

Consider David Foster Wallace Critical Essays

Asked in 2006 about the philosophical nature of his fiction, the late American writer David Foster Wallace replied, "If some people read my fiction and see it as fundamentally about philosophical ideas, what it probably means is that these are pieces where the characters are not as alive and interesting as I meant them to be." *Gesturing Toward Reality* looks into this quality of Wallace's work—when the writer dons the philosopher's cap—and sees something else. With essays offering a careful perusal of Wallace's extensive and heavily annotated self-help library, re-considerations of Wittgenstein's influence on his fiction, and serious explorations into the moral and spiritual landscape where Wallace lived and wrote, this collection offers a perspective on Wallace that even he was not always ready to see. Since so much has been said in specifically literary circles about Wallace's philosophical acumen, it seems natural to have those with an interest in both philosophy and Wallace's writing address how these two areas come together.

In this exuberantly praised book – a collection of seven pieces on subjects ranging from television to tennis, from the Illinois State Fair to the films of David Lynch, from postmodern literary theory to the supposed fun of traveling aboard a Caribbean luxury cruiseliner – David Foster Wallace brings to nonfiction the same curiosity, hilarity, and exhilarating verbal facility that has delighted readers of his fiction, including the bestselling *Infinite Jest*.

Literature has always recorded a history of patriarchy, sexual violence, and resistance. Academics have been using literature to expose and critique this violence and domination for half a century. But the continued potency of #MeToo after its 2017 explosion adds new urgency and wider awareness about these issues, while revealing new ways in which rape culture shapes our everyday lives. This intersectional guide helps readers, students, teachers, and scholars face and challenge our culture of sexual violence by confronting it through the study of literature. #MeToo and *Literary Studies* gathers essays on literature from Ovid to Carmen Maria Machado, by academics working across the United States and around the world, who offer clear ways of using our reading, teaching, and critical practices to address rape culture and sexual violence. It also examines the promise and limitations of the #MeToo movement itself, speaking to the productive use of social media as well as to the voices that the movement has so far muted. In uniting diverse voices to enable the #MeToo movement to reshape literary studies, this book is also committed to the idea that the way we read and write about literature can make real change in the world.

In this rare peak into the personal life of the author of numerous bestselling novels, gain an understanding of David Foster Wallace and how he became the man that he was. Only once did David Foster Wallace give a public talk on his views on life, during a commencement address given in 2005 at Kenyon College. The speech is reprinted for the first time in book form in *This is Water*. How does one keep from going through their comfortable, prosperous adult life unconsciously? How do we get ourselves out of the foreground of our thoughts and achieve compassion? The speech captures Wallace's electric intellect as well as his grace in attention to others. After his death, it became a treasured piece of writing reprinted in *The Wall Street Journal* and the *London Times*, commented on endlessly in blogs, and emailed from friend to friend. Writing with his one-of-a-kind blend of causal humor, exacting intellect, and practical philosophy, David Foster Wallace probes the challenges of daily living and offers advice that renews us with every reading.

A Novel (Penguin Orange Collection)

Postirony

Reading and Distraction in the Twenty-First Century

Essays on Faith and Fiction

Depression and Dysphoria in the Fiction of David Foster Wallace

Consider David Foster Wallace

Print Purchase Includes Free Online Access

In Literature and the Encounter with Immanence Brynнар Swenson collects nine original essays that approach the relationship between literature and immanence through methodologies grounded in the philosophy of Spinoza.

David Foster Wallace's Toxic Sexuality: Hideousness, Neoliberalism, Spermatics is the first full-length study of perhaps the most controversial aspect of Wallace's work - male sexuality. Departing from biographical accounts of Wallace's troubled relationship to sex, the book offers new and engaging close readings of this vexed topic in both his fiction and non-fiction. Wallace consistently returns to images of sexual toxicity across his career to argue that, when it comes to sex, men are immutably hideous. He makes this argument by drawing on a variety of neoliberal logics and spermatic metaphors, which in their appeal to apparently neutral economic processes and natural bodily facts, forestall the possibility that men can change. The book therefore provides a revisionist account of Wallace's attitudes towards capitalism, as well as a critical dissection of his approach to masculinity and sexuality. In doing so, David Foster Wallace's **Toxic Sexuality** shows how Wallace can be considered a neoliberal writer, whose commitment to furthering male sexual toxicity is a disturbing but undeniable part of his literary project.

This is part of a new series of guides to contemporary novels. The aim of the series is to give readers accessible and informative introductions to some of the most popular, most acclaimed and most influential novels of recent years - from 'The Remains of the Day' to 'White Teeth'. A team of contemporary fiction scholars from both sides of the Atlantic has been assembled to provide a thorough and readable analysis of each of the novels in question.

In David Foster Wallace: Fiction and Form, David Hering analyses the structures of David Foster Wallace's fiction, from his debut The Broom of the System to his final unfinished novel The Pale King. Incorporating extensive analysis of Wallace's drafts, notes and letters, and taking account of the rapidly expanding field of Wallace scholarship, this book argues that the form of Wallace's fiction is always inextricably bound up within an ongoing conflict between the monologic and the dialogic, one strongly connected with Wallace's sense of his own authorial presence and identity in the work. Hering suggests that this conflict occurs at the level of both subject and composition, analysing the importance of a number of provocative structural and critical contexts - ghostliness, institutionality, reflection - to the fiction while describing how this argument is also visible within the development of Wallace's manuscripts, comparing early drafts with published material to offer a career-long framework of the construction of Wallace's fiction. The final chapter offers an unprecedentedly detailed analysis of the troubled, decade-long construction of the work that became The Pale King.

Fate, Time, and Language

David Foster Wallace's Toxic Sexuality

Consider the Lobster

Approaches to Teaching the Works of David Foster Wallace

Both Flesh and Not

Essays

Gesturing Toward Reality: David Foster Wallace and Philosophy

The agents at the IRS Regional Examination Center in Peoria, Illinois, appear ordinary enough to newly arrived trainee David Foster Wallace. But as he immerses himself in a routine so tedious and repetitive that new employees receive boredom-survival training, he learns of the extraordinary variety of personalities drawn to this strange calling. And he has arrived at a moment when forces within the IRS are plotting to eliminate even what little humanity and dignity the work still has. The Pale King remained unfinished at the time of David Foster Wallace's death, but it is a deeply compelling and satisfying novel, hilarious and fearless and as original as anything Wallace ever undertook. It grapples directly with ultimate questions—questions of life's meaning and of the value of work and society—through characters imagined with the interior force and generosity that were Wallace's unique gifts. Along the way it suggests a new idea of heroism and commands infinite respect for one of the most daring writers of our time.

Depression and Dysphoria in the Fiction of David Foster Wallace is the first full-length study of this critically overlooked theme, addressing a major gap in Wallace studies. Wallace has long been recognised as a 'depression laureate' inheriting a mantle previously held by Sylvia Plath due to the frequent and remarkable depictions of depressed characters in his fiction. However, this book resists taking Wallace's fiction at face value and instead situates close reading of his complex fictions in theoretical dialogue both with philosophical and theoretical texts and with contemporary authors and infl uences. This book explores Wallace's complex engagement with philosophical and medical ideas of emotional suffering and demonstrates how this evolves over his career. The shifts in Wallace's thematic focus on various forms of dysphoria, including heartache, loneliness, boredom, and anxiety, as well as depression, correspond to an increasingly pessimistic philosophy underlying his fiction.

David Foster Wallace is invariably seen as an emphatically American figure. Lucas Thompson challenges this consensus, arguing that Wallace's investments in various international literary traditions are central to both his artistic practice and his critique of US culture. Thompson shows how, time and again, Wallace's fiction draws on a diverse range of global texts, appropriating various forms of world literature in the attempt to craft fiction that critiques US culture from oblique and unexpected vantage points. Using a wide range of comparative case studies, and drawing on extensive archival research, Global Wallace reveals David Foster Wallace's substantial debts to such unexpected figures as Jamaica Kincaid, Julio Cortázar, Jean Rhys, Octavio Paz, Leo Tolstoy, Zbigniew Herbert, and Albert Camus, among many others. It also offers a more comprehensive account of the key influences that Wallace scholars have already perceived, such as Fyodor Dostoevsky, Franz Kafka, and Manuel Puig. By reassessing Wallace's body of work in relation to five broadly construed geographic territories -- Latin America, Russia, Eastern Europe, France, and Africa -- the book reveals the mechanisms with which Wallace played particular literary traditions off one another, showing how he appropriated vastly different global texts within his own fiction. By expanding the geographic coordinates of Wallace's work in this way, Global Wallace reconceptualizes contemporary American fiction, as being embedded within a global exchange of texts and ideas.

In the years since his suicide, scholars have explored David Foster Wallace's writing in transdisciplinary ways. This is the first book of its kind to discuss how Wallace understood and wrote about religion. At present, the scholarly community is sharply divided on how best to read Wallace on religious questions. Some interpret him to be a Nietzschean nihilist, while others see in him a profoundly spiritual, even mystical thinker. Some read Wallace as a Buddhist thinker, and others as a Christian existentialist. Involved at every level of this discussion are Wallace's experiences in Twelve Step recovery programs, according to which only a higher power can help one remove unwanted defects of character. The multifarious essays in this volume by literature, religion, and philosophy scholars in the Wallace community delve into Wallace's life and writings to advance the conversation about Wallace and religion. While they may disagree with one another in substantial ways, the contributors argue that Wallace was not only deliberate in his writings on religious themes, but also displayed an impressive level of theological nuance.

Contemporary Fictions of Attention

#MeToo and Literary Studies

Cool Characters

Nature and Technology in American Culture

Infinite Jest

Critical Essays

David Foster Wallace's Balancing Books

David Foster Wallace's works engage with his literary moment--roughly summarized as postmodernism--and with the author's historical context. From his famously complex fiction to essays critical of American culture, Wallace's works have at their core ess concerns such as self-understanding, connecting with others, ethical behavior, and finding meaning. The essays in this volume suggest ways to elucidate Wallace's philosophical and literary preoccupations for today's students, who continue to contend with personal and political, through reading literature. Part 1, "Materials," offers guidance on biographical, contextual, and archival sources and critical responses to Wallace's writing. The essays in part 2, "Approaches," discuss teaching key works and genres in settings, first-year undergraduate writing classes, American literature surveys, seminars on Wallace, and world literature courses. They examine Wallace's social and philosophical contexts and contributions, treating topics such as gender, literary ethics, and writing programs.

Though David Foster Wallace is well known for declaring that "Fiction's about what it is to be a fucking human being," what he actually meant by the term "human being" has been quite forgotten. It is a truism in Wallace studies that Wallace was a posthuman theoretically sophisticated to write about characters as having some kind of essential interior self or soul. Though the contemporary, posthuman model of the embodied brain is central to Wallace's work, so is his critique of that model: the soul is as vital a fiction as the bodies in which his souls are housed. Drawing on Wallace's reading in the science and philosophy of mind, this book gives a rigorous account of Wallace's dualism, and of his humanistic engagement with key postmodern concerns: authorship; t interiority; madness and mind doctors; and free will. If Wallace's fiction is about what it is to be a human being, this book is about the human 'I' at the heart of Wallace's work.

A compelling, comprehensive, and substantive introduction to the work of David Foster Wallace.

Lee Konstantinou examines irony in American literary and political life, showing how it migrated from the countercultural margins of the 1950s to the 1980s mainstream. Along the way, irony was absorbed into postmodern theory and ultimately become a tool who have moved beyond its limitations with a practice of "postirony."

David Foster Wallace's *Infinite Jest*

Language, Identity, and Resistance

This Is Water

Reading, Writing, and Teaching about Sexual Violence and Rape Culture

And Other Essays

Empathy and Irony in David Foster Wallace's *Infinite Jest*

Rereading the Machine in the Garden

Since the start of the financial crisis in 2008, the notion that capitalism has become too abstract for all but the most rarefied specialists to understand has been widely presupposed. Yet even in academic circles, the question of abstraction itself — of what exactly abstraction is, and does, under financialisation — seems to have gone largely unexplored — or has it? By putting the question of abstraction centre stage, *How Abstract Is It?* Thinking Capital Now offers an indispensable counterpoint to the "economic turn" in the humanities, bringing together leading literary and cultural critics in order to propose that we may know far more about capital's myriad abstractions than we typically think we do. Through in-depth engagement with classic and cutting-edge theorists, agile analyses of recent Hollywood films, groundbreaking readings of David Foster Wallace's sprawling, unfinished novel, *The Pale King*, and even original poems, the contributors here suggest that the machinations and costs of finance — as well as alternatives to it — may already be hiding in plain sight. This book was originally published as a special issue of *Textual Practice*.

"A critical overview of the writing of David Foster Wallace, taking his persistent interests in philosophy, language and plurality as points of departure"--

What is 'postirony'? Foremost, it is a response to the ironic zeitgeist. Moreover, it is the key to understanding a specific form of literature. The contemporary reader is familiar with and - unfortunately - used to postmodernism's ironic, self-reflexive metafiction. Authors like David Foster Wallace and Dave Eggers chose a different path: Despite the reign of contemporary irony, they strive to reach the reader on a level beyond, cognitively as well as emotionally - they claim to be sincere and true. Focusing largely on nonfiction by said authors, Lukas Hoffmann explores the means the texts use to achieve something new - namely, a new form of sincerity.

Marshall Boswell examines the four major works of fiction David Foster Wallace has produced thus far: the novels *The Broom of the System* and *Infinite Jest* and the story collections *Girl with Curious Hair* and *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men*.

Fictions of Value

New Essays on the Novels

David Foster Wallace and the Body

How Abstract Is It? Thinking Capital Now

The Pale King

Wallace's Dialects

Cognition, Consciousness, and Dualism in David Foster Wallace's Fiction

In recent years, the American fiction writer David Foster Wallace has been treated as a symbol, as an icon, and even a film character. Ordinary Unhappiness returns us to the reason we all know about him in the first place: his fiction. By closely examining Infinite Jest, Brief Interviews with Hideous Men, and The Pale King, Jon Baskin points readers to the work at the center of Wallace's oeuvre and places that writing in conversation with a philosophical tradition that includes Wittgenstein, Kierkegaard, and Cavell, among others. What emerges is a Wallace who not only speaks to our postmodern addictions in the age of mass entertainment and McDonald's but who seeks to address a quiet desperation at the heart of our modern lives. Freud said that the job of the therapeutic process was to turn "hysterical misery into ordinary unhappiness." This book makes a case for how Wallace achieved this in his fiction.

Do lobsters feel pain? Did Franz Kafka have a funny bone? What is John Updike's deal, anyway? And what happens when adult video starlets meet their fans in person? David Foster Wallace answers these questions and more in essays that are also enthralling narrative adventures. Whether covering the three-ring circus of John McCain's 2000 presidential race, plunging into the wars between dictionary writers, or confronting the World's Largest Lobster Cooker at the annual Maine Lobster Festival, Wallace projects a quality of thought that is uniquely his and a voice as powerful and distinct as any in American letters.

Criticism of the work of David Foster Wallace has tended to be atomistic, focusing on a single aspect of individual works. A Companion to the Work of David Foster Wallace is designed as a professional study of all of Wallace's creative work. This volume includes both thematic essays and focused examinations of each of his major works of fiction.

From Tristram Shandy to Fredric Jameson, Consider David Foster Wallace blazes a trail into the new territory of David Foster Wallace studies. Greg Carlisle, author of the landmark Wallace study Elegant Complexity, provides an introduction that sets the scene and speculates on the future of Wallace studies. Editor David Hering provides a provocative look at the triangular symbols in Infinite Jest. Adam Kelly explores the intriguing question of why Wallace is considered to be at the forefront of a new sincerity in American fiction. Thomas Tracey discusses trauma in Oblivion. Gregory Phipps examines Infinite Jest's John "No Relation" Wayne and the concept of the ideal athlete. Daniel Turnbull compares Wallace's Kenyon College commencement address to the ethics of Iris Murdoch. These 17 essays stem from the first ever academic conference devoted to the work of David Foster Wallace. Held in Liverpool, England, in 2009, the conference sparked a worldwide discussion of the place of Wallace's work in academia and popular culture. Essential for all Wallace scholars, fans of Wallace's fiction and nonfiction will also find the collection full of insights that span Wallace's career. Yes, there are footnotes.

A Reader's Guide

A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again

Wallace and I

A Companion to David Foster Wallace Studies

David Foster Wallace and "The Long Thing"

David Foster Wallace and World Literature

Hideousness, Neoliberalism, Spermatics

***Infinite Jest* has been hailed as one the great modern American novels and its author, David Foster Wallace, who committed suicide in 2008, as one of the most influential and innovative authors of the past 20 years.**

Don DeLillo called Infinite Jest* a "three-stage rocket to the future," a work "equal to the huge, babbling spin-out sweep of contemporary life," while *Time Magazine* included *Infinite Jest* on its list of 100 Greatest Novels published between 1923-2006. *David Foster Wallace's Infinite Jest: A Reader's Guide* was the first book to be published on the novel and is a key reference for those who wish to explore further. *Infinite Jest* has become an exemplar for difficulty in contemporary Fiction-its 1,079 pages full of verbal invention, oblique narration, and a scattered, nonlinear, chronology. In this comprehensively revised second edition, *Burn maps Wallace's influence on contemporary American fiction, outlines Wallace's poetics, and provides a full-length study of the novel, drawing out the most important themes and ideas, before surveying Wallace's post-Infinite Jest output, including The Pale King.

Part of the Penguin Orange Collection, a limited-run series of twelve influential and beloved American classics in a bold series design offering a modern take on the iconic Penguin paperback Winner of the 2016 AIGA + Design Observer 50 Books | 50 Covers competition For the seventieth anniversary of Penguin Classics, the Penguin Orange Collection celebrates the heritage of Penguin's iconic book design with twelve influential American literary classics representing the breadth and diversity of the Penguin Classics library. These collectible editions are dressed in the iconic orange and white tri-band cover design, first created in 1935, while

french flaps, high-quality paper, and striking cover illustrations provide the cutting-edge design treatment that is the signature of Penguin Classics Deluxe Editions today. The Broom of the System The “dazzling, exhilarating” (*San Francisco Chronicle*) debut novel from one of the most groundbreaking writers of his generation, *The Broom of the System* is an outlandishly funny and fiercely intelligent exploration of the paradoxes of language, storytelling, and reality.

Considered by many to be the greatest writer of his generation, David Foster Wallace was at the height of his creative powers when he committed suicide in 2008. In a sweeping portrait of Wallace’s writing and thought and as a measure of his importance in literary history, *The Legacy of David Foster Wallace* gathers cutting-edge, field-defining scholarship by critics alongside remembrances by many of his writer friends, who include some of the world’s most influential authors. In this elegant volume, literary critics scrutinize the existing Wallace scholarship and at the same time pioneer new ways of understanding Wallace’s fiction and journalism. In critical essays exploring a variety of topics—including Wallace’s relationship to American literary history, his place in literary journalism, his complicated relationship to his postmodernist predecessors, the formal difficulties of his 1996 magnum opus *Infinite Jest*, his environmental imagination, and the “social life” of his fiction and nonfiction—contributors plumb sources as diverse as Amazon.com reader recommendations, professional book reviews, the 2009 *Infinite Summer* project, and the David Foster Wallace archive at the University of Texas’s Harry Ransom Center. The creative writers—including Don DeLillo, Jonathan Franzen, George Saunders, Rick Moody, Dave Eggers, and David Lipsky, and Wallace’s Little, Brown editor, Michael Pietsch—reflect on the person behind the volumes of fiction and nonfiction created during the author’s too-short life. All of the essays, critical and creative alike, are written in an accessible style that does not presume any background in Wallace criticism. Whether the reader is an expert in all things David Foster Wallace, a casual fan of his fiction and nonfiction, or completely new to Wallace, *The Legacy of David Foster Wallace* will reveal the power and innovation that defined his contribution to literary life and to self-understanding. This illuminating volume is destined to shape our understanding of Wallace, his writing, and his place in history.

Brilliant, dazzling, never-before-collected nonfiction writings by "one of America's most daring and talented writers" (*Los Angeles Times Book Review*): Both *Flesh and Not* gathers fifteen of Wallace's seminal essays, all published in book form for the first time. Never has Wallace's seemingly endless curiosity been more evident than in this compilation of work spanning nearly 20 years of writing. Here, Wallace turns his critical eye with equal enthusiasm toward Roger Federer and Jorge Luis Borges; *Terminator 2* and *The Best of the Prose Poem*; the nature of being a fiction writer and the quandary of defining the essay; the best underappreciated novels and the English language's most irksome misused words; and much more. Both *Flesh and Not* restores Wallace's essays as originally written, and it includes a selection from his personal vocabulary list, an assembly of unusual words and definitions.

Understanding David Foster Wallace

Ordinary Unhappiness

Essays and Arguments

David Foster Wallace: Fiction and Form

Some Thoughts, Delivered on a Significant Occasion, about Living a Compassionate Life

Writing about Time

The Unspeakable Failures of David Foster Wallace

What do we value? Why do we value it? And in a neoliberal age, can morality ever displace money as the primary means of defining value? These are the questions that drove David Foster Wallace, a writer widely credited with changing the face of contemporary fiction and moving it beyond an emotionless postmodern irony. Jeffrey Severs argues in David Foster Wallace's *Balancing Books* that Wallace was also deeply engaged with the social, political, and economic issues of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. A rebellious economic thinker, Wallace satirized the deforming effects of money, questioned the logic of the monetary system, and saw the world through the lens of value's many hidden and untapped meanings. In original readings of all of Wallace's fiction, from *The Broom of the System* and *Infinite Jest* to his story collections and *The Pale King*, Severs reveals Wallace to be a thoroughly political writer whose works provide an often surreal history of financial crises and economic policies. As Severs demonstrates, the concept of value occupied the intersection of Wallace's major interests: economics, work, metaphysics, mathematics, and morality. Severs ranges from the Great Depression and the New Deal to the realms of finance, insurance, and taxation to detail Wallace's quest for balance and grace in a world of excess and entropy. Wallace showed characters struggling to place two feet on the ground and restlessly sought to "balance the books" of a chaotic culture. Explaining why Wallace's work has galvanized a new phase in contemporary global literature, Severs draws connections to key Wallace forerunners Don DeLillo, Thomas Pynchon, and William Gaddis, as well as his successors—including Dave Eggers, Teddy Wayne, Jonathan Lethem, and Zadie Smith—interpreting Wallace's legacy in terms of finance, the gift, and office life.

Presents David Foster Wallace critiques philosopher Richard Taylor's work implying that humans have no control over the future and includes essays linking Wallace's critique with his later works of fiction.

Author's abstract: Critical considerations of David Foster Wallace's work have tended, on the whole, to use the framework that the author himself established in his essay "E Unibus Pluram" and in his interview with Larry McCaffery. Following his own lead, the critical consensus is that Wallace succeeds in overcoming the limits of postmodern irony. If we examine the formal trappings of his writing, however, we find that the critical assertion that Wallace manages to transcend the paralytic irony of his postmodern predecessors is made in the face of his frequent employment of postmodern techniques and devices. Thus, there arises a contradiction between Wallace's stated aims that critics have largely endorsed and his clear stylistic debt to the very authors against whom he is supposedly rebelling. This critical consensus raises the question of how these distinctly anti-postmodern themes can be treated with identifiably postmodern literary techniques. The resolution to this apparent contradiction lies in the ends to which Wallace puts these postmodern means. Although Wallace's fiction shares many characteristics with much of postmodern literature, he employs many of those same techniques to achieve a distinctly anti-postmodern goal: the praxis of a literary ethic that revolves around narrative empathy, both the textual empathy that the characters have for each other and the metatextual empathy that the reader has for the characters.

The volume reexamines the trope of the intrusive machine and the regenerative pastoral garden, laid out fifty years ago by Leo Marx in *The Machine in the Garden*, one of the founding texts of American Studies. Contributions explore the lasting influence of the trope in American culture and the arts, rereading it as a dialectics where nature is as much technologized as technology is naturalized. They trace this dialectic trope in filmic and literary representations of industrial, bureaucratic, and digital gardens; they explore its function in the aftermath of the civil war, the rural electrification during the New Deal, in landscape art, and in ethnic literatures; and they discuss the historical premises and lasting influence of Leo Marx's seminal study.

David Foster Wallace

Literature and the Encounter with Immanence

"Goo-prone and Generally Pathetic"

Essays on American Literature

The Cambridge Companion to David Foster Wallace

The Broom of the System

David Foster Wallace and Religion

Of the twelve books David Foster Wallace published both during his lifetime and posthumously, only three were novels. Nevertheless, Wallace always thought of himself primarily as a novelist. From his college years at Amherst, when he wrote his first novel as part of a creative honors thesis, to his final days, Wallace was buried in a novel project, which he often referred to as "the Long Thing."

Meanwhile, the short stories and journalistic assignments he worked on during those years he characterized as "playing hooky from a certain Larger Thing." Wallace was also a specific kind of novelist, devoted to producing a specific kind of novel, namely the omnivorous, culture-consuming "encyclopedic" novel, as described in 1976 by Edward Mendelson in a ground-breaking essay on Thomas Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow*. David Foster Wallace and "The Long Thing" is a state-of-the-art guide through Wallace's three major works, including the generation-defining *Infinite Jest*. These essays provide fresh new readings of each of Wallace's novels as well as thematic essays that trace out patterns and connections across the three works. Most importantly, the collection includes six chapters on Wallace's unfinished novel, *The Pale King*, which will prove to be foundational for future scholars of this important text.

With the supposed shortening of our attention spans, what future is there for fiction in the age of the internet? *Contemporary Fictions of Attention* rejects this discourse of distraction-crisis which suggests that the future of reading is in peril, and instead finds that contemporary writers construct 'fictions of attention' that find some value in states or moments of inattention. Through discussion of work by a diverse selection of writers, including Joshua Cohen, Ben Lerner, Tom McCarthy, Ali Smith, Zadie Smith, and David Foster Wallace, this book identifies how fiction prompts readers to become peripherally aware of their own attention. *Contemporary Fictions of Attention* locates a common interest in attention within 21st-century fiction and connects this interest to a series of debates surrounding ethics, temporality, the everyday, boredom, work, and self-discipline in contemporary culture.

Many of the finest critics working in American literature explore the representation of time from colonial times to the present.

Only once did David Foster Wallace give a public talk on his views on life, during a commencement address given in 2005 at Kenyon College. The speech is reprinted for the first time in book form in *THIS IS WATER*. How does one keep from going through their comfortable, prosperous adult life unconsciously? How do we get ourselves out of the foreground of our thoughts and achieve compassion? The speech captures Wallace's electric intellect as well as his grace in attention to others. After his death, it became a treasured piece of writing reprinted in *The Wall Street Journal* and the *London Times*, commented on endlessly in blogs, and emailed from friend to friend. Writing with his one-of-a-kind blend of causal humor, exacting intellect, and practical philosophy, David Foster Wallace probes the challenges of daily living and offers advice that renews us with every reading.

An Essay on Free Will

The Legacy of David Foster Wallace

The Nonfictional Literature of David Foster Wallace and Dave Eggers

Global Wallace

The Therapeutic Fiction of David Foster Wallace

A gargantuan, mind-altering comedy about the Pursuit of Happiness in America Set in an addicts' halfway house and a tennis academy, and featuring the most endearingly screwed-up family to come along in recent fiction, *Infinite Jest* explores essential questions about what entertainment is and why it has come to so dominate our lives; about how our desire for entertainment affects our need to connect with other people; and about what the pleasures we choose say about who we are. Equal parts philosophical quest and screwball comedy, *Infinite Jest* bends every rule of fiction without sacrificing for a moment its own entertainment value. It is an exuberant, uniquely American exploration of the passions that make us human - and one of those rare books that renew the idea of what a novel can do. "The next step in fiction...Egdy, accurate, and darkly witty...Think Beckett, think Pynchon, think Gaddis. Think." --Sven Birkerts, *The Atlantic*

David Foster Wallace and the Body is the first full-length study to focus on Wallace's career-long fascination with the human body and the textual representation of the body. The book provides engaging, accessible close readings that highlight the importance of the overlooked, and yet central theme of all of this major American author's works: having a body. Wallace repeatedly made clear that good fiction is about what it means to be a 'human being'. A large part of what that means is having a body, and being conscious of the conflicts that arise, morally and physically, as a result; a fact with which, as Wallace forcefully and convincingly argues, we all desire 'to be reconciled'. Given the ubiquity of the themes of embodiment in Wallace's work, this study is an important addition to an expanding field. The book also opens up the themes addressed to interrogate aspects of contemporary literature, culture, and society more generally, placing Wallace's works in the history of literary and philosophical engagements with the brute fact of embodiment.

American novelist, essayist, and short story writer David Foster Wallace was known for his experimental writing style influenced by contemporary American culture. Essays from his most noted works, including his critically acclaimed novel, *Infinite Jest*, s

Mary Shapiro explores the use of regional and ethnic dialects in the works of David Foster Wallace, not just as a device used to add realism to dialogue, but as a vehicle for important social commentary about the role language plays in our daily lives, how we express personal identity, and how we navigate social relationships. Wallace's Dialects straddles the fields of linguistic criticism and folk linguistics, considering which linguistic variables of Jewish-American English, African-American English, Midwestern, Southern, and Boston regional dialects were salient enough for Wallace to represent, and how he showed the intersectionality of these with gender and social class. Wallace's own use of language is examined with respect to how it encodes his identity as a white, male, economically privileged Midwesterner, while also foregrounding characteristic and distinctive idiolect features that allowed him to connect to readers across implied social boundaries.