



# Neo-Baroque Aesthetics and Contemporary Entertainment (Media in Transition)

*Angela Ndalians*

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The artists of the seventeenth-century baroque period used spectacle to delight and astonish; contemporary entertainment media, according to Angela Ndalianis, are imbued with a neo-baroque aesthetic that is similarly spectacular. In *Neo-Baroque Aesthetics and Contemporary Entertainment*, she situates today's film, computer games, comic books, and theme-park attractions within an aesthetic-historical context and uses the baroque as a framework to enrich our understanding of contemporary entertainment media. The neo-baroque aesthetics that Ndalianis analyzes are not, she argues, a case of art history repeating or imitating itself; these forms have emerged as a result of recent technological and economic transformations. The neo-baroque forms combine sight and sound and text in ways that parallel such seventeenth-century baroque forms as magic lanterns, automata, painting, sculpture, and theater but use new technology to express the concerns of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century. Moving smoothly from century to century, comparing ceiling paintings to the computer game *Doom*, a Spiderman theme park adventure to the baroque version of multimedia known as the *Bel Composto*, and a Medici wedding to *Terminator 2:3D*, the book demonstrates the logic of media histories. Ndalianis focuses on the complex interrelationships among entertainment media and presents a rigorous cross-genre, cross-historical analysis of media aesthetics.

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