

Elegant Complexity A Study Of David Foster Wallaces Infinite Jest

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The Social Lives of Books - Edward Frederick Finn 2011

This project explores how changing models of literary production are blurring or erasing the divisions between authors, critics and readers. Millions of cultural consumers are participating in previously closed literary conversations and expressing forms of mass distinction through their purchases and reviews of books. These traces of popular reading choices constitute a fresh perspective on elusive audience reactions to literature and reveal evolving networks of conversation. Employing network analysis methodologies and 'distant reading' of book reviews, recommendations and other digital traces of cultural distinction, I develop a new model for literary culture in America today. Through readings of the fiction and reception of Thomas Pynchon, Toni Morrison, David Foster Wallace and Junot Díaz, this model outlines the fundamental requirements for contemporary literary fame. My introduction outlines methodological tools I developed and situates them in the critical traditions of literary reception, cultural sociology and media theory before describing the digital ecologies that have emerged around literature online and their value. Chapter 1 explores the nature of literary fame through a case study of Thomas Pynchon, whose carefully guarded anonymity and ironic distance from capitalism are reflected in the networks his readers construct around his long, challenging books. In stark contrast, Toni Morrison, the subject of Chapter 2, has succeeded critically and commercially, tirelessly seeking out readers to form literary communities around her writing, most prominently through her collaboration with Oprah's Book Club. Chapter 3 considers David Foster Wallace and Junot Díaz and sets out a model for contemporary literary culture: a reading society that demands new forms of authorial reflexivity to mirror the collaborative, iterative nature of digital literary conversations. I conclude with a brief consideration of the exciting prospects and challenges for fiction in a world that reads more than ever but is growing disaffected with the material realities of literary production.

David Foster Wallace and "The Long Thing" - Marshall Boswell 2014-07-31

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.

The Iron Bars of Freedom - Stefan Hirt 2008-03-11

David Foster Wallace's *"Infinite Jest"* is one of the most ambitious American novels of the last decade. Its

huge scope, its immense array of characters, and Wallace's artful mastery of language make it a complex and sometimes difficult text that has frequently been compared with other works of magnitude such as *"Ulysses"* and *"Gravity's Rainbow"*. This book aims to provide the reader of Wallace's novel with one (of many) possible thread(s) which might lead him through the textual labyrinth of *"Infinite Jest"*. It is concerned with the issues of narcissism, addiction, depression, and despair and interprets the novel within an Existentialist framework drawn from the philosophical works of Jean-Paul Sartre and Søren Kierkegaard. Hirt analyzes Wallace's portrayal of contemporary existence inside a society that, paradoxically, entraps the individual self exactly by exposing it to an unprecedented state of freedom. Furthermore, Hirt discusses the counter-proposals which Wallace weighs against postmodern culture. *"Infinite Jest"* is thus set in relation to postmodern literature, and the similarities as well as the differences between this literary period and *"Infinite Jest"* are illuminated.

An Elegant Defense - Matt Richtel 2019-03-12

National Bestseller "A valuable read that will help you understand what it takes to stop COVID-19. ... A super interesting look at the science of immunity." —Bill Gates, Gates Notes Summer Reading List The Pulitzer Prize-winning New York Times journalist "explicates for the lay reader the intricate biology of our immune system" (Jerome Groopman, MD, New York Review of Books) From New York Times science journalist Matt Richtel, *An Elegant Defense* is an acclaimed and definitive exploration of the immune system and the secrets of health. Interweaving cutting-edge science with the intimate stories of four individual patients, this epic, first-of-its-kind book "give[s] lay readers a means of understanding what's known so far about the intricate biology of our immune systems" (The Week). The immune system is our body's essential defense network, a guardian vigilantly fighting illness, healing wounds, maintaining order and balance, and keeping us alive. It has been honed by evolution over millennia to face an almost infinite array of threats. For all its astonishing complexity, however, the immune system can be easily compromised by fatigue, stress, toxins, advanced age, and poor nutrition—hallmarks of modern life—and even by excessive hygiene. Paradoxically, it is a fragile wonder weapon that can turn on our own bodies with startling results, leading today to epidemic levels of autoimmune disorders. *An Elegant Defense* effortlessly guides readers on a scientific detective tale winding from the Black Plague to twentieth-century breakthroughs in vaccination and antibiotics, to today's laboratories that are revolutionizing immunology—perhaps the most extraordinary and consequential medical story of our time. Drawing on extensive new interviews with dozens of world-renowned scientists, Richtel has produced a landmark book, equally an investigation into the deepest riddles of survival and a profoundly human tale that is movingly brought to life through the eyes of his four main characters, each of whom illuminates an essential facet of our "elegant defense."

DFW - Paul Brody 2014-04-24

As one of the most celebrated novelists and essayists of the new millennium, David Foster Wallace quickly rose to prominence as the voice of his generation. The publication of *Infinite Jest* in 1996 cemented his status. If David Foster Wallace had written nothing besides *Infinite Jest*, his legacy would be secure as one

of the most important artists of the new Millennium. But he did so much more than that: he left behind a diverse body of creative nonfiction that was held together by his sincere approach to any subject. He positively influenced thousands of students in his writing workshops and literary seminars over the years. More than anything, he gave a shape and a voice to the confused, conflicted Internet generation. This short biography traces the life and career of one America's most complex and gifted writers.

Systems Thinking - Jamshid Gharajedaghi 2011-08-09

Systems Thinking, Third Edition combines systems theory and interactive design to provide an operational methodology for defining problems and designing solutions in an environment increasingly characterized by chaos and complexity. This new edition has been updated to include all new chapters on self-organizing systems as well as holistic, operational, and design thinking. The book covers recent crises in financial systems and job markets, the housing bubble, and environment, assessing their impact on systems thinking. A companion website is available at interactdesign.com. This volume is ideal for senior executives as well as for chief information/operating officers and other executives charged with systems management and process improvement. It may also be a helpful resource for IT/MBA students and academics. Four NEW chapters on self-organizing systems, holistic thinking, operational thinking, and design thinking Covers the recent crises in financial systems and job markets globally, the housing bubble, and the environment, assessing their impact on systems thinking Companion website to accompany the book is available at interactdesign.com

The Legacy of David Foster Wallace - Samuel Cohen 2012-04-15

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.

A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again - David Foster Wallace 2009-11-23

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*.

Existentialist Engagement in Wallace, Eggers and Foer - Allard den Dulk 2016-06-30

The novels of David Foster Wallace, Dave Eggers and Jonathan Safran Foer are increasingly regarded as representing a new trend, an 'aesthetic sea change' in contemporary American literature. 'Post-postmodernism' and 'New Sincerity' are just two of the labels that have been attached to this trend. But what do these labels mean? What characterizes and connects these novels? Den Dulk shows that the connection between these works lies in their shared philosophical dimension. On the one hand, they portray excessive self-reflection and endless irony as the two main problems of contemporary Western life. On the other hand, the novels embody an attempt to overcome these problems: sincerity, reality-commitment and community are portrayed as the virtues needed to achieve a meaningful life. This shared philosophical dimension is analyzed by viewing the novels in light of the existentialist philosophies of Søren Kierkegaard, Jean-Paul Sartre, Ludwig Wittgenstein and Albert Camus.

The Most Fun Thing - Kyle Beachy 2021-08-10

Named a Best Book of the Year by NPR • Southwest Review • Electric Literature Perfect for fans of *Barbarian Days*, this memoir in essays follows one man's decade-long quest to uncover the hidden meaning of skateboarding, and explores how this search led unexpectedly to insights on marriage, love, loss, American invention, and growing old. In January 2012, creative writing professor and novelist Kyle Beachy published one of his first essays on skate culture, an exploration of how Nike's corporate strategy successfully gutted the once-mighty independent skate shoe market. Beachy has since established himself

as skate culture's freshest, most illuminating, at times most controversial voice, writing candidly about the increasingly popular and fast-changing pastime he first picked up as a young boy and has continued to practice well into adulthood. What is skateboarding? What does it mean to continue skateboarding after the age of forty, four decades after the kickflip was invented? How does one live authentically as an adult while staying true to a passion cemented in childhood? How does skateboarding shape one's understanding of contemporary American life? Of growing old and getting married? Contemplating these questions and more, Beachy offers a deep exploration of a pastime—often overlooked, regularly maligned—whose seeming simplicity conceals universal truths. *THE MOST FUN THING* is both a rich account of a hobby and a collection of the lessons skateboarding has taught Beachy—and what it continues to teach him as he struggles to find space for it as an adult, a professor, and a husband.

Gesturing Toward Reality: David Foster Wallace and Philosophy - Robert K. Bolger 2014-06-19

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.

Infinite Jest - David Foster Wallace 2009-04-13

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...Edgy, accurate, and darkly witty...Think Beckett, think Pynchon, think Gaddis. Think." --Sven Birkerts, *The Atlantic*

Writing and Learning in Cross-national Perspective - David Foster 2017-10-03

Despite the increasingly global implications of conversations about writing and learning, U.S. composition studies has devoted little attention to cross-national perspectives on student writing and its roles in wider cultural contexts. Caught up in our own concerns about how U.S. students make the transition as writers from secondary school to postsecondary education, we often overlook the fact that students around the world are undergoing the same evolution. How do the students in China, England, France, Germany, Kenya, or South Africa--the educational systems represented in this collection--write their way into the communities of their chosen disciplines? How, for instance, do students whose mother tongue is not the language of instruction cope with the demands of academic and discipline-specific writing? And in what ways is U.S. students' development as academic writers similar to or different from that of students in other countries? With this collection, editors David Foster and David R. Russell broaden the discussion about the role of writing in various educational systems and cultures. Students' development as academic writers raises issues of student authorship and agency, as well as larger issues of educational access, institutional power relations, system goals, and students' roles in society. The contributors to this collection discuss selected writing purposes and forms characteristic of a specific national education system, describe students' agency as writers, and identify contextual factors--social, economic, linguistic, cultural--that shape institutional responses to writing development. In discussions that bookend these studies of different educational structures, the editors compare U.S. postsecondary writing practices and pedagogies with those in other national systems, and suggest new perspectives for cross-national study of learning/writing

issues important to all educational systems. Given the worldwide increase in students entering higher education and the endless need for effective writing across disciplines and nations, the insights offered here and the call for further studies are especially welcome and timely.

Some Remarks - Neal Stephenson 2012-08-07

#1 New York Times bestselling author Neal Stephenson is, quite simply, one of the best and most respected writers alive. He's taken sf to places it's never been (Snow Crash, Anathem). He's reinvented the historical novel (The Baroque Cycle), the international thriller (Reamde), and both at the same time (Cryptonomicon). Now he treats his legion of fans to *Some Remarks*, an enthralling collection of essays—Stephenson's first nonfiction work since his long essay on technology, *In the Beginning...Was the Command Line*, more than a decade ago—as well as new and previously published short writings both fiction and non. *Some Remarks* is a magnificent showcase of a brilliantly inventive mind and talent, as he discourses on everything from Sir Isaac Newton to Star Wars.

A Gravity's Rainbow Companion - Steven C. Weisenburger 2011-03-15

Adding some 20 percent to the original content, this is a completely updated edition of Steven Weisenburger's indispensable guide to Thomas Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow*. Weisenburger takes the reader page by page, often line by line, through the welter of historical references, scientific data, cultural fragments, anthropological research, jokes, and puns around which Pynchon wove his story. Weisenburger fully annotates Pynchon's use of languages ranging from Russian and Hebrew to such subdialects of English as 1940s street talk, drug lingo, and military slang as well as the more obscure terminology of black magic, Rosicrucianism, and Pavlovian psychology. The Companion also reveals the underlying organization of *Gravity's Rainbow*--how the book's myriad references form patterns of meaning and structure that have eluded both admirers and critics of the novel. The Companion is keyed to the pages of the principal American editions of *Gravity's Rainbow*: Viking/Penguin (1973), Bantam (1974), and the special, repaginated Penguin paperback (2000) honoring the novel as one of twenty "Great Books of the Twentieth Century."

Reading Embodied Citizenship - Emily Russell 2011-02-25

Liberal individualism, a foundational concept of American politics, assumes an essentially homogeneous population of independent citizens. When confronted with physical disability and the contradiction of seemingly unruly bodies, however, the public searches for a story that can make sense of the difference. The narrative that ensues makes "abnormality" an important part of the dialogue about what a genuine citizen is, though its role is concealed as an exception to the rule of individuality rather than a defining difference. *Reading Embodied Citizenship* brings disability to the forefront, illuminating its role in constituting what counts as U.S. citizenship. Drawing from major figures in American literature, including Mark Twain, Flannery O'Connor, Carson McCullers, and David Foster Wallace, as well as introducing texts from the emerging canon of disability studies, Emily Russell demonstrates the place of disability at the core of American ideals. The narratives prompted by the encounter between physical difference and the body politic require a new understanding of embodiment as a necessary conjunction of physical, textual, and social bodies. Russell examines literature to explore and unsettle long-held assumptions about American citizenship.

A Little History of the World - E. H. Gombrich 2014-10-01

E. H. Gombrich's *Little History of the World*, though written in 1935, has become one of the treasures of historical writing since its first publication in English in 2005. The Yale edition alone has now sold over half a million copies, and the book is available worldwide in almost thirty languages. Gombrich was of course the best-known art historian of his time, and his text suggests illustrations on every page. This illustrated edition of the *Little History* brings together the pellucid humanity of his narrative with the images that may well have been in his mind's eye as he wrote the book. The two hundred illustrations—most of them in full color—are not simple embellishments, though they are beautiful. They emerge from the text, enrich the author's intention, and deepen the pleasure of reading this remarkable work. For this edition the text is reset in a spacious format, flowing around illustrations that range from paintings to line drawings, emblems, motifs, and symbols. The book incorporates freshly drawn maps, a revised preface, and a new index. Blending high-grade design, fine paper, and classic binding, this is both a sumptuous gift book and

an enhanced edition of a timeless account of human history.

Subjects of Substance - Julian Henneberg 2020-07-31

Recent U.S. literature has both been informed by, and critically engaged with, materialist conceptions of selfhood. Over the past decades, disciplines like neuroscience and evolutionary biology have increasingly recast the human self as a malleable construct produced by physiological processes. In a parallel development, literary authors have created their own conceptions of somatic subjectivity in conjunction or contrast with scientific and medical discourses. *Subjects of Substance* examines the forms, functions, and effects of materialist models of mind in selected memoirs and novels. Authors discussed include Michael W. Clune, Don DeLillo, Kay Redfield Jamison, Siri Hustvedt, Richard Powers, Elyn R. Saks, and David Foster Wallace.

New Media and the Transformation of Postmodern American Literature - Casey Michael Henry 2019-02-07

How has American literature after postmodernism responded to the digital age? Drawing on insights from contemporary media theory, this is the first book to explore the explosion of new media technologies as an animating context for contemporary American literature. Casey Michael Henry examines the intertwining histories of new media forms since the 1970s and literary postmodernism and its aftermath, from William Gaddis's *J R* and Bret Easton Ellis's *American Psycho* through to David Foster Wallace's *Infinite Jest*. Through these histories, the book charts the ways in which print-based postmodern writing at first resisted new mass media forms and ultimately came to respond to them.

The Betrayers - David Bezmozgis 2014-09-23

Winner of the National Jewish Book Award A Wall Street Journal Best Book of 2014 A New Yorker Favorite Book of 2014 New York Times Book Review Editor's Choice These incandescent pages give us one fraught, momentous day in the life of Baruch Kotler, a Soviet Jewish dissident who now finds himself a disgraced Israeli politician. When he refuses to back down from a contrary but principled stand regarding the settlements in the West Bank, his political opponents expose his affair with a mistress decades his junior, and the besieged couple escapes to Yalta, the faded Crimean resort of Kotler's youth. There, shockingly, Kotler encounters the former friend whose denunciation sent him to the Gulag almost forty years earlier. In a whirling twenty-four hours, Kotler must face the ultimate reckoning, both with those who have betrayed him and with those whom he has betrayed, including a teenage daughter, a son facing his own moral dilemma in the Israeli army, and the wife who once campaigned to secure his freedom and stood by him through so much. Stubborn, wry, and self-knowing, Baruch Kotler is one of the great creations of contemporary fiction. An aging man grasping at a final passion, he is drawn inexorably into a crucible that is both personal and biblical in scope. In prose that is elegant, sly, precise, and devastating in its awareness of the human heart, David Bezmozgis has rendered a story for the ages, an inquest into the nature of fate and consequence, love and forgiveness. *The Betrayers* is a high-wire act, a powerful tale of morality and sacrifice that will haunt readers long after they turn the final page.

Approaches to Teaching the Works of David Foster Wallace - Stephen J. Burn 2019-08-01

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 essential human 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 urgent issues, both 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 high school 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 the culture of writing programs.

David Foster Wallace: Fiction and Form - David Hering 2016-09-08

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*.

Understanding David Foster Wallace - Marshall Boswell 2020-09-30

Since its publication in 2003, *Understanding David Foster Wallace* has served as an accessible introduction to the rich array of themes and formal innovations that have made Wallace's fiction so popular and influential. A seminal text in the burgeoning field of David Foster Wallace studies, the original edition of *Understanding David Foster Wallace* was nevertheless incomplete as it addressed only his first four works of fiction—namely the novels *The Broom of the System* and *Infinite Jest* and the story collections *Girl with Curious Hair* and *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men*. This revised edition adds two new chapters covering his final story collection, *Oblivion*, and his posthumous novel, *The Pale King*. Tracing Wallace's relationship to modernism and postmodernism, this volume provides close readings of all his major works of fiction. Although critics sometimes label Wallace a postmodern writer, Boswell argues that he should be regarded as the nervous leader of some still-unnamed (and perhaps unnamable) third wave of modernism. In charting a new direction for literary practice, Wallace does not seek to overturn postmodernism, nor does he call for a return to modernism. Rather his work moves resolutely forward while hoisting the baggage of modernism and postmodernism heavily, but respectfully, on its back. Like the books that serve as its primary subject, Boswell's study directly confronts such arcane issues as postmodernism, information theory, semiotics, the philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein, and poststructuralism, yet it does so in a way that is comprehensible to a wide and general readership—the very same readership that has enthusiastically embraced Wallace's challenging yet entertaining and redemptive fiction.

Mere Christianity - C. S. Lewis 2009-06-02

In the classic *Mere Christianity*, C.S. Lewis, the most important writer of the 20th century, explores the common ground upon which all of those of Christian faith stand together. Bringing together Lewis' legendary broadcast talks during World War Two from his three previous books *The Case for Christianity*, *Christian Behavior*, and *Beyond Personality*, *Mere Christianity* provides an unequalled opportunity for believers and nonbelievers alike to hear this powerful apologetic for the Christian faith.

Reading David Foster Wallace between philosophy and literature - Allard den Dulk 2022-11-08

This book breaks new ground by showing that the work of David Foster Wallace originates from and functions in the space between philosophy and literature. Philosophy is not a mere supplement to or decoration of his writing, nor does he use literature to illustrate pre-established philosophical truths. Rather, for Wallace, philosophy and literature are intertwined ways of experiencing and expressing the world that emerge from and amplify each other. The book does not advance a fixed or homogenous interpretation of Wallace's oeuvre but instead offers an investigative approach that allows for a variety of readings. The volume features fourteen new essays by prominent and promising Wallace scholars, divided into three parts: one on general aspects of Wallace's oeuvre – such as his aesthetics, form, and engagement with performance – and two parts with thematic focuses, namely 'Consciousness, Self, and Others' and 'Embodiment, Gender, and Sexuality'.

The Spell of the Sensuous - David Abram 2012-10-17

Winner of the International Lannan Literary Award for Nonfiction *Animal tracks*, word magic, the speech of stones, the power of letters, and the taste of the wind all figure prominently in this intellectual tour de force that returns us to our senses and to the sensuous terrain that sustains us. This major work of ecological philosophy startles the senses out of habitual ways of perception. For a thousand generations, human beings viewed themselves as part of the wider community of nature, and they carried on active

relationships not only with other people with other animals, plants, and natural objects (including mountains, rivers, winds, and weather patters) that we have only lately come to think of as "inanimate." How, then, did humans come to sever their ancient reciprocity with the natural world? What will it take for us to recover a sustaining relation with the breathing earth? In *The Spell of the Sensuous* David Abram draws on sources as diverse as the philosophy of Merleau-Ponty, Balinese shamanism, Apache storytelling, and his own experience as an accomplished sleight-of-hand of magician to reveal the subtle dependence of human cognition on the natural environment. He explores the character of perception and excavates the sensual foundations of language, which—even at its most abstract—echoes the calls and cries of the earth. On every page of this lyrical work, Abram weaves his arguments with a passion, a precision, and an intellectual daring that recall such writers as Loren Eiseley, Annie Dillard, and Barry Lopez.

Conversations with David Foster Wallace - Stephen Burn 2012-03-08

Collection of interviews that profiles Wallace's career of twenty years, from 1987 until his suicide in 2008, that provides insight into his development as a writer and complicated persona.

The Moral Worlds of Contemporary Realism - Mary K. Holland 2020-06-11

Literature has never looked weirder—full of images, colors, gadgets, and footnotes, and violating established norms of character, plot, and narrative structure. Yet over the last 30 years, critics have coined more than 20 new "realisms" in their attempts to describe it. What makes this decidedly unorthodox literature "realistic"? And if it is, then what does "realism" mean anymore? Examining literature by dozens of writers, and over a century of theory and criticism about realism, *The Moral Worlds of Contemporary Realism* sorts through the current critical confusion to illustrate how our ideas about what is real and how best to depict it have changed dramatically, especially in recent years. Along the way, Mary K. Holland guides the reader on a lively tour through the landscape of contemporary literary studies—taking in metafiction, ideology, posthumanism, postmodernism, and poststructuralism—with forays into quantum mechanics, new materialism, and Buddhism as well, to give us entirely new ways of viewing how humans use language to make sense of—and to make—the world.

William Gaddis: Expanded Edition - Steven Moore 2015-02-26

In 1989, Steven Moore published the first scholarly study of all three of William Gaddis's novels and since then it has been generally regarded as the best book on this difficult but major writer's work. This revised and expanded edition includes new chapters on the novels Gaddis published after 1989, the National Book Award-winning *A Frolic of His Own* and the posthumous novella *Agape Agape*, along with updated introductory and concluding chapters. This introduction offers a clear discussion of all five of Gaddis's novels, providing essential biographical information, two chapters each on his most significant novels, *The Recognitions* and *J R*, and a chapter each devoted to his later three novels. A concluding chapter locates his place in American literature and notes his influence on younger writers. Each chapter focuses on the main themes of each novel and discusses the literary techniques Gaddis deployed to dramatize those themes. Since Gaddis is an erudite, allusive novelist, Moore clarifies his references and explains how they enhance his themes.

David Foster Wallace in Context - Clare Hayes-Brady 2022-12-01

David Foster Wallace is regarded as one of the most important American writers of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. This book introduces readers to the literary, philosophical and political contexts of Wallace's work. An accessible and useable resource, this volume conceptualizes his work within long-standing critical traditions and with a new awareness of his importance for American literary studies. It shows the range of issues and contexts that inform the work and reading of David Foster Wallace, connecting his writing to diverse ideas, periods and themes. Essays cover topics on gender, sex, violence, race, philosophy, poetry and geography, among many others, guiding new and long-standing readers in understanding the work and influence of this important writer.

The David Foster Wallace Reader - David Foster Wallace 2014-11-11

Where do you begin with a writer as original and brilliant as David Foster Wallace? Here -- with a carefully considered selection of his extraordinary body of work, chosen by a range of great writers, critics, and those who worked with him most closely. This volume presents his most dazzling, funniest, and most heartbreaking work -- essays like his famous cruise-ship piece, "A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do

Again," excerpts from his novels *The Broom of the System*, *Infinite Jest*, and *The Pale King*, and legendary stories like "The Depressed Person." Wallace's explorations of morality, self-consciousness, addiction, sports, love, and the many other subjects that occupied him are represented here in both fiction and nonfiction. Collected for the first time are Wallace's first published story, "The View from Planet Trillaphon as Seen In Relation to the Bad Thing" and a selection of his work as a writing instructor, including reading lists, grammar guides, and general guidelines for his students. A dozen writers and critics, including Hari Kunzru, Anne Fadiman, and Nam Le, add afterwords to favorite pieces, expanding our appreciation of the unique pleasures of Wallace's writing. The result is an astonishing volume that shows the breadth and range of "one of America's most daring and talented writers" (Los Angeles Times Book Review) whose work was full of humor, insight, and beauty.

The Cambridge Companion to David Foster Wallace - Ralph Clare 2018-09-20

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

The Non-Canonical Gospels - Paul Foster 2008-09-11

This book brings together a collection of chapter length treatments on the most significant of the non-canonical gospels. A particular strength of the volume is that it draws upon the research of leading experts in the field and clearly and concisely communicates the most hotly contested issues surrounding each text. While a key function of each chapter is to make the current academic debates accessible to a wider audience, these treatments are not simply overviews or survey articles. They also present fresh perspectives on a number of points, and critically assess the most recent trends in scholarship. As such, they will provide an ideal entry point for advanced undergraduate courses and taught Masters programmes. The structure of the book is divided up in an easily useable format. There is an introduction which underscores the significance of the non-canonical texts both for the original readers and for contemporary audiences. This chapter by Keith Elliott also traces important moments in the reception of a number of these texts both in art and literature. Next follows the main sequence of chapters dealing with individual texts. Texts such as the Gospel of Thomas, the Gospel of Peter, and the Gospel of Mary are treated first due to the impact they have had to varying degrees on Historical Jesus research. Other texts are grouped in various subgroups: the two infancy gospels follow each other, and the more fragmentary texts are also closely linked in the arrangement. The book presents one of the most comprehensive and up-to-date discussions of a range of texts that continue to be of interest to scholars and wider readers. The discussions should clarify a number of popular misconceptions and allow for a more informed debate. The scholars who contribute to this collection represent an eclectic range of views and theological outlooks. No attempt has been made to impose a prescribed perspective. Rather, the leading experts have been consulted to produce fresh and stimulating treatments. The book will include contributions from Andrew Gregory (Oxford), Christopher Tuckett (Cambridge), April DeConick (Rice), and Simon Gathercole (Aberdeen), among others.

David Foster Wallace's Balancing Books - Jeffrey Severs 2017-01-03

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.

Moving Kings - Joshua Cohen 2017-07-11

A propulsive, incendiary novel about faith, race, class, and what it means to have a home, from Joshua Cohen, "a major American writer" (The New York Times) NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY VULTURE AND BOOKFORUM One of the boldest voices of his generation, Joshua Cohen returns with *Moving Kings*, a powerful and provocative novel that interweaves, in profoundly intimate terms, the housing crisis in America's poor black and Hispanic neighborhoods with the world's oldest conflict, in the Middle East. The year is 2015, and twenty-one-year-olds Yoav and Uri, veterans of the last Gaza War, have just completed their compulsory military service in the Israel Defense Forces. In keeping with national tradition, they take a year off for rest, recovery, and travel. They come to New York City and begin working for Yoav's distant cousin David King—a proud American patriot, Republican, and Jew, and the recently divorced proprietor of King's Moving Inc., a heavyweight in the tri-state area's moving and storage industries. Yoav and Uri now must struggle to become reacquainted with civilian life, but it's not easy to move beyond their traumatic pasts when their days are spent kicking down doors as eviction-movers in the ungentrified corners of the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens, throwing out delinquent tenants and seizing their possessions. And what starts off as a profitable if eerily familiar job—an "Occupation"—quickly turns violent when they encounter one homeowner seeking revenge. Praise for *Moving Kings* "A Jewish Sopranos . . . utterly engrossing, full of passionate sympathy . . . Cohen is an extraordinary prose stylist, surely one of the most prodigious at work in American fiction today."—James Wood, The New Yorker "Brilliant . . . It feels master-planned to slowly unsettle your convictions, as the best novels do. . . . Cohen has a brain-on-fire intellect and a Balzac-grade enthusiasm for understanding varieties of experience."—Los Angeles Times "Moving Kings is a lit fuse, a force let loose, a creeping flame heading for demolition, and Cohen himself is a master of argot and wit."—Cynthia Ozick "A dazzling and poignant book."—Rachel Kushner "Cohen's writing is filled with sharp turns of phrase and elegant rhythms. . . . The denouement is as vengeful as any Old Testament plot twist. . . . Cohen has become one of America's top young novelists."—Time

Nature's Nightmare - Greg Carlisle 2013

Elegant Complexity - Greg Carlisle 2007

"Elegant Complexity is the first critical work to provide detailed and thorough commentary on each of the 192 sections of David Foster Wallace's masterful *Infinite Jest*. No other commentary on *Infinite Jest* recognizes that Wallace clearly divided the book into 28 chapters that are thematically unified. A chronology at the end of the study reorders each section of the novel into a sequential timeline that orients the reader and that could be used to support a chronological reading of the novel. Other helpful reference materials include a thematic outline, more chronologies, a map of one the novel's settings, lists of characters grouped by association, and an indexed list of references. *Elegant Complexity* orients the reader at the beginning of each section and keeps commentary separate for those readers who only want orientation. The researcher looking for specific characters or themes is provided a key at the beginning of each commentary. Carlisle explains the novel's complex plot threads (and discrepancies) with expert insight and clear commentary. The book is 99% spoiler-free for first-time readers of *Infinite Jest*."--Publisher's website.

Consider David Foster Wallace - David Hering 2010

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 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.

Inherent Vice - Thomas Pynchon 2012-06-13

Part noir, part psychedelic romp, all Thomas Pynchon—Private eye Doc Sportello surfaces, occasionally, out of a marijuana haze to watch the end of an era In this lively yarn, Thomas Pynchon, working in an unaccustomed genre that is at once exciting and accessible, provides a classic illustration of the principle that if you can remember the sixties, you weren't there. It's been a while since Doc Sportello has seen his ex- girlfriend. Suddenly she shows up with a story about a plot to kidnap a billionaire land developer whom she just happens to be in love with. It's the tail end of the psychedelic sixties in L.A., and Doc knows that "love" is another of those words going around at the moment, like "trip" or "groovy," except that this one usually leads to trouble. Undeniably one of the most influential writers at work today, Pynchon has penned

another unforgettable book.

David Foster Wallace's Infinite Jest, Second Edition - Stephen J. Burn 2012-04-26

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.