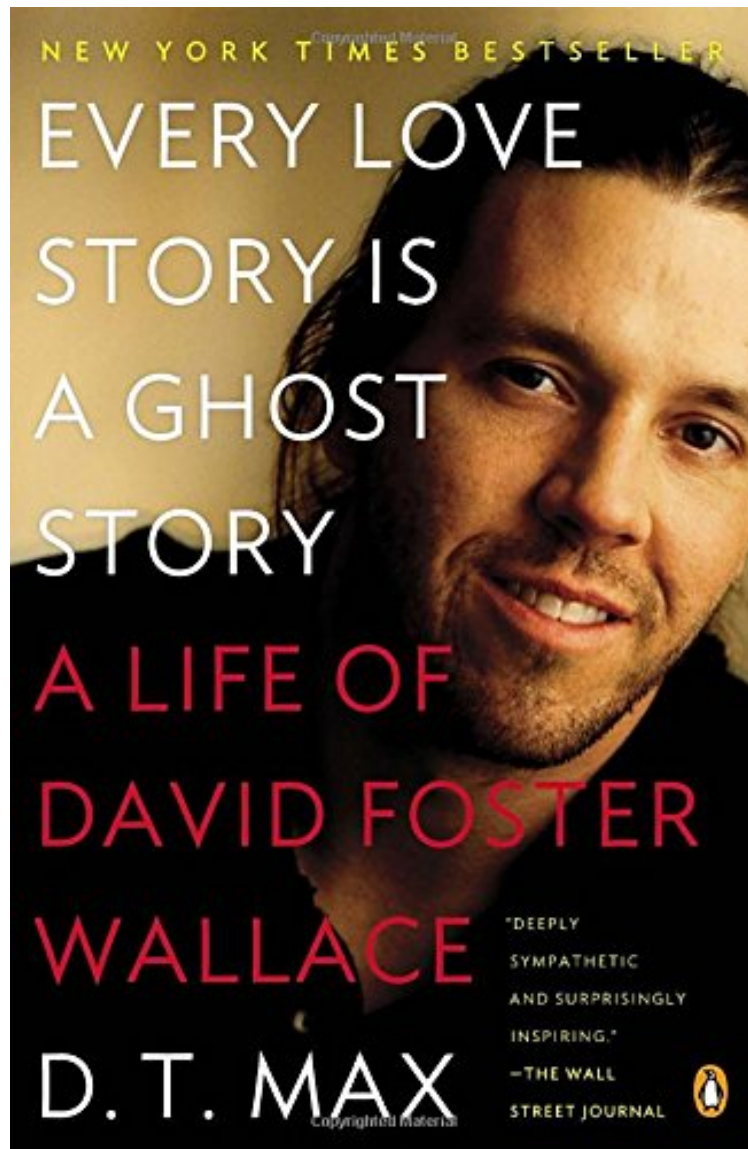


(Free) Every Love Story Is a Ghost Story: A Life of David Foster Wallace

## Every Love Story Is a Ghost Story: A Life of David Foster Wallace

*D. T. Max*

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**D. T. Max : Every Love Story Is a Ghost Story: A Life of David Foster Wallace** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Every Love Story Is a Ghost Story: A Life of David Foster Wallace:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. He lives! Wonderful nuanced portrait. By Jessica From the moment I was introduced to DFW, I not only loved his work but felt that I knew him. Characters like the Hungarian waiter, in his cruise ship piece have stayed with me over the decades. I still quote from his work. DFW is the real deal a truly

tortured genius and this biographer doesn't spare him. Although I knew he was an alcoholic/substance abuser, I didn't realize how hard he worked to remain sober and how much he admired, loved and needed his recovery groups. His struggles with anti-depressants and their side effects were heartbreaking to read about, as is of course his final determined suicide. Correspondence with Franzen and DiLillo reveal DFW's insecurity about not measuring up to their genius as social seers for the new era and he constantly feared being left behind. DT Max never comes off as preachy or having insight into the mind of DFW but instead seems humbled by the giant shadow DFW casts and I think that makes for a work to be trusted. The bibliography and footnotes themselves are reminiscent of DFW's own meticulous research. I love the images of Wallace with his rescued dogs, surrounded by stacks of paper, happiest when in the thick of writing on a difficult subject - "The Mathematics of Infinity" comes to mind. Now there's a subject to fixate on. I am almost afraid to read it, certain that I will become overawed by his ability to move from letters to numbers with ease. I am also happy that his work is actually gaining in popularity and stature as time goes by. D.T. Max captures the complexity of the man, the attention and kindness he showed to his students, the care he showed to his animals and financial generosity with friends and ex-lovers from the large endowments he received for his work. That these qualities reside alongside sex addiction, financial irresponsibility and professional jealousy makes for a realistic and interesting portrait. If there is a flaw in the work it is that I wanted to better understand his obsession with suicide at the end of his life. Withdrawal from antidepressants does not quite cover the determination with which he carried out his final mission. Oddly, I feel a weird comfort in knowing that it was not an accident. This work does what all good biographies should: make me want to read more of his work. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. I read this book in a single sitting, a ... By William Gianopoulos I read this book in a single sitting, a rare event in my life with books. One of the joys of this book is Mr. Max's effort to mirror DFW's own habit of linking ideas with loads of interesting footnotes to help curious readers dissect the smooth skin of Max's text and delve deeper into the life and mind of DFW. I would buy this book for the footnotes alone. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. SAD BUT PROFOUND WORK By David Marion Wilkinson I found this book compelling. Read it in two sittings, which is rare for my rambling mind. I was always fascinated by Wallace's talent. While I found his fiction difficult to read (my issue, not his) I was vastly entertained by his impressive body of non-fiction work. Now that I've read Max's biography, I'm struck most by the personal torment of the writer himself--as well as that of those who loved him. I lost patience with Wallace's descent into drug and alcohol abuse, as a person of his intelligence had to know it could only compound his clinical depression, and had assumed that his substance abuse had re-surfaced to facilitate his death as we have seen too often in some of our best American writers. It's just not true. Max's account of Wallace's last years shows us instead how hard Wallace worked at remaining sober, and sound enough, to make his life work. The more he gave of himself to his program, and to others also struggling and yearning to make sense of their lives, the more he quietly but absolutely unravelled. How terribly tragic that Wallace's magnificent intellect allowed him to write so wonderfully about the world around him but could never help him find his true place in it. The man never seemed to know peace. To me, he suffered so terribly most every day of his life, and was so ill-equipped by nature to deal with the myopic isolation of a literary career. He seemed happiest when he had his teeth set in a novel, and no writer could have worked harder, been more focused, or more ambitious, than the years that produced INFINITE JEST. Alas, no human being could have been less prepared for the life a great novel gave him. Depression gripped Wallace as a child and never let him go.

The acclaimed New York Times bestselling biography and emotionally detailed portrait of the artist as a young man (Michiko Kakutani, *The New York Times*) Since his untimely death by suicide at the age of forty-six in 2008, David Foster Wallace has become more than the representative writer of his literary generation he has become a symbol of sincerity and honesty in an inauthentic age, a figure whose reputation and reach grow by the day. In this compulsively readable biography, D. T. Max charts Wallace's tormented, anguished, and often triumphant battle to succeed as a novelist as he fights off depression and addiction to emerge with his masterpiece, *Infinite Jest*. Written with the cooperation of Wallace family members and friends and with access to hundreds of Wallace's unpublished letters, manuscripts, and journals, this revelatory biography illuminates the unique connections between Wallace's life and his fiction in a gripping and deeply moving narrative that will transfix readers.

.com Visit 's books blog, Omnivoracious.com, to read an exclusive essay from D.T. Max: "5 Things You Didn't Know About David Foster Wallace - But Should." From Booklist \*Starred\* As endlessly interpretable writer David Foster Wallace's first biographer, New Yorker staff writer Max seeks to be foundational. His straight-ahead approach corrals the commotion of Wallace's struggle with his epic artistic visions, substance abuse, and severe depression into an involving, fast-flowing narrative rich in facts and free of speculation. So seamless is Max's reportage that one loses sight of how many sources he consulted to fully chronicle young Illinoisan Wallace's inherited passions for language and philosophy, spectacular academic achievements, self-medication with pot and alcohol, chaotic relationships, teaching gigs, and sustaining alliances with his agent, editors, guiding light Don DeLillo, and friend Jonathan Franzen. Max presents meticulous coverage of off-the-charts-smart Wallace's literary intentions and innovations, from his

impressive early first book, *The Broom of the System* (1987), to his nonfiction escapades to the bludgeoning demands of his masterpiece, *Infinite Jest* (1996), and *The Pale King* (2011), the brilliant novel this MacArthur fellow left unfinished when he committed suicide, in 2008, at age 46, at which point this biography abruptly concludes. Maxs thorough account of Wallaces breakdowns, stints in psychiatric institutions and a halfway house, and profound reliance on support groups reveals the conviction and risks inherent in Wallaces mission to write with integrity, humor, sincerity, and artistic incandescence and to make the head throb heartlike. --Donna Seaman

From Bookforum

Aside from acknowledging that Wallaces experience with depression left him humbled and more sensitive to the terror and the survival strategies of others, Maxs terrifically intelligent and (crucially) modest bio does Wallace the great courtesy of treating as distinct his work and his mental health. Gideon Lewis-Kraus