

David Foster Wallace

Quotes

*Thinking, People, Writing, Real, Art, Loneliness, Mean, Way, Book, Infinite Jest,
Trying, Important, Men, Fiction, Want, Believe, Inspirational, Children, Ideas,
Pain*

I do things like get in a taxi and say, "The library, and step on it.

~David Foster Wallace

It can become an exercise in trying to get the reader to like and admire you instead of an exercise in creative art.

~David Foster Wallace

One of the things that makes Wittgenstein a real artist to me is that he realized that no conclusion could be more horrible than solipsism.

~David Foster Wallace

If your fidelity to perfectionism is too high, you never do anything.

~David Foster Wallace

I know I'm paranoid, but am I paranoid enough?

~David Foster Wallace

This might be one way to start talking about differences between the early postmodern writers of the fifties and sixties and their contemporary descendants.

~David Foster Wallace

How odd I can have all this inside me and to you it's just words.

~David Foster Wallace

Everybody is identical in their secret unspoken belief that way deep down they are different from everyone else.

~David Foster Wallace

In the day-to-day trenches of adult life, there is actually no such thing as atheism. There is no such thing as not worshipping. Everybody worships. The only choice we get is what to worship.

~David Foster Wallace

In reality, there is no such thing as not voting: you either vote by voting, or you vote by staying home and tacitly doubling the value of some Diehard's vote.

~David Foster Wallace

True heroism is minutes, hours, weeks, year upon year of the quiet, precise, judicious exercise of probity and care—“with no one there to see or cheer. This is the world.

~David Foster Wallace

The truth will set you free. But not until it is finished with you.

~David Foster Wallace

Lonely people tend, rather, to be lonely because they decline to bear the psychic costs of being around other humans. They are allergic to people. People affect them too strongly.

~David Foster Wallace

Whatever you get paid attention for is never what you think is most important about yourself.

~David Foster Wallace

Quentin Tarantino is interested in watching somebody's ear getting cut off; David Lynch is interested in the ear.

~David Foster Wallace

I'd like to be the sort of person who can enjoy things at the time, instead of having to go back in my head and enjoy them.

~David Foster Wallace

We are not dead but asleep, dreaming of ourselves.

~David Foster Wallace

You will become way less concerned with what other people think of

you when you realize how seldom they do.

~David Foster Wallace

Rap's conscious response to the poverty and oppression of U.S. blacks is like some hideous parody of sixties black pride.

~David Foster Wallace

Lucky people develop a relationship with a certain kind of art that becomes spiritual, almost religious, and doesn't mean, you know, church stuff, but it means you're just never the same.

~David Foster Wallace

It takes great personal courage to let yourself appear weak.

~David Foster Wallace

Everybody worships. The only choice we get is what to worship.

~David Foster Wallace

That everything is on fire, slow fire, and we're all less than a million breaths away from an oblivion more total than we can even bring ourselves to even try to imagine.

~David Foster Wallace

Fiction becomes a weird way to countenance yourself and to tell the truth instead of being a way to escape yourself or present yourself in a way you figure you will be maximally likable.

~David Foster Wallace

Good writing isn't a science. It's an art, and the horizon is infinite. You can always get better.

~David Foster Wallace

It's in the democratic citizen's nature to be like a leaf that doesn't believe in the tree it's part of.

~David Foster Wallace

Try to learn to let what is unfair teach you.

~David Foster Wallace

Almost anything that you pay close, direct attention to becomes interesting.

~David Foster Wallace

What goes on inside is just too fast and huge and all interconnected for words to do more than barely sketch the outlines of at most one tiny little part of it at any given instant.

~David Foster Wallace

What TV is extremely good at - and realize that this is 'all it does' - is discerning what large numbers of people think they want, and supplying it.

~David Foster Wallace

For those who've never experienced a sunrise in the rural midwest, it's roughly as soft and romantic as someone's abruptly hitting the lights in a dark room.

~David Foster Wallace

The parts of me that used to think I was different or smarter or whatever, almost made me die.

~David Foster Wallace

Good literature makes your head throb heartlike

~David Foster Wallace

Look, man, we'd probably most of us agree that these are dark times, and stupid ones, but do we need fiction that does nothing but dramatize how dark and stupid everything is?

~David Foster Wallace

We're all lonely for something we don't know we're lonely for. How else to explain the curious feeling that goes around feeling like missing somebody we've never even met?

~David Foster Wallace

Te Occidere Possunt Sed Te Edere Non Possunt Nefas Est" ("They can kill you, but the legalities of eating you are quite a bit dicier").

~David Foster Wallace

The great thing about irony is that it splits things apart, gets up above them so we can see the flaws and hypocrisies and duplicates.

~David Foster Wallace

I love the way you love, but I hate the way I'm supposed to love you back.

~David Foster Wallace

To be, in a word, unborable.... It is the key to modern life. If you are immune to boredom, there is literally nothing you cannot accomplish

~David Foster Wallace

Everything I've ever let go of has claw marks on it.

~David Foster Wallace

It's weird to feel like you miss someone you're not even sure you know.

~David Foster Wallace

K--: 'When they say "I am my own person," "I do not need a man," "I am responsible for my own sexuality," they are actually telling you just what they want you to make them forget.

~David Foster Wallace

Acceptance is usually more a matter of fatigue than anything else.

~David Foster Wallace

I don't think writers are any smarter than other people. I think they may be more compelling in their stupidity, or in their confusion.

~David Foster Wallace

Everything takes time. Bees have to move very fast to stay still.

~David Foster Wallace

It did what all ads are supposed to do: create an anxiety relievable by purchase.

~David Foster Wallace

Most of us will still take nihilism over neanderthalism.

~David Foster Wallace

Writing fiction takes me out of time. I sit down and the clock will not exist for me for a few hours. That's probably as close to immortal as we'll ever get.

~David Foster Wallace

The fun of reading as "an exchange between consciousnesses, a way for human beings to talk to each other about stuff we can't normally talk about."

~David Foster Wallace

Certain sincerely devout and spiritually advanced people believe that the God of their understanding helps them find parking places and gives them advice on Mass. Lottery numbers.

~David Foster Wallace

God seems to have a kind of laid-back management style I'm not crazy about.

~David Foster Wallace

He said she went around with her feelings out in front of her with an arm around the feelings' windpipe and a Glock 9mm. to the feelings' temple like a terrorist with a hostage, daring you to shoot.

~David Foster Wallace

There is such a thing as raw, unalloyed, agendaless kindness.

~David Foster Wallace

It means being conscious and aware enough to choose what you pay attention to and to choose how you construct meaning from experience.

~David Foster Wallace

...logical validity is not a guarantee of truth.

~David Foster Wallace

Scenery is here. Wish you were beautiful.

~David Foster Wallace

I often think I can see it in myself and in other young writers, this desperate desire to please coupled with a kind of hostility to the reader.

~David Foster Wallace

Nuclear weapons and TV have simply intensified the consequences of our tendencies, upped the stakes.

~David Foster Wallace

For these cultures, getting rid of the pain without addressing the deeper cause would be like shutting off a fire alarm while the fire's still going.

~David Foster Wallace

The interesting thing is why we're so desperate for this anesthetic against loneliness.

~David Foster Wallace

It's like a fugue of evaded responsibility.

~David Foster Wallace

There is no hatred in my love for you. Only a sadness I feel all the more strongly for my inability to explain or describe it.

~David Foster Wallace

Perhaps this is what it means to go mad: to be emptied and to be aware of the emptiness.

~David Foster Wallace

The problem is that once the rules of art are debunked, and once the unpleasant realities the irony diagnoses are revealed and diagnosed, 'then' what do we do?

~David Foster Wallace

This is so American, man: either make something your God and cosmos and then worship it, or else kill it.

~David Foster Wallace

This diagnosis can be done in about two lines. It doesn't engage anybody.

~David Foster Wallace

The reader becomes God, for all textual purposes. I see your eyes glazing over, so I'll hush.

~David Foster Wallace

Fiction is about what it is to be a human being.

~David Foster Wallace

I just think that fiction that isn't exploring what it means to be human today isn't art.

~David Foster Wallace

I think TV promulgates the idea that good art is just art which makes people like and depend on the vehicle that brings them the art.

~David Foster Wallace

To be willing to sort of die in order to move the reader, somehow. Even now I'm scared about how sappy this'll look in print, saying this.

~David Foster Wallace

she committed suicide by putting her extremities down the garbage disposal-first one arm and then, kind of miraculously if you think about it, the other arm.

~David Foster Wallace

I will probably write an hour a day and spend eight hours a day biting my knuckle and worrying about not writing.

~David Foster Wallace

Fiction, poetry, music...these are the places (for me) where loneliness is countenanced, stared down, transfigured, treated.

~David Foster Wallace

It seems important to find ways of reminding ourselves that most "familiarity" is meditated and delusive.

~David Foster Wallace

The entire ball game, in terms of both the exam and life, was what you gave attention to vs. what you willed yourself to not.

~David Foster Wallace

People, unless they're paying attention, tend to confuse fanciness with

intelligence or authority.

~David Foster Wallace

Mario, what do you get when you cross an insomniac, an unwilling agnostic and a dyslexic?

~David Foster Wallace

I felt, as I became a later and later bloomer, alienated not just from my own recalcitrant glabrous little body but in a way from the whole elemental exterior I'd come to see as my co-conspirator.

~David Foster Wallace

I think it's easy to stop smoking; it's just hard not to commit a felony after you stop.

~David Foster Wallace

I had kind of a midlife crisis at twenty which probably doesn't augur well for my longevity

~David Foster Wallace

Truly decent, innocent people can be taxing to be around.

~David Foster Wallace

Every love story is a ghost story.

~David Foster Wallace

My worst character flaw that I'm conscious of is that I tend to think my way into circles instead of resolving anything. It's paralyzing and boring for people around me.

~David Foster Wallace

I don't want to hurt myself. I want to stop hurting.

~David Foster Wallace

When a solipsist dies ... everything goes with him.

~David Foster Wallace

Nothing brings you together like a common enemy.

~David Foster Wallace

It's all very confusing. I think I'm very honest and candid, but I'm also proud of how honest and candid I am -- so where does that put me?

~David Foster Wallace

Footnote: 79) The anchor is gigantic and must weigh a hundred tons, and -- delightfully -- it really is anchor-shaped, i.e. the same shape as anchors in tattoos.

~David Foster Wallace

I cannot say what color Lenore Beadsman's eyes are; I cannot look at them; they are the sun to me.

~David Foster Wallace

It is tragic and sad and chaotic and lovely. All life is the same, as citizens of the human State: the animating limits are within, to be killed and mourned, over and over again.

~David Foster Wallace

In fact, the likeliest reason why so many of us care so little about politics is that modern politicians makes us sad, hurt us deep down in ways that are hard even to name, much less talk about.

~David Foster Wallace

Most really pretty girls have pretty ugly feet, and so does Mindy Metalman, Lenore notices, all of a sudden.

~David Foster Wallace

I'd tell you all you want and more, if the sounds I made could be what

you hear

~David Foster Wallace

Mary had a little lamb, its fleece electrostatic / And everywhere Mary went, the lights became erratic.

~David Foster Wallace

To make someone an icon is to make him an abstraction, and abstractions are incapable of vital communication with living people.

~David Foster Wallace

There are very few innocent sentences in writing.

~David Foster Wallace

For me, boviscopophobia is an even stronger motive than semi-agoraphobia for staying on the ship when we're in port.

~David Foster Wallace

I wish you way more than luck.

~David Foster Wallace

Almost nothing important that ever happens to you happens because you engineer it.

~David Foster Wallace

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