

david foster wallace both flesh and not

David Foster Wallace Both Flesh and Not: Exploring the Duality of a Literary Genius

david foster wallace both flesh and not captures an intriguing paradox at the heart of one of contemporary literature's most enigmatic figures. Wallace's work and persona seem to oscillate between the tangible and the intangible, the deeply personal and the expansively philosophical, the intensely human and the almost spectral presence he left behind. To understand David Foster Wallace both flesh and not is to delve into a complex interplay of identity, creativity, and existential inquiry that continues to fascinate readers, scholars, and writers alike.

In this article, we'll explore this duality through the lens of his writing style, thematic concerns, and cultural impact, while weaving in some lesser-known insights about the man behind the words. Whether you're a longtime fan or new to his work, this exploration will deepen your appreciation for the unique space Wallace occupies in American literature.

The Flesh: David Foster Wallace as a Human Being

When we think about David Foster Wallace both flesh and not, the "flesh" aspect points us toward the very real, tangible person—the man who walked this earth, taught classes, struggled with mental health, and lived through the mundane alongside the extraordinary. Wallace was born in 1962 and became a towering figure in late 20th-century and early 21st-century literature. His personal struggles with depression and addiction were well documented and often reflected in his writing, giving readers a glimpse into the raw vulnerability behind his intellectual brilliance.

The Man Behind the Words

Wallace's personal history is inseparable from his work. He was a Harvard and Amherst graduate, known for his prodigious intellect and work ethic. Despite his academic accomplishments, Wallace remained deeply empathetic and accessible, qualities that shine through in his essays and fiction. His teaching career, especially at Pomona College, revealed a man dedicated to nurturing new writers and thinkers.

Understanding David Foster Wallace both flesh and not involves acknowledging his struggles with mental illness. His openness about depression and his

tragic suicide in 2008 added layers of poignancy to his work. These elements remind us that the “flesh” side of Wallace is marked by human fragility, even as his writing often reaches for something transcendent.

Physicality and Presence in His Work

Wallace was acutely aware of the body’s role in experience. From the exhaustive descriptions in *Infinite Jest* to the intimate moments in his essays, he never divorced the mind from the flesh. His exploration of addiction, for example, often focused on the physical compulsion and the psychological aftermath, grounding his philosophical musings in the lived reality of the body.

The Not: The Ethereal and Intellectual Legacy

If the “flesh” of David Foster Wallace is his human, lived experience, the “not” encompasses the ethereal, intellectual, and almost ghostly imprint he left on literature and culture. His influence transcends his physical presence; it exists in the ideas, narratives, and stylistic innovations that continue to inspire.

Wallace’s Unique Literary Voice

David Foster Wallace both flesh and not is perhaps best understood through his distinctive literary voice—a blend of high intellect, humor, and emotional depth. His prose style, characterized by lengthy footnotes, digressions, and a conversational tone, broke conventional narrative molds and invited readers to engage actively with complex ideas.

This “not” aspect of Wallace is where his work becomes larger than life. His novels and essays tackle themes such as consciousness, addiction, entertainment, and the search for meaning in a postmodern world. These themes resonate with readers in a way that feels almost otherworldly, as if Wallace’s mind operates on a plane beyond ordinary experience.

The Philosophical and Cultural Impact

Wallace’s writing is deeply philosophical, often grappling with questions about authenticity, free will, and the nature of happiness. This intellectual legacy—the “not” in David Foster Wallace both flesh and not—has cemented his status as a thinker who challenged the cultural narratives of his time.

More than just a literary figure, Wallace became a cultural touchstone for a

generation seeking depth in a media-saturated, fast-paced world. His critiques of irony and cynicism, especially in essays like "E Unibus Pluram," continue to influence writers, critics, and academics.

Interweaving Flesh and Not: How Wallace's Duality Shapes Reader Experience

The interplay between the "flesh" and "not" in David Foster Wallace's life and work creates a dynamic tension that enriches the reader's engagement. His deeply personal struggles lend authenticity to his intellectual pursuits, while his expansive ideas elevate personal pain into universal inquiry.

Embracing Complexity in Storytelling

Wallace's narrative complexity mirrors the complexity of being both "flesh and not." His use of nonlinear storytelling, fragmented narratives, and metafictional techniques reflect the fractured nature of human consciousness and the search for coherence in chaos.

This approach encourages readers to embrace ambiguity and multiplicity, recognizing that identity and experience are never fixed but always in flux. When reading Wallace, one confronts the paradox of being fully embodied and yet striving toward something beyond the self.

Practical Insights from Wallace's Duality

For writers and thinkers looking to draw inspiration from David Foster Wallace both flesh and not, several practical lessons emerge:

- **Balance intellect and emotion:** Wallace shows how intellectual rigor and emotional vulnerability can coexist powerfully in writing.
- **Embrace complexity:** Don't shy away from complicated narratives or ideas; they often reflect the true nature of human experience.
- **Be authentic:** Personal struggles and imperfections can deepen the resonance of creative work.
- **Challenge conventions:** Experimenting with form and style can open new avenues for expression and engagement.

David Foster Wallace in the Digital Age

In today's fast-moving digital culture, the tension between the "flesh" and "not" in David Foster Wallace's work feels more relevant than ever. His keen insights into media saturation, distraction, and the search for meaning seem prophetic in an era dominated by screens and fragmented attention spans.

Wallace's Relevance to Contemporary Readers

Wallace anticipated many challenges of the digital age—the superficiality of internet culture, the alienation wrought by constant connectivity, and the struggle to remain authentic within mass media. His essays, such as those on television and entertainment, offer valuable perspectives on how we consume information and construct identity.

For readers today, engaging with Wallace's work is not just a literary exercise but a way to navigate the complexities of modern life. His call for empathy, mindfulness, and deep engagement speaks across time, reminding us of the enduring human need to be both fully present in the flesh and open to the "not" – the ideas, emotions, and connections that transcend the physical.

David Foster Wallace both flesh and not remains a compelling framework for understanding a writer whose life and work defy simple categorization. His human vulnerabilities and intellectual heights intertwine to create a legacy that continues to spark conversation, inspire creativity, and challenge the boundaries of literature. Whether through his groundbreaking fiction or his incisive essays, Wallace's presence lingers—both as a tangible figure who lived and struggled, and as an enduring spirit whose ideas continue to shape how we think about ourselves and the world around us.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is 'Both Flesh and Not' by David Foster Wallace?

'Both Flesh and Not' is a posthumously published collection of essays, lectures, and other writings by David Foster Wallace that explore themes of philosophy, literature, and human experience.

When was 'Both Flesh and Not' published?

'Both Flesh and Not' was published in 2012, several years after David Foster Wallace's death in 2008.

What are the main themes explored in 'Both Flesh and Not'?

The book delves into themes such as the nature of consciousness, language, suffering, and the interplay between physical existence and abstract thought.

Is 'Both Flesh and Not' a novel or a collection of essays?

'Both Flesh and Not' is a collection of essays and lectures, not a novel.

How does 'Both Flesh and Not' contribute to understanding David Foster Wallace's philosophy?

The writings in 'Both Flesh and Not' provide deeper insight into Wallace's thoughts on ethics, self-awareness, and the human condition, complementing his fiction work.

Are there any notable essays included in 'Both Flesh and Not'?

Yes, the collection includes several notable essays such as his reflections on philosophy and language, which were previously unpublished or hard to find.

Who edited 'Both Flesh and Not'?

The collection was edited by Wallace's literary executor and scholars who compiled his unpublished and scattered works.

How does 'Both Flesh and Not' compare to David Foster Wallace's other works like 'Infinite Jest'?

'Both Flesh and Not' is more philosophical and essayistic, focusing on Wallace's nonfiction thoughts, whereas 'Infinite Jest' is a complex, fictional narrative.

Where can I find 'Both Flesh and Not' for reading?

'Both Flesh and Not' is available in bookstores, online retailers, and digital platforms such as Kindle and Audible.

Additional Resources

David Foster Wallace Both Flesh and Not: An Analytical Exploration of His Literary Dualities

david foster wallace both flesh and not serves as a compelling entry point into the intricate and layered universe of one of contemporary literature's most enigmatic figures. Known for his sprawling narratives, intellectual rigor, and profound emotional depth, Wallace's work often straddles the line between the corporeal and the abstract, the tangible and the metaphysical. This duality—being “both flesh and not”—captures the essence of his literary approach, where human experience is dissected with surgical precision yet viewed through a lens that transcends mere physicality.

This phrase encapsulates the tension at the heart of Wallace's oeuvre: the struggle to reconcile the raw, often painful realities of existence with the intellectual and existential frameworks that attempt to make sense of them. An investigation into this theme reveals much about his narrative style, thematic concerns, and the lasting impact of his work on modern literature.

Understanding the Duality: Flesh and Not in Wallace's Writing

At its core, the phrase “both flesh and not” mirrors the fundamental paradox that characterizes much of Wallace's storytelling. His characters are vividly human—flawed, vulnerable, and deeply embodied—yet they are frequently caught in moments of existential questioning that elevate their experiences beyond the physical realm.

Wallace's writing style often reflects this tension. His prose is dense and detailed, meticulously describing physical sensations, environments, and interpersonal interactions. Simultaneously, it delves into abstract philosophical inquiries about consciousness, authenticity, and the search for meaning. This interplay between the sensory and the cerebral is a hallmark of his work.

Manifestations in Major Works

The dual nature of “both flesh and not” is evident in several of Wallace's seminal works, highlighting his unique narrative strategy.

- **Infinite Jest:** This magnum opus exemplifies the collision of physicality and abstraction. Characters are embroiled in addiction, entertainment, and obsession—very bodily, immediate concerns—yet the novel's sprawling structure and thematic complexity probe into questions of identity, free will, and the nature of happiness, which exist beyond the corporeal.
- **Both Flesh and Not** (essay): In this nonfiction piece, Wallace explicitly grapples with the duality of human experience, exploring how the physical body and intellectual self interact and sometimes conflict. The

essay serves as a direct articulation of the thematic concerns that permeate his fiction.

- **Consider the Lobster:** Here, Wallace explores the ethics of eating and the consciousness of non-human creatures—a juxtaposition of flesh (the lobster’s body) and the cognitive dissonance humans face in contemplating pain and suffering that is “not” human.

Philosophical Underpinnings and Literary Techniques

Wallace’s exploration of “both flesh and not” is deeply informed by philosophical traditions, particularly existentialism and phenomenology. He probes the boundaries between subjective experience and objective reality, using literary techniques that foreground this liminal space.

Stream of Consciousness and Metafiction

One of Wallace’s signature techniques is his use of stream of consciousness combined with metafictional commentary. This allows readers to inhabit the immediate, flesh-bound consciousness of his characters while simultaneously stepping back to reflect on the act of narration itself—thus moving “beyond” the physical into a meta-awareness of existence.

Footnotes as a Structural Device

His extensive use of footnotes, especially in *Infinite Jest*, functions as a metaphorical extension of the “not flesh” aspect. These annotations disrupt the linear narrative flow, inviting readers into a more cerebral engagement that contrasts with the visceral immediacy of the main text. This technique exemplifies the tension between corporeal storytelling and intellectual abstraction.

The Impact of Wallace’s Duality on Readers and Critics

The dialectic of “both flesh and not” resonates strongly with readers who seek literature that challenges conventional boundaries. Wallace’s ability to simultaneously engage the physical senses and the intellectual faculties results in a reading experience that is immersive and thought-provoking.

Emotional Authenticity Versus Intellectual Complexity

A significant aspect of Wallace's appeal lies in his capacity to balance emotional authenticity with intellectual complexity. Readers often find themselves confronted with raw human emotions—loneliness, despair, joy—while navigating intricate philosophical ideas. This dual engagement can be both rewarding and demanding, contributing to his reputation as a writer who does not shy away from complexity.

Critical Reception and Academic Interest

Scholars have extensively analyzed Wallace's representation of "both flesh and not," situating his work within postmodern and post-postmodern literary contexts. His blending of highbrow philosophical discourse with everyday human concerns challenges traditional literary categorizations, making him a focal point for debates on narrative form and the role of literature in exploring consciousness.

Pros and Cons of Wallace's Embrace of Duality

While Wallace's thematic focus on the intersection of the physical and metaphysical has garnered acclaim, it also presents certain challenges.

- **Pros:**

- Creates multilayered narratives that reward deep reading and analysis.
- Offers a nuanced portrayal of human experience that acknowledges complexity and contradiction.
- Innovative narrative techniques enrich literary form and expand the possibilities of storytelling.

- **Cons:**

- Dense prose and structural complexity can alienate casual readers.
- The intellectual demands of his work may overshadow emotional engagement for some audiences.
- Footnotes and digressions sometimes disrupt narrative flow,

potentially detracting from immersion.

David Foster Wallace's Legacy: Beyond Flesh and Not

The phrase "both flesh and not" not only encapsulates a recurrent theme in Wallace's writing but also symbolizes his enduring legacy. His work continues to inspire writers, critics, and readers to examine the porous boundaries between the physical world and the realm of ideas. Through his innovative literary techniques and profound exploration of human consciousness, Wallace invites a reconsideration of what it means to be fully human in an era marked by technological saturation and existential uncertainty.

In the end, David Foster Wallace's contribution lies in his unwavering commitment to portraying the fullness of human experience—embracing both its bodily realities and its ineffable mysteries. This duality remains central to understanding his place in literary history and the ongoing relevance of his work.

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david foster wallace both flesh and not: Both Flesh and Not David Foster Wallace, 2013 David Foster Wallace was heralded by critics and fans as the voice of a generation. This book collects together 15 of Wallace's essays, from 'Federer Both Flesh and Not', considered by many to be his non-fiction masterpiece, to 'The (As it Were) Seminal Importance of Terminator 2', his deft dissection of James Cameron's blockbuster.

david foster wallace both flesh and not: *David Foster Wallace's Toxic Sexuality* Edward Jackson, 2020-06-11 David Foster Wallace's *Toxic Sexuality: Hideousness, Neoliberalism, Spermatids* is the first full-length study of perhaps the most controversial aspect of Wallace's work – male sexuality. Departing from biographical accounts of Wallace's troubled relationship to sex, the book offers new and engaging close readings of this vexed topic in both his fiction and non-fiction. Wallace consistently returns to images of sexual toxicity across his career to argue that, when it comes to sex, men are immutably hideous. He makes this argument by drawing on a variety of neoliberal logics and spermatid metaphors, which in their appeal to apparently neutral economic processes and natural bodily facts, forestall the possibility that men can change. The book therefore

provides a revisionist account of Wallace's attitudes towards capitalism, as well as a critical dissection of his approach to masculinity and sexuality. In doing so, David Foster Wallace's *Toxic Sexuality* shows how Wallace can be considered a neoliberal writer, whose commitment to furthering male sexual toxicity is a disturbing but undeniable part of his literary project.

david foster wallace both flesh and not: Both Flesh And Not David Foster Wallace, 2012-11-29 *Both Flesh and Not* is an collection of essays and writing from the virtuosic genius David Foster Wallace Beloved for his brilliantly discerning eye, his verbal elasticity and his uniquely generous imagination, David Foster Wallace was heralded by critics and fans as the voice of a generation. Collected here are fifteen essays published for the first time in book form, including writing never published before in the UK. From 'Federer Both Flesh and Not', considered by many to be his non-fiction masterpiece; to 'The (As it Were) Seminal Importance of Terminator 2,' which deftly dissects James Cameron's blockbuster; to 'Fictional Futures and the Conspicuously Young', an examination of television's effect on a new generation of writers, the writing collected here swoops from erudite literary discussion to open-hearted engagement with the most familiar of our twentieth-century cultural references. A celebration of Wallace's great loves - for language, for precision, for meaning - and a feast of enjoyment for his fans, *Both Flesh and Not* is a fitting tribute to this writer who was never concerned with anything less important than what it means to be alive. Praise for David Foster Wallace: 'A visionary, a craftsman, a comedian . . . he's in a different time-space continuum from the rest of us' Zadie Smith 'Wallace's essays brim with cerebral energy, acute observation and fizzing wit. Enviably good' Sunday Times 'Wallace's exuberance and intellectual impishness are a delight . . . a superb comedian of culture' Guardian, James Wood David Foster Wallace wrote the novels *Infinite Jest* and *The Broom of the System*, and the short-story collections *Oblivion*, *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men* and *Girl with Curious Hair*. His non-fiction includes *Consider the Lobster*, *A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again*, *Everything and More*, *This is Water* and *Both Flesh and Not*. He died in 2008.

david foster wallace both flesh and not: The Problem of Free Will in David Foster Wallace Paolo Pitari, 2024-06-27 This book argues that David Foster Wallace failed to provide a response to the existential predicament of our time. Wallace wanted to confront despair through art, but he remained trapped, and his entrapment originates in the existentialist contradiction: the impossibility of affirming the meaningfulness of life and an ethics of compassion while believing in free will. To substantiate this thesis, the analysis reads Wallace in conversation with the existentialist philosophers and writers who influenced him: Søren Kierkegaard, Fyodor Dostoevsky, Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus, and Ludwig Wittgenstein. It compares his non-fiction with the sociologies of Christopher Lasch, Zygmunt Bauman, Ulrich Beck and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim, and Anthony Giddens. And it finds inspiration in Giacomo Leopardi, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Emanuele Severino to conclude that the philosophy which pervades Wallace's works entails despair and represents the essence of our civilization's interpretation of the world.

david foster wallace both flesh and not: 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.

david foster wallace both flesh and not: Der Spaß an der Sache David Foster Wallace, 2018-08-16 »Eine Kompetenzgranate mit Dauerzündung, die unterhalten, aber nicht unterfordern will« Ulrich Blumenbach. Zum zehnten Todestag des wichtigsten amerikanischen Autors seiner Generation erscheinen alle Essays in einem Band. Gerade die Essays und Reportagen sind für viele Kritiker und Leser Wallace' Königsdisziplin, und in dieser nach Themen geordneten Anthologie sind seine Beobachtungsschärfe und sprachliche Brillanz neu zu entdecken. Neben Romanen und Erzählungen hat David Foster Wallace immer auch Essays geschrieben, mal im Auftrag von Zeitschriften und Zeitungen, mal für Sammlungen. Zu den bekanntesten gehört sicherlich »Schrecklich amüsant - aber in Zukunft ohne mich«, sein berühmter Text über die Reise auf einem Kreuzfahrtschiff, und »Das hier ist Wasser«. Dieses monumentale Buch versammelt alle Sachtexte des großen amerikanischen Autors. Ulrich Blumenbach, der längst zur deutschen Stimme Wallace'

geworden ist, hat die Essays in diesem finalen Band nach Themengebieten geordnet: Von Tennis über Ästhetik, Sprache & Literatur, Politik, Film & Fernsehen, die Unterhaltungsindustrie und Leben & Liebe reicht die Bandbreite. So ist Wallace in all seiner Brillanz in diesen höchst unterhaltsamen und klugen Texten aufs Neue zu entdecken und zu bewundern.

david foster wallace both flesh and not: *Ich war (k)ein Wort noch nie* Hendrik Bloem, 2018-10-24 Nicht nur die Dichtung hat ihren Raum wieder - Spektrum Poesie

david foster wallace both flesh and not: *Ich war ein Wort noch nie* Hendrik Bloem, 2018-08-20 Zu viel für ein Leben, zu wenig zum Sterben. So steht es auf Bliggedis Instagram. Und das hier ist Internet-Lyrik, Twitter-Poesie, Facebook-Poesie, Google-Gedichte, SMS-Literatur, Snapchat-Zeilen und Chat-Verse. Aber ebenso Elegien des Jetzt, Dramen in Handschrift, News für die Ewigkeit, Aktuelles vom Mond. - Burnhard Moosebumps Die Dichtung hat ihren Raum wieder, denn noch nie waren kurze Texte so allgegenwärtig und populär wie in Zeiten des Smartphones. - Spektrum Poesie Atmosphärisch, existenziell, lapidar, künstlerisch, experimentell und realistisch - einfach geil. - Herrmann Schwedemeyer

david foster wallace both flesh and not: Fictions of Proximity Tim Personn, 2023-11-02 Fictions of Proximity: Skepticism, Romanticism, and the Wallace Nexus tells the story of a nexus of contemporary novelists around David Foster Wallace who took up the legacy of logical positivism and reworked it between the 1980s and the 2000s in a way that has affinities with romanticism. The book shows how the writers of this 'Wallace nexus' use fiction's complexities to challenge the idea that in human interactions, only complete fusion and transparency may count as instances of knowing. In place of this positivistic ideal of absorption, the book offers the freshly defined concept of 'proximity,' a closeness with separateness. It reads key novels of contemporary Anglo-American literature as 'fictions of proximity,' i.e., as texts that dramatize, problematize, and enact the movement into this position of proximity. To tell this story, the book draws on unpublished archival materials and understudied connections, advancing new interpretations of four novelists: David Foster Wallace, David Markson, Bret Easton Ellis, and Zadie Smith. Fictions of Proximity provides new readings of these writers, both of their canonical texts and of lesser-known works, and situates them with respect to prominent figures in contemporary post-positivist philosophy.

david foster wallace both flesh and not: Verabschiedungen der »Postmoderne« Florian Scherübl, 2022-07-04 In den jüngeren Historisierungen der sogenannten »Theorie« der Kultur- und Literaturwissenschaft sind zwei Einordnungen dominant: Kritiker*innen haben das vermeintlich postmoderne Denken für ein ominöses »postfaktisches Zeitalter« verantwortlich gemacht, der Postmoderne eher verbundene Forscher*innen haben es in Form der Generationengeschichte thematisiert. Beiden Herangehensweisen gemeinsam ist das Moment des Rückblicks und der Verabschiedung. Die Beiträger*innen des Bandes nehmen diese jüngeren Bezugnahmen auf den Begriff der Postmoderne kritisch in den Blick und eruieren neben den Historisierungstendenzen auch neue Ansatzmöglichkeiten theoretischer Paradigmen in den Geistes- und Kulturwissenschaften.

david foster wallace both flesh and not: Wittgensteins Mätresse David Markson, 2013-04-16 Die Künstlerin Kate hält sich für den letzten Menschen auf Erden. Doch gab es sie wirklich – jene Apokalypse, die nur sie allein verschont hat? Oder ist Kate wahnsinnig? In einem Strandhaus an einer unbekannten Küste dokumentiert eine Frau ihre Suche nach den Überlebenden einer namenlosen Katastrophe, durchforstet ihre Erinnerung an Kunstwerke, Bücher und Artefakte einer untergegangenen Zivilisation. Und während Kate rastlos über den Globus reist, in den größten Museen der Welt übernachtet und an den verlassenen Monumenten unserer Kultur umherstreicht, entspinnt sich wie nebenbei eine irrwitzige Geschichte der westlichen Welt: von Homer, der womöglich eine Frau war, über Aristoteles' Lispeln bis zu Rembrandts rostbrauner Katze, von Guy de Maupassants Abneigung gegenüber dem Eiffelturm zu Brahms' Abneigung gegenüber Kindern. Doch dann und wann, tief verborgen zwischen den Zeilen, scheint eine Trauer auf, die vermuten lässt, dass Kates Geschichte womöglich eine ganz andere ist ...

david foster wallace both flesh and not: The Cambridge History of Postmodern Literature Brian McHale, Len Platt, 2016-03-22 The Cambridge History of Postmodern Literature offers a

comprehensive survey of the field, from its emergence in the mid-twentieth century to the present day. It offers an unparalleled examination of all facets of postmodern writing that helps readers to understand how fiction and poetry, literary criticism, feminist theory, mass media, and the visual and fine arts have characterized the historical development of postmodernism. Covering subjects from the Cold War and countercultures to the Latin American Boom and magic realism, this History traces the genealogy of a literary tradition while remaining grounded in current scholarship. It also presents new critical approaches to postmodern literature that will serve the needs of students and specialists alike. Written by a host of leading scholars, this History will not only engage readers in contemporary debates but also serve as a definitive reference for years to come.

david foster wallace both flesh and not: Contemporary Fictions of Attention Alice Bennett, 2018-08-09 With the supposed shortening of our attention spans, what future is there for fiction in the age of the internet? *Contemporary Fictions of Attention* rejects this discourse of distraction-crisis which suggests that the future of reading is in peril, and instead finds that contemporary writers construct 'fictions of attention' that find some value in states or moments of inattention. Through discussion of work by a diverse selection of writers, including Joshua Cohen, Ben Lerner, Tom McCarthy, Ali Smith, Zadie Smith, and David Foster Wallace, this book identifies how fiction prompts readers to become peripherally aware of their own attention. *Contemporary Fictions of Attention* locates a common interest in attention within 21st-century fiction and connects this interest to a series of debates surrounding ethics, temporality, the everyday, boredom, work, and self-discipline in contemporary culture.

david foster wallace both flesh and not: Fictional Worlds and the Moral Imagination Garry L. Hagberg, 2020-12-11 This edited collection investigates the kinds of moral reflection we can undertake within the imaginative worlds of literature. In philosophical contexts of ethical inquiry we can too easily forget that literary experience can play an important role in the cultivation of our ethical sensibilities. Because our ethical lives are conducted in the real world, fictional representations of this world can appear removed from ethical contemplation. However, as this stimulating volume shows, the dichotomy between fact and fiction cannot be so easily categorised. Moral perception, moral sensitivity, and ethical understanding more broadly, may all be developed in a unique way through our imaginative life in fiction. Moral quandaries are often presented in literature in ways more linguistically precise and descriptively complete than the ones we encounter in life, whilst simultaneously offering space for contemplation. The twelve original chapters in this volume examine literary texts – including theatre and film – in this light, and taken together they show how serious reflection within fictional worlds can lead to a depth of humane insight. The topics explored include: the subtle ways that knowledge can function as a virtue; issues concerning our relations to and understanding of each other; the complex intertwining of virtues and vices in the modern world; and the importance of bringing to light and reconsidering ethical presuppositions. With an appreciation of the importance of richly contextualized particularity and the power of descriptive acuity, the volume maps out the territory that philosophical reflection and literary engagement share.

david foster wallace both flesh and not: Walls Without Cinema Larrie Dudenhoeffer, 2020-11-12 This volume closely examines the near-ubiquitous images of state security walls, domes, and other such defense enclosures flashing across movie screens since 2006, the year of the ratification of George W. Bush's Secure Fence Act. This study shows that many of the films of this era enable us to imaginatively test the effects of these security mechanisms on citizens, immigrants, refugees, and other sovereign states, challenging our commitment to constructing them, maintaining them, staffing them, and subsidizing their enormous overheads. With case studies ranging from *Atomic Blonde* and *Ready Player One* to *Black Panther* and *Elysium*; *Walls without Cinema* serves as a timely counterpoint to the xenophobic rhetoric and abusive, carceral security conditions that characterize the Trump administration's management of the Mexico-U.S. border situation.

david foster wallace both flesh and not: Robert Musil im Spannungsfeld zwischen Psychologie und Phänomenologie Artur R. Boelderl, Barbara Neymeyr, 2023-12-04 Dieser

interdisziplinäre Tagungsband untersucht die Bedeutung von Psychologie und Phänomenologie im Werk Robert Musils. Dabei rücken Gestaltpsychologie und Psychoanalyse ebenso in den Fokus wie phänomenologische Philosophie und Neuropsychologie. Die Beiträge erschließen die interdiskursiven Spannungsfelder systematisch und kulturhistorisch. So eröffnen sie neue Einsichten in Musils Poetik, die auch Philosophie und Psychologie literarisch fruchtbar macht.

david foster wallace both flesh and not: Not Working Josh Cohen, 2019-01-03 'A PROBING EXPLORATION OF THE CREATIVE AND IMAGINATIVE POSSIBILITIES OF INACTIVITY' FINANCIAL TIMES 'To do nothing at all is the most difficult thing in the world.' Oscar Wilde More than ever before, we live in a culture that excoriates inactivity and demonizes idleness. Work, connectivity and a constant flow of information are the cultural norms, and a permanent busyness pervades even our quietest moments. Little wonder so many of us are burning out. In a culture that tacitly coerces us into blind activity, the art of doing nothing is disappearing. Inactivity can induce lethargy and indifference, but is also a condition of imaginative freedom and creativity. Psychoanalyst Josh Cohen explores the paradoxical pleasures of inactivity, and considers four faces of inertia - the burnout, the slob, the daydreamer and the slacker. Drawing on his personal experiences and on stories from his consulting room, while punctuating his discussions with portraits of figures associated with the different forms of inactivity - Andy Warhol, Orson Welles, Emily Dickinson and David Foster Wallace - Cohen gets to the heart of the apathy so many of us feel when faced with the demands of contemporary life, and asks how we might live a different and more fulfilled existence.

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