

DAVID FOSTER WALLACE IN CONTEXT

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.

CLARE HAYES-BRADY is Associate Professor in American Literature at University College Dublin. She is the author of *The Unspeakable Failures of David Foster Wallace: Language, Identity, and Resistance* (2016).

Cambridge University Press & Assessment
978-1-316-51332-3 — David Foster Wallace in Context
Edited by Clare Hayes-Brady
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EDITED BY
CLARE HAYES-BRADY

University College Dublin



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Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom
 One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
 314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India
 103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment,
 a department of the University of Cambridge.

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www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781316513323

DOI: 10.1017/9781009064545

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 of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take
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First published 2023

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

A Cataloging-in-Publication data record for this book is available from the Library of Congress

NAMES: Hayes-Brady, Clare, editor.

TITLE: David Foster Wallace in context / edited by Clare Hayes-Brady.

DESCRIPTION: Cambridge ; New York, NY : Cambridge University Press, 2022. | Includes
 bibliographical references.

IDENTIFIERS: LCCN 2022033905 (print) | LCCN 2022033906 (ebook) | ISBN 9781316513323
 (hardback) | ISBN 9781009073516 (paperback) | ISBN 9781009064545 (epub)

SUBJECTS: LCSH: Wallace, David Foster—Criticism and interpretation. | BISAC: LITERARY
 CRITICISM / American / General | LCGFT: Literary criticism.

CLASSIFICATION: LCC PS3573.A425635 Z6624 2022 (print) | LCC PS3573.A425635 (ebook) |
 DDC 813/.54—dc23/eng/20220916

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2022033905>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2022033906>

ISBN 978-1-316-51332-3 Hardback

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Acknowledgments

It has been a strange time to gather and edit a book of essays. Between the development of the idea and team for the volume and its production, life took on a strange new shape, with the arrival of a new disease that made the world seem both infinitely smaller and infinitely larger. In the spirit of this strange, networked remoteness, it seems appropriate to highlight and thank the many people who have made this volume possible. Working through the pandemic has given me a renewed value for the yielding, fractal strangeness of Wallace's writing and a greater appreciation for the collaborative spirit of the community of scholars of his work. This community has worked through the strangest and most stressful period many of us can recall, producing scholarship full of insight, wit and enthusiasm. I am hugely indebted to them, and appreciative of the generosity of their writing, their thinking and their time.

Ray Ryan, editor at Cambridge University Press, approached me to edit this volume in 2018, while I was on maternity leave and casting about for my next project and a sense of purpose. What a piece of work to be offered! Ray's advice and support throughout this process have been invaluable, both to the book and to my own development as a scholar and academic. During the process of developing the volume, two reviewers provided rich and useful feedback; the book would be much inferior without their guidance, and I thank them for their time and expertise. Having gathered the essays, I realized I needed eyes sharper than my own to help assemble them to the best advantage. In this respect, I could not have had better collaborators than Dr. Edward Jackson, whose work on the bibliography has been impeccable, and Dr. Dara Downey, copy editor and proofreader extraordinaire, whose attention to both micro and macro levels of detail is unparalleled. They are wonderful colleagues and friends, and I thank them sincerely.

This book has occupied most of my professional attention and time since 2019, and my colleagues at University College Dublin have provided

a collegial, supportive space, always ready with advice and cheer, and tea (either real or, latterly, virtual). In particular, I must thank Dr. Katherine Fama, Dr. Nerys Williams and Dr. Maria Stuart, whose unstinting support and friendship has been critical to my career and to the development of this volume. Lastly, my family has been a source of stalwart, if occasionally baffled, support throughout the many iterations of reading, shaping, editing and polishing, and so, to Maz, May, Ely and Leo, my unending love and gratitude.

Abbreviations

Page references in notes will be given using the following abbreviations:

- BFN* *Both Flesh and Not: Essays*. New York: Little, Brown, 2012
- BI* *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1999
- BS* *The Broom of the System*. New York: Penguin, 1987
- CL* *Consider the Lobster*. New York: Little, Brown, 2005
- DFWR* *The David Foster Wallace Reader*. Eds. Karen Green and Michael Pietsch. New York: Little, Brown, 2014
- EM* *Everything and More*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2003
- FTL* *Fate, Time and Language*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2010
- GCH* *Girl with Curious Hair*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1989
- IJ* *Infinite Jest*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1996
- OB* *Oblivion*. New York: Little, Brown, 2004
- SFT* *A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1997
- SR* *Signifying Rappers. With Mark Costello*. New York: Ecco Press, 1990
- SS* "Solomon Silverfish." *Sonora Review*, 16 (Autumn 1987), 54–81
- ST* *String Theory*. New York: Library of America/Penguin Random House, 2016
- TIW* *This Is Water*. New York: Little, Brown, 2009
- TPK* *The Pale King*. Ed. Michael Pietsch. New York: Little, Brown, 2011

Cambridge University Press & Assessment
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