

everything and more a compact history of infinity david foster wallace

****Everything and More: A Compact History of Infinity by David Foster Wallace****

everything and more a compact history of infinity david foster wallace is a fascinating exploration that delves into the intricate and often perplexing concept of infinity through the lens of one of contemporary literature's most brilliant minds. This book, a unique blend of mathematical rigor and literary flair, offers readers an engaging journey into the history, philosophy, and mathematics of infinity. If you've ever found yourself puzzled by infinite sets, paradoxes, or the idea of something without end, David Foster Wallace's work provides not only clarity but also an unexpected depth of insight.

In this article, we'll unpack everything you need to know about **Everything and More: A Compact History of Infinity**, highlighting its key themes, the significance of its author, and why it continues to captivate both math enthusiasts and literary fans alike.

Who is David Foster Wallace and Why Infinity?

David Foster Wallace, renowned for his literary masterpieces like **Infinite Jest**, was not just a novelist but a thinker deeply interested in complex ideas that bridge disciplines. His fascination with infinity is no surprise given his penchant for exploring the limits of human understanding and communication.

The Intersection of Math and Literature

Wallace's work on infinity is an example of how literature can engage with scientific and mathematical topics in a way that is both accessible and intellectually stimulating. **Everything and More** stands out because it doesn't just explain infinity in dry, academic terms; it invites readers into the conceptual challenges and philosophical puzzles that have captivated thinkers for centuries.

Exploring the Concept of Infinity

Infinity is a concept that has perplexed mathematicians, philosophers, and scientists for millennia. From the ancient Greeks to modern set theorists, understanding infinity has been a monumental intellectual challenge.

The Historical Background in **Everything and More**

In **Everything and More**, Wallace traces the evolution of infinity through the ages, starting from Aristotle's distinction between potential and actual infinity, moving through to Georg Cantor's revolutionary work on transfinite numbers. Cantor's ideas, which introduced the notion that some infinities are larger than others, are central to the book and are explained with clarity and nuance.

Why Infinity Matters in Mathematics

Infinity is not just an abstract curiosity; it is fundamental to many areas of mathematics including calculus, set theory, and topology. Wallace's narrative helps demystify how infinity operates within these fields, making concepts like infinite series and cardinality more approachable.

Key Themes in **Everything and More by David Foster Wallace**

One of the reasons this book stands out is Wallace's ability to weave together several complex themes in a way that feels natural and engaging.

The Paradoxes of Infinity

The book tackles famous paradoxes such as Hilbert's Hotel and Zeno's paradoxes, which illustrate the strange and counterintuitive nature of infinite sets. Wallace explains these paradoxes with a mix of humor and intellectual rigor, helping readers grasp why infinity defies everyday logic.

The Philosophy Behind the Mathematics

Wallace doesn't shy away from the philosophical implications of infinity. He explores questions like: Can actual infinity exist? What does it mean for something to be infinite in reality versus in theory? These inquiries deepen the reader's appreciation of infinity beyond numbers, touching on metaphysics and epistemology.

Wallace's Writing Style and Approach

True to his reputation, Wallace's prose is dense yet rewarding. He uses footnotes, anecdotes, and analogies to break down sophisticated ideas. The tone is conversational, often witty, which makes the book more enjoyable than a typical math textbook.

Why **Everything and More** is Important for Readers Today

The book's relevance extends beyond academic circles. In an era where information is vast and sometimes overwhelming, understanding infinity offers a metaphor for the modern experience of knowledge and existence.

Bridging the Gap Between Specialists and Laypeople

Wallace's approach helps bridge the often intimidating gap between mathematicians and the general public. By humanizing the history and philosophy of infinity, the book invites readers from all backgrounds to engage with challenging ideas.

Inspiration for Thinkers and Creators

For writers, philosophers, and creatives, **Everything and More** provides a rich source of inspiration. It demonstrates how abstract concepts can be rendered meaningful and how intellectual curiosity can drive innovative storytelling.

Tips for Reading **Everything and More: A Compact History of Infinity**

If you decide to dive into Wallace's exploration of infinity, here are some helpful suggestions to enhance your experience:

- **Take your time:** The book covers complex material that benefits from slow, thoughtful reading.
- **Use supplemental resources:** A basic understanding of set theory or calculus can help but isn't necessary. Online guides or lectures on Cantor's work can provide useful context.
- **Engage with the footnotes:** Wallace's footnotes often contain important clarifications and witty commentary that enrich the main text.
- **Discuss with others:** Sharing ideas or questions about the book with fellow readers or in forums can deepen your understanding.

The Legacy of *Everything and More* in the Study of Infinity

Since its publication, *Everything and More: A Compact History of Infinity* has carved out a unique place in both literary and mathematical culture. It is often cited as a rare example of how creative writing can illuminate technical subjects without sacrificing depth.

Impact on Popular Understanding of Mathematics

Wallace's book has helped popularize the study of infinity, making it more accessible and less intimidating. By combining storytelling with mathematical exposition, it encourages curiosity and respect for the intellectual challenges mathematicians face.

Continuing the Conversation on Infinity

The themes in *Everything and More* continue to resonate as new discoveries in mathematics and physics explore concepts related to infinity, such as cosmology and the nature of the universe. Wallace's work invites ongoing dialogue about the limits of human comprehension.

David Foster Wallace's *Everything and More: A Compact History of Infinity* is much more than a math book—it's a literary journey into one of the most profound ideas humanity has ever conceived. Whether you approach it as a math enthusiast, a philosophy buff, or someone simply curious about the infinite, the book offers a rewarding exploration that lingers long after the final page. It challenges readers to think beyond the finite and consider the endless possibilities that infinity represents.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the main theme of 'Everything and More: A Compact History of Infinity' by David Foster Wallace?

The book explores the concept of infinity, focusing on its mathematical history, paradoxes, and philosophical implications, making complex ideas accessible to a general audience.

How does David Foster Wallace approach the topic of infinity differently in 'Everything and More'?

Wallace combines rigorous mathematical explanation with clear, engaging prose and

philosophical insights, providing both technical detail and broader context about the significance of infinity.

Does 'Everything and More' cover Georg Cantor's contributions to the concept of infinity?

Yes, the book discusses Cantor's groundbreaking work on set theory and different sizes of infinity, highlighting his role in modern understanding of infinite sets.

Is prior mathematical knowledge required to understand 'Everything and More'?

While some familiarity with basic mathematical concepts helps, Wallace writes the book to be accessible to curious readers without advanced math backgrounds, using clear explanations and examples.

What are some key mathematical paradoxes related to infinity discussed in the book?

Wallace explores famous paradoxes such as Zeno's paradoxes and the infinite hotel paradox, illustrating challenges and counterintuitive aspects of infinity.

How was 'Everything and More' received by critics and readers?

The book received praise for its ambitious scope and insightful treatment of a difficult topic, though some found its dense and technical sections challenging.

Additional Resources

Everything and More: A Compact History of Infinity by David Foster Wallace – An In-Depth Review

everything and more a compact history of infinity david foster wallace is a unique literary work that stands at the crossroads of mathematics, philosophy, and narrative storytelling. This book, penned by celebrated American author David Foster Wallace, offers a comprehensive examination of the concept of infinity, weaving together historical developments, mathematical rigor, and Wallace's distinctive prose style. As a work that defies simple categorization, it has attracted attention from mathematicians, literary critics, and curious readers alike. This article delves into the intricate layers of "Everything and More," exploring its themes, structure, and impact within the broader landscape of mathematical literature.

Context and Background of Everything and More

David Foster Wallace is primarily known for his fiction and essays, notably his magnum opus "Infinite Jest." However, his foray into nonfiction with "Everything and More: A Compact History of Infinity" reveals a deep intellectual engagement with complex mathematical ideas. Published in 2003, the book takes on the formidable challenge of explicating Georg Cantor's groundbreaking work on infinity—arguably one of the most abstract and conceptually difficult areas in mathematics.

Wallace's motivation for writing this book stemmed from his dissatisfaction with the existing popular and academic treatments of infinity, which he found either too dry or inaccessible. His aim was to bridge the gap, making the subject approachable without sacrificing intellectual depth. As such, the book is both a history and an exposition, tracing the evolution of infinite sets, cardinality, and the paradoxes that have perplexed mathematicians over centuries.

Exploring the Theme of Infinity

At its core, "Everything and More" grapples with different notions of infinity—countable vs. uncountable, actual vs. potential—and the philosophical implications these concepts hold. Wallace discusses how Cantor revolutionized mathematics by introducing set theory and demonstrating that some infinities are larger than others, a notion that defies intuitive understanding.

The book also touches on paradoxes such as Hilbert's Hotel, illustrating the counterintuitive properties of infinite sets. These examples are crucial in helping readers grasp why infinity is not a monolithic idea but a multifaceted one with profound consequences. Wallace's narrative balances rigorous mathematical explanation with anecdotal and historical contexts, which enriches the reader's comprehension.

Structure and Style: Wallace's Narrative Approach

Unlike traditional textbooks or purely academic treatises, "Everything and More" adopts a hybrid style that blends expository writing with personal reflection. Wallace's prose is dense yet accessible, marked by his characteristic footnotes and digressions that provide additional insights without disrupting the flow.

The book is organized thematically rather than chronologically, allowing for a focused exploration of key concepts such as set theory, cardinal numbers, and the continuum hypothesis. This structure enables readers to approach the text at varying levels of depth, making it suitable for both novices and those with a background in mathematics.

Wallace's background as a novelist and essayist is evident in his ability to humanize abstract ideas. He often contextualizes mathematical discoveries within the lives of

mathematicians, offering glimpses into their struggles and triumphs. This narrative choice enhances the intellectual appeal of the work and distinguishes it from more formulaic mathematical histories.

Key Features and Contributions

- **Historical Depth:** The book traces the development of infinity from ancient philosophical inquiries to modern mathematical formalism, providing a panoramic view of the subject.
- **Mathematical Rigor:** Wallace does not shy away from complex proofs and technical details, making the work a serious contribution to mathematical literature.
- **Accessible Language:** Despite its complexity, the book is written in a style approachable to readers with varying levels of mathematical expertise.
- **Philosophical Context:** The exploration of infinity is framed within broader metaphysical and epistemological questions, enriching the intellectual texture of the book.

Comparisons and Reception

"Everything and More" sits in a niche alongside other seminal works on infinity, such as Georg Cantor's original writings and modern texts like David Hilbert's lectures or Ronald Graham's and Jeffrey Lagarias's publications. However, Wallace's book is unique in its literary quality and narrative style, which sets it apart from more technical expositions.

Critical reception has been mixed but generally appreciative of Wallace's ambition. Some mathematicians praise the book's fidelity to mathematical concepts and its clarity, while others note occasional lapses in precision or the challenges posed by Wallace's dense prose. Literary critics often admire the blending of disciplines and the way the book reflects Wallace's broader intellectual pursuits.

Pros and Cons of Everything and More

1. Pros:

- Bridges the gap between mathematical rigor and popular science.
- Provides a compelling historical narrative that situates mathematical ideas within human contexts.

- Offers a fresh perspective on infinity that challenges conventional understandings.
- Engages readers beyond the typical academic audience.

2. Cons:

- The prose can be dense and complex, potentially alienating casual readers.
- Some mathematical explanations may require prior knowledge to fully appreciate.
- Occasional digressions may disrupt the focus for readers seeking a straightforward exposition.

Significance in the Broader Intellectual Landscape

David Foster Wallace's "Everything and More: A Compact History of Infinity" reflects a rare convergence of literary artistry and mathematical inquiry. The book serves as a testament to the potential for cross-disciplinary scholarship to illuminate deeply abstract concepts. By tackling infinity—a topic that has challenged thinkers from Aristotle to modern mathematicians—Wallace contributes to ongoing dialogues about the limits of human understanding and the nature of mathematical truth.

Moreover, the book highlights the cultural resonance of mathematical ideas, demonstrating how they shape philosophical debates and influence broader intellectual currents. Wallace's work invites readers to reconsider not only mathematical concepts but also the narrative frameworks through which complex knowledge is communicated.

While it may not replace a technical textbook or a rigorous academic treatise, "Everything and More" occupies an important place as a bridge between worlds—between mathematics and literature, abstraction and narrative, and specialized knowledge and general curiosity.

In the end, this compact history of infinity is both a tribute to Cantor's revolutionary insights and an extension of Wallace's own quest to explore infinity in all its dimensions—mathematical, philosophical, and literary. The book remains a significant point of reference for anyone intrigued by the infinite, offering everything—and more—on one of the most fascinating topics in human thought.

Everything And More A Compact History Of Infinity David Foster Wallace

everything and more a compact history of infinity david foster wallace: *Everything and More: A Compact History of Infinity* David Foster Wallace, 2010-09-21 The bestselling author of *Infinite Jest* takes on the 2,000 year-old quest to understand infinity. Wallace brings his considerable talents to the history of one of math's most enduring puzzles: the seemingly paradoxical nature of infinity.

everything and more a compact history of infinity david foster wallace: *The Infinite* A.W. Moore, 2018-10-09 We are all captivated and puzzled by the infinite, in its many varied guises; by the endlessness of space and time; by the thought that between any two points in space, however close, there is always another; by the fact that numbers go on forever; and by the idea of an all-knowing, all-powerful God. In this acclaimed introduction to the infinite, A. W. Moore takes us on a journey back to early Greek thought about the infinite, from its inception to Aristotle. He then examines medieval and early modern conceptions of the infinite, including a brief history of the calculus, before turning to Kant and post-Kantian ideas. He also gives an account of Cantor's remarkable discovery that some infinities are bigger than others. In the second part of the book, Moore develops his own views, drawing on technical advances in the mathematics of the infinite, including the celebrated theorems of Skolem and Gödel, and deriving inspiration from Wittgenstein. He concludes this part with a discussion of death and human finitude. For this third edition Moore has added a new part, 'Infinity superseded', which contains two new chapters refining his own ideas through a re-examination of the ideas of Spinoza, Hegel, and Nietzsche. This new part is heavily influenced by the work of Deleuze. Also new for the third edition are: a technical appendix on still unresolved questions about different infinite sizes; an expanded glossary; and updated references and further reading. *The Infinite*, Third Edition is ideal reading for anyone interested in an engaging and historically informed account of this fascinating topic, whether from a philosophical point of view, a mathematical point of view, or a religious point of view.

everything and more a compact history of infinity david foster wallace: *Understanding David Foster Wallace* Marshall Boswell, 2020-09-30 Since its publication in 2003, *Understanding David Foster Wallace* has served as an accessible introduction to the rich array of themes and formal innovations that have made Wallace's fiction so popular and influential. A seminal text in the burgeoning field of David Foster Wallace studies, the original edition of *Understanding David Foster Wallace* was nevertheless incomplete as it addressed only his first four works of fiction—namely the novels *The Broom of the System* and *Infinite Jest* and the story collections *Girl with Curious Hair* and *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men*. This revised edition adds two new chapters covering his final story collection, *Oblivion*, and his posthumous novel, *The Pale King*. Tracing Wallace's relationship to modernism and postmodernism, this volume provides close readings of all his major works of fiction. Although critics sometimes label Wallace a postmodern writer, Boswell argues that he should be regarded as the nervous leader of some still-unnamed (and perhaps unnamable) third wave of modernism. In charting a new direction for literary practice, Wallace does not seek to overturn postmodernism, nor does he call for a return to modernism. Rather his work moves resolutely forward while hoisting the baggage of modernism and postmodernism heavily, but respectfully, on its back. Like the books that serve as its primary subject, Boswell's study directly confronts such arcane issues as postmodernism, information theory, semiotics, the philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein, and poststructuralism, yet it does so in a way that is comprehensible to a wide and general readership—the very same readership that has enthusiastically embraced Wallace's challenging yet entertaining and redemptive fiction.

everything and more a compact history of infinity david foster wallace: *David Foster Wallace in Context* Clare Hayes-Brady, 2022-12-01 David Foster Wallace is regarded as one of the most important American writers of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. This book introduces

readers to the literary, philosophical and political contexts of Wallace's work. An accessible and useable resource, this volume conceptualizes his work within long-standing critical traditions and with a new awareness of his importance for American literary studies. It shows the range of issues and contexts that inform the work and reading of David Foster Wallace, connecting his writing to diverse ideas, periods and themes. Essays cover topics on gender, sex, violence, race, philosophy, poetry and geography, among many others, guiding new and long-standing readers in understanding the work and influence of this important writer.

everything and more a compact history of infinity david foster wallace: *Infinity: A Very Short Introduction* Ian Stewart, 2017-03-16 Infinity is an intriguing topic, with connections to religion, philosophy, metaphysics, logic, and physics as well as mathematics. Its history goes back to ancient times, with especially important contributions from Euclid, Aristotle, Eudoxus, and Archimedes. The infinitely large (infinite) is intimately related to the infinitely small (infinitesimal). Cosmologists consider sweeping questions about whether space and time are infinite. Philosophers and mathematicians ranging from Zeno to Russell have posed numerous paradoxes about infinity and infinitesimals. Many vital areas of mathematics rest upon some version of infinity. The most obvious, and the first context in which major new techniques depended on formulating infinite processes, is calculus. But there are many others, for example Fourier analysis and fractals. In this Very Short Introduction, Ian Stewart discusses infinity in mathematics while also drawing in the various other aspects of infinity and explaining some of the major problems and insights arising from this concept. He argues that working with infinity is not just an abstract, intellectual exercise but that it is instead a concept with important practical everyday applications, and considers how mathematicians use infinity and infinitesimals to answer questions or supply techniques that do not appear to involve the infinite. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

everything and more a compact history of infinity david foster wallace: *David Foster Wallace's Balancing Books* Jeffrey Severs, 2017-01-03 What do we value? Why do we value it? And in a neoliberal age, can morality ever displace money as the primary means of defining value? These are the questions that drove David Foster Wallace, a writer widely credited with changing the face of contemporary fiction and moving it beyond an emotionless postmodern irony. Jeffrey Severs argues in David Foster Wallace's *Balancing Books* that Wallace was also deeply engaged with the social, political, and economic issues of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. A rebellious economic thinker, Wallace satirized the deforming effects of money, questioned the logic of the monetary system, and saw the world through the lens of value's many hidden and untapped meanings. In original readings of all of Wallace's fiction, from *The Broom of the System* and *Infinite Jest* to his story collections and *The Pale King*, Severs reveals Wallace to be a thoroughly political writer whose works provide an often surreal history of financial crises and economic policies. As Severs demonstrates, the concept of value occupied the intersection of Wallace's major interests: economics, work, metaphysics, mathematics, and morality. Severs ranges from the Great Depression and the New Deal to the realms of finance, insurance, and taxation to detail Wallace's quest for balance and grace in a world of excess and entropy. Wallace showed characters struggling to place two feet on the ground and restlessly sought to balance the books of a chaotic culture. Explaining why Wallace's work has galvanized a new phase in contemporary global literature, Severs draws connections to key Wallace forerunners Don DeLillo, Thomas Pynchon, and William Gaddis, as well as his successors—including Dave Eggers, Teddy Wayne, Jonathan Lethem, and Zadie Smith—interpreting Wallace's legacy in terms of finance, the gift, and office life.

everything and more a compact history of infinity david foster wallace: *The Social Lives of Books* Edward Frederick Finn, 2011 This project explores how changing models of literary production are blurring or erasing the divisions between authors, critics and readers. Millions of

cultural consumers are participating in previously closed literary conversations and expressing forms of mass distinction through their purchases and reviews of books. These traces of popular reading choices constitute a fresh perspective on elusive audience reactions to literature and reveal evolving networks of conversation. Employing network analysis methodologies and 'distant reading' of book reviews, recommendations and other digital traces of cultural distinction, I develop a new model for literary culture in America today. Through readings of the fiction and reception of Thomas Pynchon, Toni Morrison, David Foster Wallace and Junot Díaz, this model outlines the fundamental requirements for contemporary literary fame. My introduction outlines methodological tools I developed and situates them in the critical traditions of literary reception, cultural sociology and media theory before describing the digital ecologies that have emerged around literature online and their value. Chapter 1 explores the nature of literary fame through a case study of Thomas Pynchon, whose carefully guarded anonymity and ironic distance from capitalism are reflected in the networks his readers construct around his long, challenging books. In stark contrast, Toni Morrison, the subject of Chapter 2, has succeeded critically and commercially, tirelessly seeking out readers to form literary communities around her writing, most prominently through her collaboration with Oprah's Book Club. Chapter 3 considers David Foster Wallace and Junot Díaz and sets out a model for contemporary literary culture: a reading society that demands new forms of authorial reflexivity to mirror the collaborative, iterative nature of digital literary conversations. I conclude with a brief consideration of the exciting prospects and challenges for fiction in a world that reads more than ever but is growing disaffected with the material realities of literary production.

everything and more a compact history of infinity david foster wallace: The Matter of High Words Robert Chodat, 2017-08-18 In a world of matter, how can we express what matters? When the explanations of the natural sciences become powerfully precise and authoritative, what is the status of our highest words, the languages that articulate our norms and orient our lives? The Matter of High Words examines a constellation of American writers who in the decades since World War II have posed these questions in distinctive ways. Walker Percy, Marilynne Robinson, Ralph Ellison, Stanley Cavell, and David Foster Wallace are all self-consciously post-WWII authors, attuned to the fragmentation and skepticism that have defined so much of the literary and critical culture of the last century and more. Yet they also attempt to reach back to older forms of thought and writing that are often thought to have dried up—the traditions of prophecy, of wisdom literature, of the sage. Working within this dual inheritance, these authors are drawn equally to both art and argument, showing and telling, shifting continually between narrative and discursive genres. In their essays they act as moralists, promoting the broad, abstract concepts that might inspire action in the face of naturalistic reduction: community, family, courage, fraternity, marriage, friendship, temperance, judgment. In their narratives, they offer particular lives in particular settings, thick descriptions that give flesh to such high words. Rarely do these movements between genres generate a tidy equilibrium; where their essays speak of cooperation and redemption, their narratives display alienation, loss, and failure. But in pursuing such risky, unorthodox strategies, these postwar sages are not only able to challenge some of the dominant naturalistic theories of the last several decades: cognitive science, neo-Darwinian theory, social science, the fact-value divide in analytic philosophy. Through five chapters of detailed analysis and close reading, Chodat explores the question of whether vocabularies of ought and ought-not can still emerge today, and how these concepts might be embodied, and whether such ideas might be found in things.

everything and more a compact history of infinity david foster wallace: Everything and More David Foster Wallace, 2003 One of the outstanding voices of his generation, David Foster Wallace has won a large and devoted following for the intellectual ambition and bravura style of his fiction and essays. Now he brings his considerable talents to the history of one of math's most enduring puzzles: the seemingly paradoxical nature of infinity. Is infinity a valid mathematical property or a meaningless abstraction? The nineteenth-century mathematical genius Georg Cantor's answer to this question not only surprised him but also shook the very foundations upon which math had been built. Cantor's counterintuitive discovery of a progression of larger and larger infinities

created controversy in his time and may have hastened his mental breakdown, but it also helped lead to the development of set theory, analytic philosophy, and even computer technology. Smart, challenging, and thoroughly rewarding, Wallace's tour de force brings immediate and high-profile recognition to the bizarre and fascinating world of higher mathematics.

everything and more a compact history of infinity david foster wallace: The Search for Physics. Infinity. Viktor Moroz, 2014-06-27 Well known that mathematics and physics have problems in their development. Only one mathematician, Morris Kline, discovered illogicality of development of mathematics. Despite this, he attempted to justify illogicality in math by fruitfulness of usage of mathematics in physics, instead to stay problem about illogical development of physics. Here is discussing inconsistencies of undefined notions which are reasons of paradoxes. Main initial notion of mathematics is notion of infinity, and it has inconsistency and this inconsistency is distributed to derived notions of infinitesimal and continuity. Those notions related to almost all branches of mathematics which used physics. Also in work is considering miss inconsistencies of Euclids and non-Euclids geometries. A lot approaches like physics is geometry or geometry is physics was and is ignoring those inconsistencies of geometries.

everything and more a compact history of infinity david foster wallace: Mathematical Cultures Brendan Larvor, 2016-05-25 This collection presents significant contributions from an international network project on mathematical cultures, including essays from leading scholars in the history and philosophy of mathematics and mathematics education. Mathematics has universal standards of validity. Nevertheless, there are local styles in mathematical research and teaching, and great variation in the place of mathematics in the larger cultures that mathematical practitioners belong to. The reflections on mathematical cultures collected in this book are of interest to mathematicians, philosophers, historians, sociologists, cognitive scientists and mathematics educators.

everything and more a compact history of infinity david foster wallace: Reworking English in Rhetoric and Composition Bruce Horner, Karen Kopelson, 2014-07-25 Many of the ideas and insights presented in this volume emerged out of work accomplished at the University of Louisville English Department's 2010 Thomas R. Watson Conference on Rhetoric and Composition on 'Working English in Rhetoric and Composition: Global/local Contexts, Commitments, Consequences'.

everything and more a compact history of infinity david foster wallace: Fictions of Infinity Martin Riedelsheimer, 2020-10-12 This study traces the connection of infinity and Levinasian ethics in 21st-century fiction. It tackles the paradox of how infinity can be (re-)presented in the finite space between the covers of a book and finds an answer that combines conceptual metaphor theory with concepts from classical narratology and beyond, such as mise en abyme, textual circularity, intertextuality or omniscient narration. It argues that texts with such structures may be conceptualised as infinite via Lakoff and Núñez's Basic Metaphor of Infinity. The catachrestic transfer of infinity from structure to text means that the texts themselves are understood to be infinite. Taking its cue from the central role of the infinite in Emmanuel Levinas's ethics, the function of such 'fictions of infinity' turns out to be ethical: infinite textuality disrupts reading patterns and calls into question the reader's spontaneity to interpret. This hypothesis is put to the test in detailed readings of four 21st-century novels, David Mitchell's *Cloud Atlas*, Jeanette Winterson's *The Stone Gods*, Ian McEwan's *Saturday* and John Banville's *The Infinities*. This book thus combines ethical criticism with structural aesthetics to uncover ethical potential in fiction.

everything and more a compact history of infinity david foster wallace: The Wallace Effect Marshall Boswell, 2019-01-24 The Wallace Effect explores David Foster Wallace's contested space at the forefront of 21st-century American fiction. Pioneering Wallace scholar Marshall Boswell does this by illuminating "The Wallace Effect"-the aura of literary competition that Wallace routinely summoned in his fiction and non-fiction and that continues to inform the reception of his work by his contemporaries. A frankly combative writer, Wallace openly challenged his artistic predecessors as he sought to establish himself as the leading literary figure of the post-postmodern turn. Boswell

challenges this portrait in two ways. First, he examines novels by Wallace's literary patriarchs and contemporaries that introduce innovations on traditional metafiction that Wallace would later claim as his own. Second, he explores four novels published after Wallace's ascendancy that attempt to demythologize Wallace's persona and his literary preeminence. By re-situating Wallace's work in a broader and more contentious literary arena, *The Wallace Effect* traces both the reach and the limits of Wallace's legacy.

everything and more a compact history of infinity david foster wallace: Terrorism and Temporality in the Works of Thomas Pynchon and Don DeLillo James Gourley, 2013-06-06 *Terrorism and Temporality in the Works of Thomas Pynchon and Don DeLillo* starts from a simple premise: that the events of the 11th of September 2001 must have had a major effect on two New York residents, and two of the seminal authors of American letters, Pynchon and DeLillo. By examining implicit and explicit allusion to these events in their work, it becomes apparent that both consider 9/11 a crucial event, and that it has profoundly impacted their work. From this important point, the volume focuses on the major change identifiable in both authors' work; a change in the perception, and conception, of time. This is not, however, a simple change after 2001. It allows, at the same time, a re-examination of both authors work, and the acknowledgment of time as a crucial concept to both authors throughout their careers. Engaging with several theories of time, and their reiteration and examination in both authors' work, this volume contributes both to the understanding of literary time, and to the work of Pynchon and DeLillo.

everything and more a compact history of infinity david foster wallace: Change Is the Only Constant Ben Orlin, 2019-10-08 From popular math blogger and author of the underground bestseller *Math With Bad Drawings*, *Change Is The Only Constant* is an engaging and eloquent exploration of the intersection between calculus and daily life, complete with Orlin's sly humor and wonderfully bad drawings. *Change is the Only Constant* is an engaging and eloquent exploration of the intersection between calculus and daily life, complete with Orlin's sly humor and memorably bad drawings. By spinning 28 engaging mathematical tales, Orlin shows us that calculus is simply another language to express the very things we humans grapple with every day -- love, risk, time, and most importantly, change. Divided into two parts, Moments and Eternities, and drawing on everyone from Sherlock Holmes to Mark Twain to David Foster Wallace, *Change is the Only Constant* unearths connections between calculus, art, literature, and a beloved dog named Elvis. This is not just math for math's sake; it's math for the sake of becoming a wiser and more thoughtful human.

everything and more a compact history of infinity david foster wallace: Math for English Majors Ben Orlin, 2024-09-03 In this trailblazing work from the internet's most empathetic math teacher, Ben Orlin unravels the secrets behind the world's most confounding language. Math, it is said, is the universal language." But if a language brings people together, why does math make so many of us feel so alone? In *Math for English Majors*, bestselling author Ben Orlin (*Math with Bad Drawings*) offers fresh insights for the mathematically perplexed and mathematical masters alike. As Orlin reveals, the "universal language" is precisely that: a language. It has nouns (numbers), verbs (calculations), and grammar (algebra). It has funny idioms ("exponential"), quirky etymologies ("squaring"), and peculiar ambiguities ("PEMDAS"). It even has its own form of literature, with equations ranging from the simple wisdom of $A^2 + B^2 = C^2$ to the startling profundity of $e^{\pi i} + 1 = 0$. Along the way, he shares relatable stories of his own mathematical misunderstandings and epiphanies, as well as the trials and triumphs of his students. And, as always, he sheds further light and levity on the subject with his inept—yet strangely effective—drawings.

everything and more a compact history of infinity david foster wallace: The Vedic Core of Human History M. K. Agarwal, 2013-12 The origin of world civilization can be traced to the Indus Valley cradle, where brilliant and original thinkers made groundbreaking discoveries. The history of these discoveries is recorded in the vast Sanskrit literature. In this study, author M. K. Agarwal explores the cultural and historical significance of the region. He explores Indus Valley culture, which encouraged creative thought as opposed to the Abrahamic faiths, which herded

followers into dogmatic thinking. He holds that these religions prospered because of their unfettered hatred of the Vedic-Hindu-Buddhist peoples, who were demonized as pagans to be murdered, tortured, raped, enslaved, and robbed. He also considers the achievements of that culture, such as the creation of the most affluent, most scientifically advanced, and most spiritual of all societies, with archeological moorings that can be traced back to 8000 BC. No other region can even come close to transforming people and culture like the Indus Valley, but the world's Vedic roots have been ignored, shunned, and covered up. Uncover the history that has been lost and develop a deeper appreciation for the true cradle of human civilization with The Vedic Core of Human History.

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