



The Gospel According to David Foster Wallace: Boredom and Addiction in an Age of Distraction (New Directions in Religion and Literature)

Adam S. Miller

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The Gospel According to David Foster Wallace is the first book to explore key religious themes - from boredom to addiction, and distraction – in the work of one of America's most celebrated contemporary novelists.

In a series of short, topic-focussed chapters, the book joins a selection of key scenes from Wallace's novels *Infinite Jest* and *The Pale King* with clear explanations of how they contribute to his overall account of what it means to be a human being in the 21st century. Adam Miller explores how Wallace's work masterfully investigates the nature of first-world boredom and shows, in the process, how easy it is to get addicted to distraction (chemical, electronic, or otherwise). Implicitly critiquing, excising, and repurposing elements of AA's Twelve Step program, Wallace suggests that the practice of prayer (regardless of belief in God), the patient application of attention to things that seem ordinary and boring, and the internalization of clichés may be the antidote to much of what ails us in the 21st century.

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