

David Foster Wallace This Is Water



David Foster Wallace's "This Is Water": A Guide to Meaningful Living

Introduction:

Are you feeling adrift in the currents of daily life? Do you crave a deeper understanding of yourself and your place in the world? Then David Foster Wallace's now-iconic commencement address, "This Is Water," offers a profound and surprisingly practical guide to navigating the complexities of human experience. This post delves into the core message of this transformative speech, exploring its key themes, offering practical applications, and ultimately revealing why it continues to resonate with readers years after its delivery. We'll unpack Wallace's insights and show you how to incorporate his wisdom into your own life, leading to greater self-awareness, empathy, and overall well-being.

Understanding the Core Message of "This Is Water"

At its heart, "This Is Water" isn't merely a graduation speech; it's a call to conscious awareness. Wallace challenges the default setting of the human mind - a self-centered, habitual way of thinking that often leads to unhappiness and dissatisfaction. He argues that true freedom lies not in escaping the mundane but in consciously choosing how we perceive and respond to the everyday realities of life.

The "Default Setting" and the Importance of Choice

Wallace vividly describes the "default setting" as a self-centered, cynical worldview that focuses on our own immediate needs and desires. He paints a picture of a mind preoccupied with its own anxieties, resentments, and petty grievances, perpetually caught in a loop of self-pity and dissatisfaction. This, he argues, is the root of much unhappiness. The crucial point is that this "default setting" is a choice, not an inevitability. We have the agency to consciously step outside of it.

Cultivating Empathy and Understanding

Central to Wallace's message is the imperative of cultivating empathy. He encourages listeners to actively challenge their own self-centered perspectives and develop the ability to see the world from another's point of view. This involves recognizing the inherent worth and struggles of others, even those we might initially dislike or dismiss. By consciously choosing to see the world from a broader perspective, we pave the way for greater compassion and meaningful connections.

The Importance of Conscious Thought and Attention

Wallace stresses the importance of active, conscious thought. He cautions against the dangers of passively accepting the narratives and perceptions that readily present themselves, encouraging instead a mindful approach to everyday experiences. This requires a conscious effort to challenge our assumptions, question our beliefs, and cultivate a deeper understanding of the world around us. He uses the metaphor of a fish not realizing it's in water to illustrate how we often fail to recognize the invisible structures shaping our experiences.

Practical Applications of Wallace's Wisdom

The power of "This Is Water" lies not only in its philosophical depth but also in its practical applicability. How can we translate Wallace's insights into tangible actions?

Practicing Mindfulness and Meditation

Mindfulness, a practice of paying attention to the present moment without judgment, directly addresses the "default setting." Regular meditation can help us cultivate awareness of our thoughts and emotions, allowing us to observe them without getting swept away by them.

Developing Empathy Through Active Listening

Truly listening to others – understanding their perspectives, empathizing with their experiences – is crucial. This involves silencing our own inner voice and consciously making an effort to truly hear what others are saying, both verbally and nonverbally.

Challenging Our Assumptions and Biases

We all hold biases and assumptions. Actively questioning these biases, seeking diverse perspectives, and acknowledging our own limitations is essential for personal growth and meaningful connection.

Finding Meaning in the Mundane

Wallace encourages us to find meaning and purpose not just in grand gestures but also in the seemingly mundane aspects of daily life. This involves finding joy and appreciation in simple things, practicing gratitude, and finding beauty in the everyday.

Conclusion

David Foster Wallace's "This Is Water" is more than just a speech; it's a life-changing philosophy. By consciously choosing to step outside the "default setting" and cultivate empathy, mindfulness, and a deeper understanding of the world, we can transform our experiences and lead more meaningful, fulfilling lives. His message remains profoundly relevant today, offering a pathway toward greater self-awareness, connection, and happiness.

FAQs

1. Is "This Is Water" only relevant for college graduates?

No, the principles in "This Is Water" apply to everyone, regardless of age or background. Its message of conscious awareness and empathy is universally relevant.

2. How long does it take to see results from practicing the principles in "This Is Water"?

The journey to cultivating mindful awareness is ongoing. Some people experience positive changes relatively quickly, while others may require more time and consistent effort. The key is consistent practice and self-compassion.

3. Is it difficult to overcome the "default setting"?

Yes, it takes conscious effort and self-discipline. However, the rewards of greater self-awareness and empathy are well worth the investment.

4. Can I apply "This Is Water" principles to my relationships?

Absolutely. Empathy and mindful communication are crucial for building strong, healthy relationships. By consciously choosing to see things from another's perspective, you can significantly improve your interactions with others.

5. Where can I find the full text of "This Is Water"?

The full text is readily available online through a simple search. Many websites and platforms offer free access to the transcript of the speech.

david foster wallace this is water: [This Is Water](#) David Foster Wallace, 2009-04-14 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.

david foster wallace this is water: [This Is Water](#) Kenyon College, 2014-05-22 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.

david foster wallace this is water: Magic Hours Tom Bissell, 2018-03-20 Award-winning essayist Tom Bissell explores the highs and lows of the creative process. He takes us from the set of *The Big Bang Theory* to the first novel of Ernest Hemingway to the final work of David Foster Wallace; from the films of Werner Herzog to the film of Tommy Wiseau to the editorial meeting in which Paula Fox's work was relaunched into the world. Originally published in magazines such as *The Believer*, *The New Yorker*, and *Harper's*, these essays represent ten years of Bissell's best writing on every aspect of creation—be it Iraq War documentaries or video-game character

voices—and will provoke as much thought as they do laughter. What are sitcoms for exactly? Can art be both bad and genius? Why do some books survive and others vanish? Bissell's exploration of these questions make for gripping, unforgettable reading.

david foster wallace this is water: The David Foster Wallace Reader David Foster Wallace, 2014-11-06 The David Foster Wallace Reader is a selection of David Foster Wallace's work, introducing readers to his humour, kindness, sweeping intellect and versatility as a writer. A compilation from the one of the most original writers of our age, featuring: · the very best of his fiction and non-fiction; · previously unpublished writing · and original contributions from 12 prominent authors and critics about his work From classic short fiction to genre-defining reportage, this book is a must for new readers and confirmed David Foster Wallace fans alike 'One of the most dazzling luminaries of contemporary American fiction' Sunday Times 'There are times, reading his work, when you get halfway through a sentence and gasp involuntarily, and for a second you feel lucky that there was, at least for a time, someone who could make sense like no other of what it is to be a human in our era' Daily Telegraph 'A prose magician, Mr. Wallace was capable of writing . . . about subjects from tennis to politics to lobsters, from the horrors of drug withdrawal to the small terrors of life aboard a luxury cruise ship, with humour and fervour and verve' Michiko Kakutani, The New York Times David Foster Wallace wrote the novels The Pale King, Infinite Jest, and The Broom of the System and three story collections. His nonfiction includes Consider the Lobster and A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again. He died in 2008.

david foster wallace this is water: Oblivion: Stories David Foster Wallace, 2012-06-28 A visionary, a craftsman, a comedian ... He can do anything with a piece of prose, and it is a humbling experience to see him go to work on what has passed up till now as 'modern fiction'. He's so modern he's in a different time-space continuum from the rest of us. Goddamn him' ZADIE SMITH A recognised master of form and a brilliant recorder of human behaviour, David Foster Wallace has been hailed as 'the most significant writer of his generation' (TLS). Each new book confirms and extends his genius, and this new short story collection is no exception. In the stories that make up OBLIVION, David Foster Wallace conjoins the rawest, most naked humanity with the infinite convolutions of self-consciousness - a combination that is dazzlingly, uniquely his. 'Wallace's talent is such that you can't help wondering: how good can he get?' TIME OUT

david foster wallace this is water: A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again David Foster Wallace, 2009-11-23 These widely acclaimed essays from the author of Infinite Jest -- on television, tennis, cruise ships, and more -- established David Foster Wallace as one of the preeminent essayists of his generation. 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.

david foster wallace this is water: Conversations with David Foster Wallace Stephen Burn, 2012-03-08 Conversations with the author of A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again, Brief Interviews with Hideous Men, and Infinite Jest

david foster wallace this is water: Brief Interviews with Hideous Men David Foster Wallace, 2009-09-24 In this thought-provoking and playful short story collection, David Foster Wallace nudges at the boundaries of fiction with inimitable wit and seductive intelligence. Wallace's stories present a world where the bizarre and the banal are interwoven and where hideous men appear in many guises. Among the stories are 'The Depressed Person,' a dazzling and blackly humorous portrayal of a woman's mental state; 'Adult World,' which reveals a woman's agonized consideration of her confusing sexual relationship with her husband; and 'Brief Interviews with Hideous Men,' a dark, hilarious series of imagined interviews with men on the subject of their relations with women. Wallace delights in leftfield observation, mining the absurd, the surprising, and the illuminating from every situation. This collection will enthrall DFW fans, and provides a perfect introduction for new readers.

david foster wallace this is water: The Broom of the System David Foster Wallace, 2004-05-25 Published when Wallace was just twenty-four years old, *The Broom of the System* stunned critics and marked the emergence of an extraordinary new talent. At the center of this outlandishly funny, fiercely intelligent novel is the bewitching heroine, Lenore Stonecipher Beadsman. The year is 1990 and the place is a slightly altered Cleveland, Ohio. Lenore's great-grandmother has disappeared with twenty-five other inmates of the Shaker Heights Nursing Home. Her beau, and boss, Rick Vigorous, is insanely jealous, and her cockatiel, Vlad the Impaler, has suddenly started spouting a mixture of psycho-babble, Auden, and the King James Bible. Ingenious and entertaining, this debut from one of the most innovative writers of his generation brilliantly explores the paradoxes of language, storytelling, and reality.

david foster wallace this is water: *Congratulations, by the Way* George Saunders, 2014-01-01 An inspiring message from the inaugural Folio Prize winner, George Saunders, one of today's most influential and original writers

david foster wallace this is water: *This Is Water* David Foster Wallace, 2009-04-14 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.

david foster wallace this is water: *Both Flesh and Not* David Foster Wallace, 2012-11-06 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.

david foster wallace this is water: *Farther Away* Jonathan Franzen, 2012-04-26 The new book of articles and opinion from Jonathan Franzen, author of 'Freedom' and 'The Corrections'.

david foster wallace this is water: *The Pale King* David Foster Wallace, 2012 The agents at the IRS Regional Examination Center appear ordinary enough to newly arrived trainee David Wallace. But as he immerses himself in a routine so tedious that new employees receive boredom-survival training, he learns of the extraordinary variety of personalities drawn to this strange calling.

david foster wallace this is water: *Signifying Rappers* David Foster Wallace, Mark Costello, 2013-07-23 David Foster Wallace and Mark Costello's exuberant exploration of rap music and culture. Living together in Cambridge in 1989, David Foster Wallace and longtime friend Mark Costello discovered that they shared an uncomfortable, somewhat furtive, and distinctively white enthusiasm for a certain music called rap/hip-hop. The book they wrote together, set against the legendary Boston music scene, mapped the bipolarities of rap and pop, rebellion and acceptance, glitz and gangsterdom. *Signifying Rappers* issued a fan's challenge to the giants of rock writing, Greil Marcus, Robert Palmer, and Lester Bangs: Could the new street beats of 1989 set us free, as

rock had always promised? Back in print at last, *Signifying Rappers* is a rare record of a city and a summer by two great thinkers, writers, and friends. With a new foreword by Mark Costello on his experience writing with David Foster Wallace, this rerelease cannot be missed.

david foster wallace this is water: The Great Mental Models, Volume 1 Shane Parrish, Rhiannon Beaubien, 2024-10-15 Discover the essential thinking tools you've been missing with The Great Mental Models series by Shane Parrish, New York Times bestselling author and the mind behind the acclaimed Farnam Street blog and "The Knowledge Project" podcast. This first book in the series is your guide to learning the crucial thinking tools nobody ever taught you. Time and time again, great thinkers such as Charlie Munger and Warren Buffett have credited their success to mental models—representations of how something works that can scale onto other fields. Mastering a small number of mental models enables you to rapidly grasp new information, identify patterns others miss, and avoid the common mistakes that hold people back. The Great Mental Models: Volume 1, General Thinking Concepts shows you how making a few tiny changes in the way you think can deliver big results. Drawing on examples from history, business, art, and science, this book details nine of the most versatile, all-purpose mental models you can use right away to improve your decision making and productivity. This book will teach you how to: Avoid blind spots when looking at problems. Find non-obvious solutions. Anticipate and achieve desired outcomes. Play to your strengths, avoid your weaknesses, ... and more. The Great Mental Models series demystifies once elusive concepts and illuminates rich knowledge that traditional education overlooks. This series is the most comprehensive and accessible guide on using mental models to better understand our world, solve problems, and gain an advantage.

david foster wallace this is water: List of the Lost Morrissey, 2015-09-24 'Beware the novelist . . . intimate and indiscreet . . . pompous, prophetic airs . . . here is the fact of fiction . . . an American tale where, naturally, evil conquers good, and none live happily ever after, for the complicated pangs of the empty experiences of flesh-and-blood human figures are the reason why nothing can ever be enough. To read a book is to let a root sink down. List of the lost is the reality of what is true battling against what is permitted to be true.' Morrissey Penguin Books is delighted to announce the forthcoming publication of *List of the Lost*, Morrissey's extraordinary novel, on 24 September.

david foster wallace this is water: Way More than Luck Various, 2015-03-10 The commencement speech is the most popular public address of our time, shared every spring and remembered for years. Here, in an anthology of some of the finest of the genre, brilliant creative minds in every sector offer their wisdom: David Foster Wallace on living a compassionate life, Debbie Millman on the importance of taking risks, Michael Lewis on the responsibility that good fortune merits—and so many other greats. Some of this advice is grand (believe in the impossible), and some of it is granular enough to check off a life list (donate five percent of your money or your time). All of it is universally uplifting. Handsomely packaged with a silkscreened cloth spine and energetic typography throughout, this book is a smart, special gift for graduates and anyone embarking on a new adventure. Includes speeches from: Dick Costolo, Nora Ephron, Ira Glass, Khaled Hosseini, Barbara Kingsolver, Madeleine L'Engle, Michael Lewis, Debbie Millman, Eileen Myles, Jonathan Safran Foer, Michael Uslan, David Foster Wallace, Bradley Whitford, and Tom Wolfe.

david foster wallace this is water: Every Love Story Is a Ghost Story D. T. Max, 2012-08-30 The acclaimed New York Times–bestselling biography and “emotionally detailed portrait of the artist as a young man” (Michiko Kakutani, *The New York Times*) In the first biography of the iconic David Foster Wallace, D.T. Max paints the portrait of a man, self-conscious, obsessive and struggling to find meaning. If Wallace was right when he declared he was “frightfully and thoroughly conventional,” it is only because over the course of his short life and stunning career, he wrestled intimately and relentlessly with the fundamental anxiety of being human. In his characteristic lucid and quick-witted style, Max untangles Wallace’s anxious sense of self, his volatile and sometimes abusive connection with women, and above all, his fraught relationship with fiction as he emerges

with his masterpiece *Infinite Jest*. Written with the cooperation of Wallace's family and friends and with access to hundreds of unpublished letters, manuscripts and journals, this captivating biography unveils the life of the profoundly complicated man who gave voice to what we thought we could not say.

david foster wallace this is water: Consider the Lobster David Foster Wallace, 2007 Do lobsters feel pain? Did Franz Kafka have a sick sense of humour? What is John Updike's deal anyway? And who won the Adult Video News' Female Performer of the Year Award the same year Gwyneth Paltrow won her Oscar? David Foster Wallace answers these questions and more in his new book of hilarious non-fiction. For this collection, David Foster Wallace immerses himself in the three-ring circus that is the presidential race in order to document one of the most vicious campaigns in recent history. Later he strolls from booth to booth at a lobster festival in Maine and risks life and limb to get to the bottom of the lobster question. Then he wheedles his way into an L.A. radio studio, armed with tubs of chicken, to get the behind-the-scenes view of a conservative talkshow featuring a host with an unnatural penchant for clothing that only looks good on the radio. In what is sure to be a much-talked-about exploration of distinctly modern subjects, one of the sharpest minds of our time delves into some of life's most delicious topics.

david foster wallace this is water: Writing the Nation: A Concise Introduction to American Literature 1865 to Present Amy Berke, Robert Bleil, Jordan Cofer, Doug Davis, 2023-12-01 In 'Writing the Nation: A Concise Introduction to American Literature 1865 to Present,' editors Amy Berke, Robert Bleil, Jordan Cofer, and Doug Davis curate a comprehensive exploration of American literary evolution from the aftermath of the Civil War to contemporary times. This anthology expertly weaves a tapestry of diverse literary styles and themes, encapsulating the dynamic shifts in American culture and identity. Through carefully selected works, the collection illustrates the rich dialogue between historical contexts and literary expression, showcasing seminal pieces that have shaped American literature's landscape. The diversity of periods and perspectives offers readers a panoramic view of the country's literary heritage, making it a significant compilation for scholars and enthusiasts alike. The contributing authors and editors, each with robust backgrounds in American literature, bring to the table a depth of scholarly expertise and a passion for the subject matter. Their collective work reflects a broad spectrum of American life and thought, aligning with major historical and cultural movements from Realism and Modernism to Postmodernism. This anthology not only marks the evolution of American literary forms and themes but also mirrors the nation's complex history and diverse narratives. 'Writing the Nation' is an essential volume for those who wish to delve into the heart of American literature. It offers readers a unique opportunity to experience the multitude of voices, styles, and themes that have shaped the country's literary tradition. This collection represents an invaluable resource for students, scholars, and anyone interested in the development of American literature and the cultural forces that have influenced it. The anthology invites readers to engage with the vibrant dialogue among its pages, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of the United States' literary and cultural heritage.

david foster wallace this is water: 2Do Before I Die Michael Ogden, Chris Day, 2009-06-27 What's on your list? Do you dream of writing a novel someday? Or of recording an album of your own music? Would you spend a month backpacking through China if you could? Have you always secretly wanted to try skydiving? Or snorkeling? Or snowboarding? Whatever your personal goals or aspirations, no matter how humble or highfalutin, this revolutionary interactive handbook will help you jump-start life changes, and experience this world to the fullest. Perhaps your life is in transition-and, after all, whose isn't? Whether you're changing careers, planning for retirement, or just starting out after graduating from school . . . whether you're plotting to make your mark on the world, contemplating how you might best contribute, or simply wondering what's next in your life . . . 2Do Before I Die will help you set personal priorities, identify life goals, and realize your dreams. Less how to than why not, 2Do Before I Die features eye-opening true stories of people who've changed their lives significantly in small ways (by learning to swim, growing a beard, working in a soup kitchen) or taken great, life-altering leaps (by starting a business, having a baby, traveling the

world). With its provocative brainstorming exercises and ingenious practical tips, *2Do Before I Die* encourages and enables you to create your own ultimate 2Do list -- one that can serve as your personal road map toward a uniquely rich life.

david foster wallace this is water: Girl with Curious Hair David Foster Wallace, 1989 A collection of short stories by David Foster Wallace that explore the different ways people live their lives.

david foster wallace this is water: Up, Simba! David Foster Wallace, 2000-09-15 The Director's Cut (three times longer than the RS article) is an incisive, funny, thoughtful piece about life on Bullshit One -- the nickname for the press bus that followed McCain's Straight Talk Express. This piece becomes ever more relevant, as we discuss what we know, don't know, and don't want to know about the way our political campaigns work.

david foster wallace this is water: Although Of Course You End Up Becoming Yourself David Lipsky, 2010-04-13 NOW A MAJOR MOTION PICTURE, STARRING JASON SEGAL AND JESSE EISENBERG, DIRECTED BY JAMES PONSOLDT An indelible portrait of David Foster Wallace, by turns funny and inspiring, based on a five-day trip with award-winning writer David Lipsky during Wallace's Infinite Jest tour In David Lipsky's view, David Foster Wallace was the best young writer in America. Wallace's pieces for Harper's magazine in the '90s were, according to Lipsky, "like hearing for the first time the brain voice of everybody I knew: Here was how we all talked, experienced, thought. It was like smelling the damp in the air, seeing the first flash from a storm a mile away. You knew something gigantic was coming." Then Rolling Stone sent Lipsky to join Wallace on the last leg of his book tour for Infinite Jest, the novel that made him internationally famous. They lose to each other at chess. They get iced-in at an airport. They dash to Chicago to catch a make-up flight. They endure a terrible reader's escort in Minneapolis. Wallace does a reading, a signing, an NPR appearance. Wallace gives in and imbibes titanic amounts of hotel television (what he calls an "orgy of spectatorship"). They fly back to Illinois, drive home, walk Wallace's dogs. Amid these everyday events, Wallace tells Lipsky remarkable things—everything he can about his life, how he feels, what he thinks, what terrifies and fascinates and confounds him—in the writing voice Lipsky had come to love. Lipsky took notes, stopped envying him, and came to feel about him—that grateful, awake feeling—the same way he felt about Infinite Jest. Then Lipsky heads to the airport, and Wallace goes to a dance at a Baptist church. A biography in five days, *Although Of Course You End Up Becoming Yourself* is David Foster Wallace as few experienced this great American writer. Told in his own words, here is Wallace's own story, and his astonishing, humane, alert way of looking at the world; here are stories of being a young writer—of being young generally—trying to knit together your ideas of who you should be and who other people expect you to be, and of being young in March of 1996. And of what it was like to be with and—as he tells it—what it was like to become David Foster Wallace. If you can think of times in your life that you've treated people with extraordinary decency and love, and pure uninterested concern, just because they were valuable as human beings. The ability to do that with ourselves. To treat ourselves the way we would treat a really good, precious friend. Or a tiny child of ours that we absolutely loved more than life itself. And I think it's probably possible to achieve that. I think part of the job we're here for is to learn how to do it. I know that sounds a little pious. —David Foster Wallace

david foster wallace this is water: McCain's Promise David Foster Wallace, 2008-06-01 Is John McCain For Real? That's the question David Foster Wallace set out to explore when he first climbed aboard Senator McCain's campaign caravan in February 2000. It was a moment when McCain was increasingly perceived as a harbinger of change, the anticandidate whose goal was to inspire young Americans to devote themselves to causes greater than their own self-interest. And many young Americans were beginning to take notice. To get at something riveting and unspinnable and true about John McCain, Wallace finds he must pierce the smoke screen of spin doctors and media manipulators. And he succeeds—in a characteristically potent blast of journalistic brio that not only captures the lunatic rough-and-tumble of a presidential campaign but also delivers a compelling inquiry into John McCain himself: the senator, the POW, the campaign finance reformer, the

candidate, the man.

david foster wallace this is water: 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 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.

david foster wallace this is water: Everything and More: A Compact History of Infinity David Foster Wallace, 2010-09-21 The period from the 5th to the 7th century AD was characterised by far-reaching structural changes that affected the entire west of the Roman Empire. This process used to be regarded by scholars as part of the dissolution of Roman order, but in current discussions it is now examined more critically. The contributions to this volume of conference papers combine approaches from history and literature studies in order to review the changing forms and fields of the establishment of collective identities, and to analyse them in their mutual relationships.

david foster wallace this is water: On Tennis David Foster Wallace, 2014-06-24 From the author of *Infinite Jest* and *Consider the Lobster*: a collection of five brilliant essays on tennis, from the author's own experience as a junior player to his celebrated profile of Roger Federer at the peak of his powers. A long-time rabid fan of tennis, and a regionally ranked tennis player in his youth, David Foster Wallace wrote about the game like no one else. *On Tennis* presents David Foster Wallace's five essays on the sport, published between 1990 and 2006, and hailed as some of the greatest and most innovative sports writing of our time. This lively and entertaining collection begins with Wallace's own experience as a prodigious tennis player (*Derivative Sport in Tornado Alley*). He also challenges the sports memoir genre (*How Tracy Austen Broke My Heart*), takes us to the US Open (*Democracy and Commerce at the U.S. Open*), and profiles of two of the world's greatest tennis players (*Tennis Player Michael Joyce's Professional Artistry as a Paradigm of Certain Stuff About Choice, Freedom, Limitation, Joy, Grotesquerie, and Human Completeness and Federer Both Flesh and Not*). With infectious enthusiasm and enormous heart, Wallace's writing shows us the beauty, complexity, and brilliance of the game he loved best.

david foster wallace this is water: The World Beyond Your Head Matthew Crawford, 2015-04-09 From Matthew Crawford, 'one of the most influential thinkers of our time' (*Sunday Times*), comes *The World Beyond Your Head* - a hugely ambitious manifesto on flourishing in the modern world. In this brilliant follow-up to *The Case for Working with Your Hands*, Crawford investigates the challenge of mastering one's own mind. With ever-increasing demands on our attention, how do we focus on what's really important in our lives? Exploring the intense focus of ice-hockey players, the zoned-out behaviour of gambling addicts, and the inherited craft of building pipe organs, Crawford argues that our current crisis of attention is the result of long-held assumptions in Western culture and that in order to flourish, we need to establish meaningful connections with the world, the people around us and the historical moment we live in. Praise for *The Case for Working With Your Hands*: 'The best book I have read for ages . . . a profound exploration of modern education, work and capitalism' *Telegraph* 'Full of interesting stories and thought-provoking aperçus enlivened with humour . . . Important, memorable and enjoyable' *The Times* 'Masterly' *Economist* Matthew Crawford is a philosopher and mechanic. He has a Ph.D. in political philosophy from the University of Chicago and served as a postdoctoral fellow on its

Committee on Social Thought. Currently a senior fellow at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture at the University of Virginia, he also runs Shockoe Moto, a motorcycle repair shop.

david foster wallace this is water: The Unspeakable Failures of David Foster Wallace

Clare Hayes-Brady, 2016-02-25 This book examines the writing of David Foster Wallace, hailed as the voice of a generation on his death. Critics have identified horror of solipsism, obsession with sincerity and a corresponding ambivalence regarding postmodern irony, and detailed attention to contemporary culture as the central elements of Wallace's writing. Clare Hayes-Brady draws on the evolving discourses of Wallace studies, focusing on the unifying anti-teleology of his writing, arguing that that position is a fundamentally political response to the condition of neo-liberal America. She argues that Wallace's work is most unified by its resistance to closure, which pervades the structural, narrative and stylistic elements of his writing. Taking a broadly thematic approach to the numerous types of 'failure', or lack of completion, visible throughout his work, the book offers a framework within which to read Wallace's work as a coherent whole, rather than split along the lines of fiction versus non-fiction, or pre- and post-Infinite Jest, two critical positions that have become dominant over the last five years. While demonstrating the centrality of 'failure', the book also explores Wallace's approach to sincere communication as a recurring response to what he saw as the inane, self-absorbed commodification of language and society, along with less explored themes such as gender, naming and heroism. Situating Wallace as both a product of his time and an artist sui generis, Hayes-Brady details his abiding interest in philosophy, language and the struggle for an authentic self in late-twentieth-century America.

david foster wallace this is water: Lost Empress Sergio De La Pava, 2019-04-16 FROM THE

PEN/ROBERT W. BINGHAM PRIZE-WINNING AUTHOR OF A NAKED SINGULARITY Led by a renegade young owner out for revenge against her traitorous family, the Paterson Pork—New Jersey's only Indoor Football League franchise—is challenging the Dallas Cowboys for championship glory. Meanwhile, a brilliant and lethal mastermind has gotten himself intentionally thrown into prison on Rikers Island with plans to commit the most audacious crime of all time. And is the world ending? Maybe. Filled with impossible triumphs and grave injustices, *Lost Empress* is another brilliant, hilarious, and eccentric masterpiece from Sergio de la Pava: a vibrant exultation of a novel, populated by a cast of unforgettable characters—immigrants, exiles, and outsiders—who will have you rooting for them, right up until the end.

david foster wallace this is water: The Recognitions William Gaddis, 2020-11-24 A

postmodern masterpiece about fraud and forgery by one of the most distinctive, accomplished novelists of the last century. *The Recognitions* is a sweeping depiction of a world in which everything that anyone recognizes as beautiful or true or good emerges as anything but: our world. The book is a masquerade, moving from New England to New York to Madrid, from the art world to the underworld, but it centers on the story of Wyatt Gwyon, the son of a New England minister, who forsakes religion to devote himself to painting, only to despair of his inspiration. In expiation, he will paint nothing but flawless copies of his revered old masters—copies, however, that find their way into the hands of a sinister financial wizard by the name of Recktall Brown, who of course sells them as the real thing. Dismissed uncomprehendingly by reviewers on publication in 1955 and ignored by the literary world for decades after, *The Recognitions* is now established as one of the great American novels, immensely ambitious and entirely unique, a book of wild, Boschian inspiration and outrageous comedy that is also profoundly serious and sad.

david foster wallace this is water: Levels of the Game John McPhee, 2011-04-01 Levels of the

Game is John McPhee's astonishing account of a tennis match played by Arthur Ashe against Clark Graebner at Forest Hills in 1968. It begins with the ball rising into the air for the initial serve and ends with the final point. McPhee provides a brilliant, stroke-by-stroke description while examining the backgrounds and attitudes which have molded the players' games. This may be the high point of American sports journalism- Robert Lipsyte, *The New York Times*

david foster wallace this is water: Jerry on Jerry Dennis McNally, 2015-11-24 These

never-before-published interviews with Jerry Garcia reveal his thoughts on religion, politics, his

personal life, and his creative process. *Jerry on Jerry* provides new insight into the beloved frontman of the Grateful Dead in time for the 50th Anniversary of the band. Released by the Jerry Garcia Family and made available to the public for the first time, these are some of the most candid, intimate interviews with Jerry Garcia ever published. Here, Garcia speaks openly about everything from growing up in the San Francisco Bay Area and his first encounters with early R&B to his thoughts on songwriting, LSD, the Beats and Neal Cassady, government, movies, and more. Illustrated with family photographs, ephemera, and Jerry's artwork, *Jerry on Jerry* presents uniquely poignant, unguarded, and astute moments, showing a side of Jerry that even his biggest fans have not known.

david foster wallace this is water: Evolution of Desire Cynthia L Haven, 2018-04-01 René Girard (1923–2015) was one of the leading thinkers of our era—a provocative sage who bypassed prevailing orthodoxies to offer a bold, sweeping vision of human nature, human history, and human destiny. His oeuvre, offering a “mimetic theory” of cultural origins and human behavior, inspired such writers as Milan Kundera and J. M. Coetzee, and earned him a place among the forty “immortals” of the Académie Française. Too often, however, his work is considered only within various academic specializations. This first-ever biographical study takes a wider view. Cynthia L. Haven traces the evolution of Girard’s thought in parallel with his life and times. She recounts his formative years in France and his arrival in a country torn by racial division, and reveals his insights into the collective delusions of our technological world and the changing nature of warfare. Drawing on interviews with Girard and his colleagues, *Evolution of Desire: A Life of René Girard* provides an essential introduction to one of the twentieth century’s most controversial and original minds.

david foster wallace this is water: Civilized to Death Christopher Ryan, 2020-08-11 The New York Times bestselling coauthor of *Sex at Dawn* explores the ways in which “progress” has perverted the way we live—how we eat, learn, feel, mate, parent, communicate, work, and die—in this “engaging, extensively documented, well-organized, and thought-provoking” (Booklist) book. Most of us have instinctive evidence the world is ending—balmy December days, face-to-face conversation replaced with heads-to-screens zomboidism, a world at constant war, a political system in disarray. We hear some myths and lies so frequently that they feel like truths: Civilization is humankind’s greatest accomplishment. Progress is undeniable. Count your blessings. You’re lucky to be alive here and now. Well, maybe we are and maybe we aren’t. *Civilized to Death* counters the idea that progress is inherently good, arguing that the “progress” defining our age is analogous to an advancing disease. Prehistoric life, of course, was not without serious dangers and disadvantages. Many babies died in infancy. A broken bone, infected wound, snakebite, or difficult pregnancy could be life-threatening. But ultimately, Christopher Ryan questions, were these pre-civilized dangers more murderous than modern scourges, such as car accidents, cancers, cardiovascular disease, and a technologically prolonged dying process? *Civilized to Death* “will make you see our so-called progress in a whole new light” (Book Riot) and adds to the timely conversation that “the way we have been living is no longer sustainable, at least as long as we want the earth to outlive us” (Psychology Today). Ryan makes the claim that we should start looking backwards to find our way into a better future.

david foster wallace this is water: When Breath Becomes Air (Indonesian Edition) Paul Kalanithi, 2016-10-06 Pada usia ketiga puluh enam, Paul Kalanithi merasa suratan nasibnya berjalan dengan begitu sempurna. Paul hampir saja menyelesaikan masa pelatihan luar biasa panjangnya sebagai ahli bedah saraf selama sepuluh tahun. Beberapa rumah sakit dan universitas ternama telah menawari posisi penting yang diimpikannya selama ini. Penghargaan nasional pun telah diraihinya. Dan kini, Paul hendak kembali menata ikatan pernikahannya yang merenggang, memenuhi peran sebagai sosok suami yang ia janjikan. Akan tetapi, secara tiba-tiba, kanker mencengkeram paru-parunya, melumpuhkan organ-organ penting dalam tubuhnya. Seluruh masa depan yang direncanakan Paul seketika menguap. Pada satu hari ia adalah seorang dokter yang menangani orang-orang yang sekarat, tetapi pada hari berikutnya, ia adalah pasien yang mencoba bertahan hidup. Apa yang membuat hidup berharga dan bermakna, mengingat semua akan sirna pada

akhirnya? Apa yang Anda lakukan saat masa depan tak lagi menuntun pada cita-cita yang diidamkan, melainkan pada masa kini yang tanpa akhir? Apa artinya memiliki anak, merawat kehidupan baru saat kehidupan lain meredup? When Breath Becomes Air akan membawa kita bergelut pada pertanyaan-pertanyaan penting tentang hidup dan seberapa layak kita diberi pilihan untuk menjalani kehidupan. [Mizan, Bentang Pustaka, Memoar, Biografi, Kisah, Medis, Terjemahan, Indonesia]

david foster wallace this is water: The Seventh Function of Language Laurent Binet, 2017-08-01 "A cunning, often hilarious mystery for the Mensa set and fans of Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose* and Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia*." —Heller McAlpin, NPR Paris, 1980. The literary critic Roland Barthes dies—struck by a laundry van—after lunch with the presidential candidate François Mitterand. The world of letters mourns a tragic accident. But what if it wasn't an accident at all? What if Barthes was . . . murdered? In *The Seventh Function of Language*, Laurent Binet spins a madcap secret history of the French intelligentsia, starring such luminaries as Jacques Derrida, Umberto Eco, Gilles Deleuze, Michel Foucault, Judith Butler, and Julia Kristeva—as well as the hapless police detective Jacques Bayard, whose new case will plunge him into the depths of literary theory (starting with the French version of *Roland Barthes for Dummies*). Soon Bayard finds himself in search of a lost manuscript by the linguist Roman Jakobson on the mysterious "seventh function of language." A brilliantly erudite comedy, *The Seventh Function of Language* takes us from the cafés of Saint-Germain to the corridors of Cornell University, and into the duels and orgies of the Logos Club, a secret philosophical society that dates to the Roman Empire. Binet has written both a send-up and a wildly exuberant celebration of the French intellectual tradition. "Binet juxtaposes car chases with highbrow in-jokes and ruminations. The book is a love letter to the power of language—the most dangerous weapon is the tongue." —The New Yorker "An affectionate send-up of an Umberto Eco-style intellectual thriller that doubles as an exemplar of the genre, filled with suspense, elaborate conspiracies, and exotic locales." —Esquire

david foster wallace this is water: Getting Away from Already Being Pretty Much Away from It All David Foster Wallace, 2012-04-01 Beloved for his keen eye, sharp wit, and relentless self-mockery, David Foster Wallace has been celebrated by both critics and fans as the voice of a generation. In this hilarious essay, originally published in the collection *A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again*, he chronicles seven days in the Caribbean aboard the m.v. Zenith. As he partakes in supposedly fun activities offered on the luxury tour, he offers riotous anecdotes and unparalleled insight into contemporary American culture.

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