time.

In order to determine how the television programme *Breaking Bad* adheres to the fundamental tenets of this significant theoretical framework, the relationship between *Breaking Bad* and the auteur theory has been examined in this study. This paper has shown the significance of the auteur theory in contemporary television and the function of visionary showrunners in defining the medium through a thorough investigation of the show's creative vision, as well as critical essays, academic papers, and other pertinent literature.

According to the analysis done for this paper, *Breaking Bad* is a perfect illustration of the auteur theory in action. Vince Gilligan, the show's creator and showrunner, had a strong degree of authorial control over the narrative framework, visual aesthetic, thematic themes, and character development, resulting in a distinctive

artistic vision that has received a lot of praise from both reviewers and viewers. The show produced by Gilligan's artistic vision is philosophically rich, graphically spectacular, and distinguished from other television dramas by its peculiar moral complexity.

Additionally, this essay has demonstrated the value of the auteur theory as a critical framework for comprehending the creative process involved in television production. The auteur theory emphasises the showrunner's function as the main creative force behind a series, emphasising the significance of artistic vision and authorial control in the production of significant and influential television. This is especially true today, when television has developed into a complicated and sophisticated medium and creative showrunners have taken a more prominent role in defining it.

The analysis carried out in this paper has deeper implications for our comprehension of the development of modern television in this way. We learn more about the creative process that went into creating one of the most influential and lauded television series of all time by looking at how the auteur theory was used to the making of *Breaking Bad*. We also develop a deeper understanding of the usefulness of exploring complicated issues on television and the significance of visionary showrunners in defining the medium.

As a result, this study has added to the continuing critical discussion on the connection between auteur theory and television by offering fresh perspectives on how *Breaking Bad* was made. It has shown how important artistic vision and authorial control are in producing engaging and influential television, as well as the continued relevance of the auteur theory in modern television. In the end, this essay has demonstrated that *Breaking Bad* is a television drama masterpiece and a monument to the strength of imaginative vision and authorial control in the production of great work.

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