

# Breaking bad analysis

[Literature](#), [Poem](#)



Vince Gilligan's 'Breaking Bad' is a TV series about Walter White, a chemistry teacher, who starts cooking Methamphetamine to provide money for his family. In an interview with The New York Times, creator Vince Gilligan said the larger lesson of the series is that "actions have consequences". He elaborated on the show's philosophy: "If religion is a reaction of man, and nothing more, it seems to me that it represents a human desire for wrongdoers to be punished. I hate the idea of Idi Amin living in Saudi Arabia for the last 25 years of his life.

That galls me to no end. I feel some sort of need for biblical atonement, or justice, or something. I like to believe there is some comeuppance, that karma kicks in at some point, even if it takes years or decades to happen. My girlfriend says this great thing that's become my philosophy as well. 'I want to believe there's a heaven. But I can't not believe there's a hell.' The overarching theme of 'Breaking Bad' is "actions have consequences". We are shown this theme through the clever employment of motifs such the damaged pink teddy bear, a reoccurring 8 symbol and

The damaged pink bear in the series symbolises "all the terrible grief that Walt has wrought upon his loved ones" and "the judgment of God". The Pink Bear is damaged as Walter inadvertently helps cause the mid-air collision of two airplanes which kills many innocent civilians. The pink teddy bear is then revealed to have fallen out of one of the planes and into the White family's pool. Vince Gilligan called the plane accident an attempt to visualize all the damage that Walt has caused because of his actions. A reoccurring symbol in the show is the number "8". 8 symbolizes eternity and self destruction.

This relates to Breaking Bad on many levels. First of all, the clearly marked 8 bruise on Jesse's face indicates self destruction. The first person he kills on this show, innocent Gale, was the eighth person on the show to die as a result of Walt and Jesse's partnership. The sideways eight in the sky can be argued to stand for infinity. In one scene; Jesse, Gus and Mike are heading to Mexico to give the cartel Walt's recipe. Thus, the drug trade is never ending. There will be rises and falls of drug lords, new entrants, and deaths but it will continue to thrive.

**Moral consequences** In an interview with The New York Times, creator Vince Gilligan said the larger lesson of the series is that "actions have consequences. He elaborated on the show's philosophy: If religion is a reaction of man, and nothing more, it seems to me that it represents a human desire for wrongdoers to be punished. I hate the idea of Idi Amin living in Saudi Arabia for the last 25 years of his life. That galls me to no end. I feel some sort of need for biblical atonement, or justice, or something.

I like to believe there is some comeuppance, that karma kicks in at some point, even if it takes years or decades to happen. My girlfriend says this great thing that's become my philosophy as well. 'I want to believe there's a heaven. But I can't not believe there's a hell.' In a piece examining the show in comparison to The Sopranos, Mad Men and The Wire, Chuck Klosterman said that Breaking Bad is "built on the uncomfortable premise that there's an irrefutable difference between what's right and what's wrong, and it's the only one where the characters have real control over how they choose to live.

Klosterman added that the central question of Breaking Bad is " What makes a man 'bad' — his actions, his motives, or his conscious decision to be a bad person? " Klosterman concluded that, in the world of Breaking Bad, " goodness and badness are simply complicated choices, no different than anything else. "[4] Ross Douthat of The New York Times, in a response to Klosterman's piece, compared Breaking Bad and The Sopranos, stating that both series are " morality plays" that are " both interested in moral agency".

Douthat went on to say that Walter White and Tony Soprano " represent mirror-image takes on the problem of evil, damnation and free will". Walter as a man who " deliberately abandons the light for the darkness" while Tony is " someone born and raised in darkness" who turns down " opportunity after opportunity to claw his way upward to the light. " Gilligan intimated he would inject undertones of black comedy into the fifth season. [32] [edit]Pink teddy bear The pink teddy bear as seen during the second season A recurring motif within the second season is the image of a damaged teddy bear and its missing eye.

The teddy bear first appears at the end of the music video " Fallacies" for Jesse's fake band, " TwaughtHammer", which was released as a webisode in February 2009 leading to the second season. The teddy bear can also be spotted on the mural on Jane's bedroom wall during the final episode of the second season, further connecting the crash to Jane. It is seen in flashforwards during four episodes, the titles of which, when put together in order, form the following sentence: " Seven Thirty-Seven down over ABQ". The flashforwards are shot in black-and-white, with the sole exception of the

pink teddy bear, which is an homage to the film *Schindler's List*, in which the color red is used to distinguish a little girl in a coat.

At the end of the season, Walter inadvertently helps cause the mid-air collision of two airplanes. The pink teddy bear is then revealed to have fallen out of one of the planes and into the White family's pool. Vince Gilligan called the plane accident an attempt to visualize "all the terrible grief that Walt has wrought upon his loved ones" and "the judgment of God. In the first episode of the third season, the NTSB fishes the teddy bear out of his pool and Walt later finds the missing eye in the pool filter. Television critic Myles McNutt has called it "a symbol of the damage [Walt] feels responsible for," and *The A. V. Club* commented that "the pink teddy bear continues to accuse." Fans and critics have compared the appearance of the teddy bear's face to the image of Gus Fring's face in the fourth season finale.

Walter White's name is reminiscent of the poet Walt Whitman, a fact that has played a major role as a plot device, used up to the mid-season finale of season five. The finale, "Gliding Over All", is titled after poem 271 of Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*, a book which is featured prominently in the series. In previous seasons, Gale Boetticher had given Walt a copy of the book, which has been seen many times since. Prior to giving this gift, Boetticher, an avid Whitman fan, recites "When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer", one of the poems found in *Leaves of Grass*. In the episode "Bullet Points", Hank finds the initials W.

W. written in Boetticher's notes, and jokes with Walt that they are his initials, although Walt quickly attributes them to Whitman. In the episode "Hazard Pay", Walt finds his copy of *Leaves of Grass* as he is packing up his bedroom,

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briefly smiles and leaves the book out to read. When Walt discovers the book, he is at an especially high time in his life, where he feels that things are coming together and he is succeeding in all ventures.

A poem in the book, " Song of Myself," is based on many of these same feelings, furthering the connection between Walt's life and Whitman's poetry. The book plays an especially large role in the episode " Gliding Over All", when Hank finds a copy of Leaves of Grass in Walt's bathroom and opens it to the cover page where he finds the inscription " To my other favorite W. W. It's an honour working with you. Fondly G. B. " Hank, who has been working to find out who Boetticher had been working with, attributes the initials to Walt and Boetticher. However, there was speculation that the G. B. could have stood for Walt's former coworker and love interest, Gretchen, as her last name has never been said in the show, though series creator Vince Gilligan has debunked this theory.