

good people by david foster wallace analysis

Good People by David Foster Wallace: A Deep Dive Analysis

Introduction:

David Foster Wallace's "Good People," a deceptively simple short story, packs a powerful punch. Its seemingly straightforward narrative of a young couple facing an unexpected pregnancy subtly unravels a complex web of ethical dilemmas, religious beliefs, and the inherent ambiguities of human morality. This in-depth analysis will dissect the story's core themes, explore its narrative techniques, and examine the lasting impact of Wallace's masterful prose. We'll delve into the characters' internal conflicts, the significance of the setting, and ultimately, what "Good People" reveals about the challenges of making morally sound decisions in a world devoid of easy answers. Prepare for a journey into the heart of one of Wallace's most compelling and thought-provoking works.

I. The Moral Quandary at the Story's Core:

"Good People" hinges on the agonizing decision faced by Lane Dean Jr. and his girlfriend, Helen. The unexpected pregnancy forces them to confront their deeply held – and often conflicting – beliefs. Lane, a devout Catholic, grapples with the church's teachings on abortion, wrestling with the perceived sanctity of life versus the practical implications of raising a child they aren't prepared for. Helen, while initially leaning towards abortion, displays a surprising emotional complexity, vacillating between relief and guilt. Wallace masterfully avoids simplistic portrayals of either character, showcasing the internal turmoil and the lack of clear-cut solutions in a situation fraught with moral ambiguity. This exploration of the complexities of faith, belief systems, and their impact on individual decision-making is central to the story's power. The story refuses easy answers, leaving the reader to grapple with the same moral ambiguities as the characters.

II. Character Development and Internal Conflicts:

Wallace's genius lies in his ability to create deeply flawed yet relatable characters. Lane's internal conflict is particularly compelling. He isn't presented as a villainous figure resisting a woman's right to choose; rather, he's a genuinely conflicted individual wrestling with his faith and his love for Helen. His internal monologue reveals a character caught between his

religious convictions, his fear of societal judgment, and his genuine affection for Helen. Similarly, Helen's emotional landscape is far from static. Her initial relief at the prospect of abortion slowly gives way to uncertainty and a potential sense of regret, hinting at a deeper emotional complexity than a simple "pro-choice" stance might suggest. This internal struggle allows readers to connect with the characters on a human level, fostering empathy even amidst morally challenging decisions.

III. The Significance of Setting and Symbolism:

The story's setting—a seemingly ordinary suburban environment in Ohio—serves as a counterpoint to the extraordinary nature of the moral dilemma. The mundane backdrop emphasizes the universality of the characters' struggle, suggesting that such dilemmas aren't confined to specific social circles or religious backgrounds. Furthermore, Wallace employs subtle symbolism throughout. The ambiguous ending, with its open-ended nature, reinforces the theme of uncertainty and the absence of easy answers. The repeated references to Lane's academic studies and professional aspirations highlight the tension between personal responsibility and societal expectations. These symbolic elements contribute to the story's richness and leave room for multiple interpretations.

IV. Narrative Structure and Point of View:

Wallace uses a limited third-person point of view, primarily focusing on Lane's thoughts and feelings. This technique provides intimate access to his internal struggles, allowing the reader to witness his moral and emotional evolution in real-time. The narrative structure is linear, yet the pacing and deliberate use of descriptive language create a sense of tension and suspense. The story avoids melodramatic pronouncements and instead relies on subtle characterization and nuanced language to convey its message. This understated approach adds to the story's overall power and persuasiveness.

V. The Lasting Impact of "Good People":

"Good People" transcends its immediate narrative to offer a broader commentary on human morality, faith, and the complexities of decision-making. It challenges readers to confront their own beliefs and prejudices, prompting introspection and a deeper understanding of the ethical ambiguities inherent in life's most difficult choices. The story's enduring appeal lies in its refusal to offer easy answers, forcing readers to engage with the moral dilemma long after they've finished reading. Its power lies not in its resolution but in its exploration of the deeply personal and often contradictory nature of human experience.

VI. Outline of "Good People" by David Foster Wallace:

A. Introduction: The story begins by introducing Lane Dean Jr. and Helen, a young couple facing an unexpected pregnancy. Their differing views on the situation are subtly established.

B. Main Chapters:

The Discovery: The couple confronts the reality of the pregnancy and the difficult decision ahead.

The Dilemma: Lane and Helen grapple with their religious beliefs, their fears, and their relationship's future. They seek advice, but find no easy solutions. Lane's internal conflict is heavily emphasized.

The Decision: The narrative culminates in the couple's final decision, which is left ambiguous, forcing the reader to consider its implications.

C. Conclusion: The ending underscores the lasting impact of their choice and leaves the reader to contemplate the enduring moral complexities of the situation.

VII. Detailed Explanation of the Outline:

A. Introduction: The opening scene immediately establishes the central conflict: an unexpected pregnancy and the diverging viewpoints of Lane and Helen. Wallace masterfully sets the stage, hinting at the complexities that will unfold. We learn about Lane's devout Catholicism and his wrestling with the moral implications, laying the groundwork for the central tension of the story.

B. Main Chapters:

The Discovery: This section focuses on the initial shock and the immediate reactions of Lane and Helen. It's crucial in establishing their personalities and their differing perspectives on the situation. We witness the raw emotional impact of the discovery and the nascent tension between them.

The Dilemma: This is the heart of the story. It meticulously unravels Lane's internal conflict. Wallace utilizes his signature stream-of-consciousness style to delve into Lane's thoughts, revealing his anxieties, his fears of judgment, and his internal debate between his religious beliefs and his love for Helen. This section also shows Helen's own wavering emotions, illustrating that even those seemingly leaning towards a particular solution grapple with unexpected complexities.

The Decision: This pivotal section portrays the eventual decision made by Lane and Helen. However, Wallace masterfully avoids a clear-cut resolution. The ambiguity of the ending leaves the reader to interpret the outcome and its long-term implications, which is a defining characteristic of Wallace's writing.

C. Conclusion: The story concludes without a neat resolution, reflecting the

complexities of real-life moral dilemmas. The ambiguous ending forces reflection on the lasting consequences of their decision and on the broader themes of faith, responsibility, and human fallibility. The reader is left to contemplate the implications of their choice and to consider their own responses to such a challenging situation.

VIII. FAQs:

1. What is the central theme of "Good People"? The central theme explores the complexities of moral decision-making, particularly when faced with conflicting religious beliefs and personal desires.
1. What is the significance of Lane's Catholicism in the story? Lane's Catholicism heavily influences his internal conflict and creates the central moral tension of the story.
1. Is there a clear resolution to the story's central conflict? No, the story deliberately avoids a clear-cut resolution, emphasizing the lasting ambiguity of moral dilemmas.
1. How does Wallace use language in "Good People"? Wallace uses precise and detailed language, particularly in his depiction of Lane's internal monologue, to effectively convey the characters' emotional states.
1. What is the role of setting in the story? The ordinary suburban setting contrasts with the extraordinary nature of the moral dilemma, highlighting its universality.
1. What are the main symbols used in the story? There are subtle symbols related to the characters' choices, their beliefs, and the overall ambiguity of the situation.
1. How does the story portray the relationship between Lane and Helen? The

story depicts a relationship facing a profound test, revealing the challenges of navigating difficult decisions together.

1. What makes "Good People" a significant work of literature? Its exploration of moral ambiguity, its nuanced character development, and its open-ended conclusion make it a powerful and enduring work.
1. What are some critical interpretations of "Good People"? Critical interpretations often focus on the themes of faith, morality, ambiguity, and the complexities of human relationships.

IX. Related Articles:

1. David Foster Wallace's Short Story Techniques: An exploration of Wallace's stylistic choices and narrative techniques across his short fiction.
1. The Role of Religion in David Foster Wallace's Works: A comprehensive analysis of how religious themes and beliefs appear in Wallace's novels and short stories.
1. Moral Ambiguity in Contemporary Literature: A broader examination of how contemporary authors grapple with morally complex situations in their works.
1. The Impact of Abortion on Relationships: A discussion of the impact of abortion decisions on romantic partnerships.
1. David Foster Wallace and the Postmodern Novel: An exploration of Wallace's place within the postmodern literary tradition.

1. Analyzing Character Development in Short Stories: A guide to analyzing the creation and evolution of characters in short fiction.
1. The Power of Ambiguous Endings in Literature: A study of the effect of open-ended narratives on the reader's experience.
1. Understanding Stream of Consciousness Narrative: An exploration of the stylistic techniques used in stream-of-consciousness narratives.
1. David Foster Wallace: A Biographical Overview: A brief biographical look at the life and works of David Foster Wallace.

good people by david foster wallace analysis: The Pale King David Foster Wallace, 2011-04-15

The breathtakingly brilliant novel by the author of *Infinite Jest* (New York Times) is a deeply compelling and satisfying story, as hilarious and fearless and original as anything Wallace ever wrote. The agents at the IRS Regional Examination Center in Peoria, Illinois, appear ordinary enough to newly arrived trainee David Foster Wallace. But as he immerses himself in a routine so tedious and repetitive that new employees receive boredom-survival training, he learns of the extraordinary variety of personalities drawn to this strange calling. And he has arrived at a moment when forces within the IRS are plotting to eliminate even what little humanity and dignity the work still has. *The Pale King* remained unfinished at the time of David Foster Wallace's death, but it is a deeply compelling and satisfying novel, hilarious and fearless and as original as anything Wallace ever undertook. It grapples directly with ultimate questions -- questions of life's meaning and of the value of work and society -- through characters imagined with the interior force and generosity that were Wallace's unique gifts. Along the way it suggests a new idea of heroism and commands infinite respect for one of the most daring writers of our time. *The Pale King* is by turns funny, shrewd, suspenseful, piercing, smart, terrifying, and rousing. --Laura Miller, Salon

good people by david foster wallace analysis: Oblivion David Foster Wallace, 2004-06-08 In the stories that make up *Oblivion*, David Foster Wallace joins the rawest, most naked humanity with the infinite involutions of self-consciousness -- a combination that is dazzlingly, uniquely his. These are worlds undreamt of by any other mind. Only David Foster Wallace could convey a father's desperate loneliness by way of his son's daydreaming through a teacher's homicidal breakdown (*The Soul Is Not a Smithy*). Or could explore the deepest and most hilarious aspects of creativity by delineating the office politics surrounding a magazine profile of an artist who produces miniature sculptures in an anatomically inconceivable way (*The Suffering Channel*). Or capture the ache of love's breakdown in the painfully polite apologies of a man who believes his wife is hallucinating the sound of his snoring (*Oblivion*). Each of these stories is a complete world, as fully imagined as most entire novels, at once preposterously surreal and painfully immediate.

good people by david foster wallace analysis: The David Foster Wallace Reader David Foster Wallace, 2014-11-11 Where do you begin with a writer as original and brilliant as David Foster Wallace? Here — with a carefully considered selection of his extraordinary body of work, chosen by a range of great writers, critics, and those who worked with him most closely. This volume presents his most dazzling, funniest, and most heartbreaking work — essays like his famous cruise-ship piece, A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again, excerpts from his novels The Broom of the System, Infinite Jest, and The Pale King, and legendary stories like The Depressed Person. Wallace's explorations of morality, self-consciousness, addiction, sports, love, and the many other subjects that occupied him are represented here in both fiction and nonfiction. Collected for the first time are Wallace's first published story, The View from Planet Trillaphon as Seen In Relation to the Bad Thing and a selection of his work as a writing instructor, including reading lists, grammar guides, and general guidelines for his students. A dozen writers and critics, including Hari Kunzru, Anne Fadiman, and Nam Le, add afterwords to favorite pieces, expanding our appreciation of the unique pleasures of Wallace's writing. The result is an astonishing volume that shows the breadth and range of one of America's most daring and talented writers (Los Angeles Times Book Review) whose work was full of humor, insight, and beauty.

good people by david foster wallace analysis: 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.

good people by david foster wallace analysis: 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.

good people by david foster wallace analysis: 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.

good people by david foster wallace analysis: 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.

good people by david foster wallace analysis: Is God a Christian R. Kirby Godsey, 2016-03 And while Christianity is continuing to grow at a modest rate, other religions are growing at a faster pace. Some scholars predict that Islam will overtake Christianity as the world's largest religion by the middle of the twenty-first century. Predictions aside, religions are competing for the world stage, and in the competition, Christians seem certain that God is on their side. Christians often think and behave as though God is a Christian. This book is written to ask if that assumption is true and to foster a more open conversation about other world religions. The world has grown too small and the stakes for mankind have grown too high for any of us to engage our faith as if our understanding of God represents the only way God's presence may be known in the world. We need, more than ever before, to develop creative communities of conversation. Conversation does not begin with talking. It begins with listening. Like Quakers of old, we need to gather in humility and honesty to face the meanness and evil that religion itself has sometimes heaped upon mankind. Godsey asserts that We should open ourselves to new spectrums of light that may emanate from faiths foreign to our own. Our high calling is to commit ourselves to building a better pathway for creating understanding and mutual respect among people of faith throughout the world. Book jacket.

good people by david foster wallace analysis: Bless Me, Ultima Rudolfo A. Anaya, 2008 Anaya draws on the Spanish-American folklore with which he grew up in this unique depiction of a Hispanic childhood in the Southwest.

good people by david foster wallace analysis: 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 cruiseship -- 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*.

good people by david foster wallace analysis: Quack this Way Bryan A. Garner, 2013 Two friends, both of them vocational snoots, sat down to film an interview in February 2006. Their subjects: language and writing. The interviewee drove more than an hour, from Claremont to downtown Los Angeles. The interviewer flew from Dallas. They spoke on film for 67 minutes and then walked uphill to a nearby seafood restaurant, where they continued the running conversation they had started five years earlier. They liked each other, and they seemed to understand each other. The rest is history. This is the last long interview with David Foster Wallace.

good people by david foster wallace analysis: A Visit from the Goon Squad Jennifer Egan, 2010-06-08 NATIONAL BESTSELLER • NATIONAL BOOK CRITICS CIRCLE WINNER • With music pulsing on every page, this startling, exhilarating novel of self-destruction and redemption "features characters about whom you come to care deeply as you watch them doing things they shouldn't, acting gloriously, infuriatingly human" (The Chicago Tribune). One of the New York Times's 100 Best Books of the 21st Century • One of The Atlantic's Great American Novels of the Past 100 Years

Bennie is an aging former punk rocker and record executive. Sasha is the passionate, troubled young woman he employs. Here Jennifer Egan brilliantly reveals their pasts, along with the inner lives of a host of other characters whose paths intersect with theirs. "Pitch perfect.... Darkly, rippingly funny.... Egan possesses a satirist's eye and a romance novelist's heart." —The New York Times Book Review

good people by david foster wallace analysis: 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

good people by david foster wallace analysis: 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.

good people by david foster wallace analysis: 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.

good people by david foster wallace analysis: The Broom of the System David Foster Wallace, 2016-10-18 Part of the Penguin Orange Collection, a limited-run series of twelve influential

and beloved American classics in a bold series design offering a modern take on the iconic Penguin paperback Winner of the 2016 AIGA + Design Observer 50 Books | 50 Covers competition For the seventieth anniversary of Penguin Classics, the Penguin Orange Collection celebrates the heritage of Penguin's iconic book design with twelve influential American literary classics representing the breadth and diversity of the Penguin Classics library. These collectible editions are dressed in the iconic orange and white tri-band cover design, first created in 1935, while french flaps, high-quality paper, and striking cover illustrations provide the cutting-edge design treatment that is the signature of Penguin Classics Deluxe Editions today. The Broom of the System The "dazzling, exhilarating" (San Francisco Chronicle) debut novel from one of the most groundbreaking writers of his generation, The Broom of the System is an outlandishly funny and fiercely intelligent exploration of the paradoxes of language, storytelling, and reality.

good people by david foster wallace analysis: 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.

good people by david foster wallace analysis: David Foster Wallace: Fiction and Form David Hering, 2016-09-08 In David Foster Wallace: Fiction and Form, David Hering analyses the structures of David Foster Wallace's fiction, from his debut The Broom of the System to his final unfinished novel The Pale King. Incorporating extensive analysis of Wallace's drafts, notes and letters, and taking account of the rapidly expanding field of Wallace scholarship, this book argues that the form of Wallace's fiction is always inextricably bound up within an ongoing conflict between the monologic and the dialogic, one strongly connected with Wallace's sense of his own authorial presence and identity in the work. Hering suggests that this conflict occurs at the level of both subject and composition, analysing the importance of a number of provocative structural and critical contexts - ghostliness, institutionality, reflection - to the fiction while describing how this argument is also visible within the development of Wallace's manuscripts, comparing early drafts with published material to offer a career-long framework of the construction of Wallace's fiction. The final chapter offers an unprecedentedly detailed analysis of the troubled, decade-long construction of the work that became The Pale King.

good people by david foster wallace analysis: The Unspeakable Failures of David Foster Wallace Clare Hayes-Brady, 2017-08-24 A critical overview of the writing of David Foster Wallace, taking his persistent interests in philosophy, language and plurality as points of departure--

good people by david foster wallace analysis: 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.

good people by david foster wallace analysis: Sacred Pathways Gary Thomas, 2020-09-08

Sacred Pathways reveals nine distinct spiritual temperaments--and their strengths, weaknesses, and tendencies--to help you improve your spiritual life and deepen your personal walk with God. It's time to strip away the frustration of a one-size-fits-all spirituality and discover a path of worship that frees you to be you. Experienced spiritual directors, pastors, and church leaders recognize that all of us engage with God differently, and it's about time we do too. In this updated and expanded edition of Sacred Pathways, Gary Thomas details nine spiritual temperaments and--like the Enneagram and other tools do with personality--encourages you to investigate the ways you most naturally express yourself in your relationship with God. He encourages you to dig into the traits, strengths, and pitfalls in your devotional approach so you can eliminate the barriers that keep you locked into rigid methods of worship and praise. Plus, as you begin to identify and understand your own temperament, you'll soon learn about the temperaments that aren't necessarily you but that may help you understand the spiritual tendencies of friends, family, and others around you. Whatever temperament or blend of temperaments best describes you, rest assured it's not by accident. It's by the design of a Creator who knew what he was doing when he made you according to his own unique intentions. If your spiritual walk is not what you'd like it to be, you can change that, starting here. Sacred Pathways will show you the route you were made to travel, marked by growth and filled with the riches of a close walk with God. A Sacred Pathways video Bible study is also available for group or individual use, sold separately.

good people by david foster wallace analysis: 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.

good people by david foster wallace analysis: 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.

good people by david foster wallace analysis: 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.

good people by david foster wallace analysis: On the Gull's Road Willa Cather, 2018-03-07

On the Gulls' Road is a short story by Willa Cather. It was first published in December 1908. On the Gull's Road is a touching memoir of Alexandra Deppling's unrequited love on a ship from Genoa to New York City with Mrs. Ebbing. Despite illness, and a dandy of a husband, their love is indispensible.

good people by david foster wallace analysis: The Little Engine That Could Watty Piper, 2005-09-27 I think I can, I think I can, I think I can... Discover the inspiring story of the Little Blue Engine as she makes her way over the mountain in this beloved classic—the perfect gift to celebrate the special milestones in your life, from graduations to birthdays and more! The kindness and determination of the Little Blue Engine have inspired millions of children around the world since the story was first published in 1930. Cherished by readers for over ninety years, *The Little Engine That Could* is a classic tale of the little engine that, despite her size, triumphantly pulls a train full of wonderful things to the children waiting on the other side of a mountain.

good people by david foster wallace analysis: Why Good People Do Bad Things James Hollis, 2008-04-17 Working with the Shadow is not working with evil, per se. It is working toward the possibility of greater wholeness. We will never experience healing until we can come to love our unlovable places, for they, too, ask love of us. How is it that good people do bad things? Why is our personal story and our societal history so bloody, so repetitive, so injurious to self and others? How do we make sense of the discrepancies between who we think we are—or who we show to the outside world—versus our everyday behaviors? Why are otherwise ordinary people driven to addictions and compulsions, whether alcohol, drugs, food, shopping, infidelity, or the Internet? Why are interpersonal relationships so often filled with strife? Exploring Jung's concept of the Shadow—the unconscious parts of our self that contradict the image of the self we hope to project—*Why Good People Do Bad Things* guides you through all the ways in which many of our seemingly unexplainable behaviors are manifestations of the Shadow. In addition to its presence in our personal lives, Hollis looks at the larger picture of the Shadow at work in our culture—from organized religion to the suffering and injustice that abounds in our modern world. Accepting and examining the Shadow as part of one's self, Hollis suggests, is the first step toward wholeness. Revealing a new way of understanding our darker selves, Hollis offers wisdom to help you to acquire a more conscious conduct of your life and bring a new level of awareness to your daily actions and choices.

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good people by david foster wallace analysis: Lit LP Mary Karr, 2009-11-03 *The Liars' Club* brought to vivid, indelible life Mary Karr's hardscrabble Texas childhood. Cherry, her account of her adolescence, continued to set the literary standard for making the personal universal (*Entertainment Weekly*). Now *Lit* follows the self-professed blackbelt sinner's descent into the inferno of alcoholism and madness—and to her astonishing resurrection. Karr's longing for a solid family seems secure when her marriage to a handsome, Shakespeare-quoting blueblood poet produces a son they adore. But she can't outrun her apocalyptic past. She drinks herself into the same numbness that nearly devoured her charismatic but troubled mother, reaching the brink of suicide. A hair-raising stint in *The Mental Marriott*, with an oddball tribe of gurus and saviors, awakens her to the possibility of joy and leads her to an unlikely faith. Not since Saint Augustine cried, Give me chastity, Lord—but not yet! has a conversion story rung with such dark hilarity. *Lit* is about getting drunk and getting sober; becoming a mother by letting go of a mother; learning to write by learning to live. Written with Karr's relentless honesty, unflinching self-scrutiny, and irreverent, lacerating humor, it is a truly electrifying story of how to grow up—as only Mary Karr can tell it.

good people by david foster wallace analysis: Tiny Beautiful Things Cheryl Strayed, 2012-07-10 NATIONAL BESTSELLER • Soon to be a Hulu Original series • The internationally

acclaimed author of *Wild* collects the best of The Rumpus's Dear Sugar advice columns plus never-before-published pieces. Rich with humor and insight—and absolute honesty—this wise and compassionate (New York Times Book Review) book is a balm for everything life throws our way. Life can be hard: your lover cheats on you; you lose a family member; you can't pay the bills—and it can be great: you've had the hottest sex of your life; you get that plum job; you muster the courage to write your novel. Sugar—the once-anonymous online columnist at The Rumpus, now revealed as Cheryl Strayed, author of the bestselling memoir *Wild*—is the person thousands turn to for advice.

good people by david foster wallace analysis: *Farther Away* Jonathan Franzen, 2012-04-24 Jonathan Franzen's *Freedom* was the runaway most-discussed novel of 2010, an ambitious and searching engagement with life in America in the twenty-first century. In The New York Times Book Review, Sam Tanenhaus proclaimed it a masterpiece of American fiction and lauded its illumination, through the steady radiance of its author's profound moral intelligence, [of] the world we thought we knew. In *Farther Away*, which gathers together essays and speeches written mostly in the past five years, Franzen returns with renewed vigor to the themes, both human and literary, that have long preoccupied him. Whether recounting his violent encounter with bird poachers in Cyprus, examining his mixed feelings about the suicide of his friend and rival David Foster Wallace, or offering a moving and witty take on the ways that technology has changed how people express their love, these pieces deliver on Franzen's implicit promise to conceal nothing. On a trip to China to see first-hand the environmental devastation there, he doesn't omit mention of his excitement and awe at the pace of China's economic development; the trip becomes a journey out of his own prejudice and moral condemnation. Taken together, these essays trace the progress of unique and mature mind wrestling with itself, with literature, and with some of the most important issues of our day. *Farther Away* is remarkable, provocative, and necessary.

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good people by david foster wallace analysis: *David Foster Wallace's Infinite Jest* Stephen Burn, 2003-05-20 This is part of a new series of guides to contemporary novels. The aim of the series is to give readers accessible and informative introductions to some of the most popular, most acclaimed and most influential novels of recent years - from 'The Remains of the Day' to 'White Teeth'. A team of contemporary fiction scholars from both sides of the Atlantic has been assembled to provide a thorough and readable analysis of each of the novels in question.

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into the nightmarish world where Indians are being murdered and the market for their scalps is thriving. Look for Cormac McCarthy's latest bestselling novels, *The Passenger* and *Stella Maris*.

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good people by david foster wallace analysis: Elegant Complexity Greg Carlisle, 2007 *Elegant Complexity* is the first critical work to provide detailed and thorough commentary on each of the 192 sections of David Foster Wallace's masterful *Infinite Jest*. No other commentary on *Infinite Jest* recognizes that Wallace clearly divided the book into 28 chapters that are thematically unified. A chronology at the end of the study reorders each section of the novel into a sequential timeline that orients the reader and that could be used to support a chronological reading of the novel. Other helpful reference materials include a thematic outline, more chronologies, a map of one the novel's settings, lists of characters grouped by association, and an indexed list of references. *Elegant Complexity* orients the reader at the beginning of each section and keeps commentary separate for those readers who only want orientation. The researcher looking for specific characters or themes is provided a key at the beginning of each commentary. Carlisle explains the novel's complex plot threads (and discrepancies) with expert insight and clear commentary. The book is 99% spoiler-free for first-time readers of *Infinite Jest*.--Publisher's website.

good people by david foster wallace analysis: The Maximalist Novel Stefano Ercolino, 2014-06-19 *The Maximalist Novel* sets out to define a new genre of contemporary fiction that developed in the United States from the early 1970s, and then gained popularity in Europe in the early twenty-first century. The maximalist novel has a very strong symbolic and morphological identity. Ercolino sets out ten particular elements which define and structure it as a complex literary form: length, an encyclopedic mode, dissonant chorality, diegetic exuberance, completeness, narratorial omniscience, paranoid imagination, inter-semiocity, ethical commitment, and hybrid realism. These ten characteristics are common to all of the seven works that centre his discussion: *Gravity's Rainbow* by Thomas Pynchon, *Infinite Jest* by David Foster Wallace, *Underworld* by Don DeLillo, *White Teeth* by Zadie Smith, *The Corrections* by Jonathan Franzen, *2666* by Roberto Bolaño, and *2005 dopo Cristo* by the Babette Factory. Though the ten features are not all present in the same way or form in every single text, they are all decisive in defining the genre of the maximalist novel, insofar as they are systematically co-present. Taken singularly, they can be easily found both in modernist and postmodern novels, which are not maximalist. Nevertheless, it is precisely their co-presence, as well as their reciprocal articulation, which make them fundamental in demarcating the maximalist novel as a genre.

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good people by david foster wallace analysis: 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 Mitterrand. 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*

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