

Breaking Bad and Cinematic Television



ANGELO RESTIVO

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With its twisty serialized plots, compelling antiheroes, and stylish production, *Breaking Bad* has become a signature series for a new golden age of television, in which some premium cable shows have acquired the cultural prestige usually reserved for the cinema. In *"Breaking Bad" and Cinematic Television* Angelo Restivo uses the series as a point of departure for theorizing a new aesthetics of television: one based on an understanding of the cinematic that is tethered to affect rather than to medium or prestige. Restivo outlines how *Breaking Bad* and other contemporary "cinematic" television series take advantage of the new possibilities of postnetwork TV to create an aesthetic that inspires new ways to think about how television engages with the everyday. By exploring how the show presents domestic spaces and modes of experience under neoliberal capitalism in ways that allegorize the perceived twenty-first-century failures of masculinity, family, and the American Dream, Restivo shows how the televisual cinematic has the potential to change the ways viewers relate to and interact with the world.

"Angelo Restivo's wonderful book brings a theoretical perspective to television studies in general and to contemporary serial television in particular that illuminates the aesthetic possibilities of the medium and its fundamental connections to neoliberalism and biopolitics. His timely, rigorous, and brilliant contribution will transform television studies."—AMY VILLAREJO, author of *Ethereal Queer: Television, Historicity, Desire*

"Angelo Restivo's engaging and lively analysis gestures beyond one television program, speaking to a broader set of concerns about television, aesthetics, and our shared experience of life. This lovely and perceptive study of *Breaking Bad*, the cinematic, and the entanglements of contemporary American life will invigorate film theory and make an important contribution to television studies."

—KARA KEELING, author of *The Witch's Flight: The Cinematic, the Black Femme, and the Image of Common Sense*

ANGELO RESTIVO is Associate Professor in the School of Film, Media, and Theatre at Georgia State University and author of *The Cinema of Economic Miracles: Visuality and Modernization in the Italian Art Film*, also published by Duke University Press.

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