

On the existential T.K. of a luxury cruise

By David Foster Wallace

Will be published in February 1996 by Little, Brown

David Foster Wallace is a contributing editor of Harper's Magazine. His most recent novel, *Infinite Jest*, published by Little, Brown. His last piece for Harper's, "Ticket to the Fair," appeared in the July 1994 issue.

THE FOUR-COLOR BROCHURE, PART 1

I have seen sucrose beaches and water a very bright blue. I have seen an all-red leisure suit with flared lapels. I have smelled suntan lotion spread over 2,100 pounds of hot flesh. I have been addressed as "Mon" in three different nations. I have watched 500 upscale Americans dance the Electric Slide. I have seen sunsets that appeared to be computer-enhanced. I have (very briefly) joined a conga line.

I have seen a lot of really big white ships. I

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APRIL 5-6, 2012

and fluorescent pince-nez and over twenty different makes of rubber thong. I have heard steel drums and eaten conch fritters and watched a woman in silver lamé projectile vomit inside a glass elevator. I have pointed rhythmically at the ceiling to the two-quarter beat of the same disco ~~song~~ ^{music}. I hated pointing at the ceiling in 1977.

I have seen the north coast of Jamaica. I have learned that there are actually intensities of blue beyond ~~any~~ ^{any} very bright blue. I have eaten more and classier food than I've ever eaten, and done this during a week when I've also learned the difference between "rolling" in heavy seas and "pitching" in heavy seas. I have heard a professional cruise-ship comedian tell folks, without irony, "But seriously." I have seen fuchsia pantsuits and pink sport coats and maroon-and-purple warm-ups and white loafers worn without socks. I have seen professional blackjack dealers so lovely they make you want to clutch your ~~heart~~ ^{chest}. I have heard upscale adult U.S. citizens ask the ship's Guest Relations Desk whether snorkeling necessitates getting

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April 5–6, 2012
Harry Ransom Center
The University of Texas at Austin



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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

All events will take place at the Ransom Center unless otherwise noted. All panel events will be webcast live at www.hrc.utexas.edu/webcast.

THURSDAY, APRIL 5

5–6:45 p.m. **Registration**

6:20 p.m. Doors open for registrants, **Jessen Auditorium, Homer Rainey Hall**
Symposium registrants have reserved seating. Please note: unclaimed registrant seats will be released to the general public at 6:55 p.m.

7 p.m. **Welcome**
Thomas F. Staley

Bonnie Nadell and Michael Pietsch in conversation with David L. Ulin

FRIDAY, APRIL 6

9 a.m. **Registration**
Coffee and light breakfast will be served. Please note: food and drink are not permitted in the Ransom Center's Prothro Theater.

10 a.m. **Welcome**
Megan Barnard

10:15 a.m. **A Life through the Archive**
MODERATOR: Douglas Brinkley

D. T. Max
Seth Colter Walls

11:45 a.m. **Break for lunch**

1:30 p.m. **Writers on Wallace**
MODERATOR: Michael Pietsch

Elizabeth Crane
Amanda Eyre Ward

3:15 p.m. **Editors on Wallace**
MODERATOR: Bonnie Nadell

Colin Harrison
Bill Tonelli
Deborah Treisman

5 p.m. **Closing reception**

SPEAKERS

Megan Barnard is Assistant Director for Acquisitions and Administration at the Ransom Center, where she has worked to bring the archives of contemporary writers such as David Foster Wallace to the Center.

Douglas Brinkley is Professor of History at Rice University and the historian for CBS News.

Elizabeth Crane is the author of three collections of short stories, *When the Messenger is Hot*, *All this Heavenly Glory*, and most recently *You Must Be This Happy to Enter*. Her work has also been featured in numerous publications and anthologies. She is a recipient of the Chicago Public Library 21st Century Award, and her work has been featured on National Public Radio's *Selected Shorts* and adapted for the stage by Chicago's Steppenwolf Theater company. Her debut novel, *We Only Know So Much*, is forthcoming in June 2012 from HarperPerennial.

D. T. Max is a staff writer at *The New Yorker* and a fellow at The Leon Levy Center for Biography at the Graduate Center-CUNY. Viking Press will publish his biography of David Foster Wallace, *Every Love Story is a Ghost Story: A Life of David Foster Wallace*, in September.

Bonnie Nadell is president of the Hill Nadell Literary Agency based in Los Angeles. She became David Foster Wallace's agent in 1985 and has represented all his books since then.

Michael Pietsch is Executive Vice President and Publisher of Little, Brown and Company, which he joined in 1991 after working at Scribner and Harmony Books. He worked with David Foster Wallace as editor on *Infinite Jest*, *A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again*, *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men*, *Consider the Lobster*, and *Oblivion* and edited his posthumously published novel *The Pale King*.

Thomas F. Staley is Director of the Harry Ransom Center at The University of Texas at Austin, where he is also Professor of English and holds The Harry Hunt Ransom Chair in Liberal Arts. Staley has written or edited 15 books on James Joyce and modern literature. He is the founding editor of the James Joyce Quarterly and Joyce Studies Annual. He has written and spoken widely in the United States and Europe on literary subjects, libraries, the state of the humanities in contemporary culture, and the building of modern library collections.

Bill Tonelli is an editor who has worked at *Esquire* and *Rolling Stone* among other places. He is also a writer and editor of *The Italian American Reader*, an anthology.

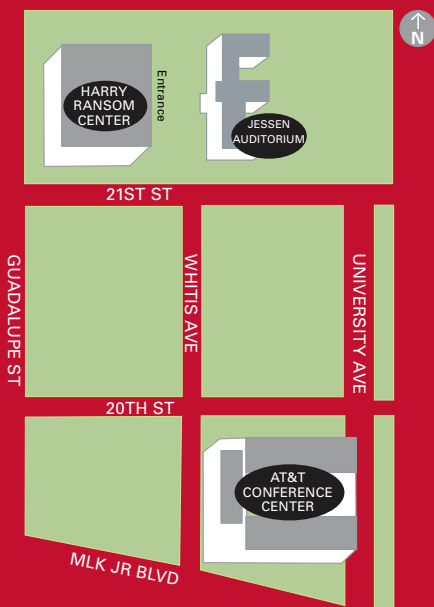
SPEAKERS CONTINUED

Deborah Treisman has been Fiction Editor of *The New Yorker* since January 2003. She joined *The New Yorker* as Deputy Fiction Editor in December 1997. Previously, she was the managing editor of *Grand Street* and has been a member of the editorial staffs of *The New York Review of Books*, *Harper's*, and *The Threepenny Review*.

David L. Ulin is book critic for the *Los Angeles Times*, where he served as book editor from 2005 to 2010. He is the author of two books, including *The Lost Art of Reading: Why Books Matter in a Distracted Time*. He is also the editor of two anthologies of Southern California literature. His essays and criticism have appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The Nation*, *The New York Times Book Review*, *Los Angeles*, *LA Weekly*, *Black Clock*, *Bookforum*, *Columbia Journalism Review*, and on National Public Radio's *All Things Considered*.

Seth Colter Walls is a culture critic and reporter for *Slate*, *The Village Voice*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Awl*, and also a contributing writer to *XXL Magazine*.

Amanda Eyre Ward is the author of one collection of short stories and four novels, most recently *Close Your Eyes*, which won the Elle Lettres Prize for Book of the Year and was a Kirkus Best Book of the Year. Her work has been published in 15 countries and optioned for film and television.



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