

Call for Papers

**DAVID FOSTER WALLACE BETWEEN PHILOSOPHY AND LITERATURE**

18-20 April 2018

Hosted by the Department of Philosophical, Pedagogical and Economic-Quantitative Sciences  
G. d'Annunzio University of Chieti-Pescara

*Twenty years after my own graduation, I have come gradually to understand that the liberal arts cliché about teaching you how to think is actually shorthand for a much deeper, more serious idea: learning how to think really means learning how to exercise some control over how and what you think. It means being conscious and aware enough to choose what you pay attention to and to choose how you construct meaning from experience. Because if you cannot exercise this kind of choice in adult life, you will be totally hosed.*

*This is Water*, David Foster Wallace

The international conference "David Foster Wallace Between Philosophy and Literature", organized by the Department of Philosophical, Pedagogical and Economic-Quantitative Sciences of G. d'Annunzio University of Chieti-Pescara, aims to contribute to Wallace Studies through an interdisciplinary approach.

The central role played by philosophy in the education of David Foster Wallace has been already addressed by many scholars, who have studied how his writings deal with major philosophical topics of the 20th-century. Nevertheless, Wallace thought that philosophy itself was not sufficient to explain what being human means and it is precisely for this reason that he turned to fiction and translated his theoretical analysis into literature, so to speak. The contiguity and the continuous interweaving between Wallace's writing and philosophy are evident if we consider Wallace's novels and short stories alongside certain theories of his declared philosophical reference-points, such as Wittgenstein, Derrida, Kierkegaard, and Heidegger. Furthermore, during his interviews and in his non-fiction writings, Wallace explained his concept of literature as a certain type of dialogue among different and distant human beings, bound up with one another through language. Ten years after his death, the organizers seek contributions to the above-mentioned debate which aim to explore Wallace's *oeuvre* from new interpretative perspectives.

Submissions on different aspects of Wallace's fiction and non-fiction are welcome. Possible areas and topics are:

- analysis of narrative structures
- linguistic strategies in representing gender and sexuality
- relationship between author and readers
- ethical issues
- interplay between philosophical and literary language
- relationship between Wallace and other authors

By 20<sup>th</sup> December 2017, potential contributors should submit a 300-word proposal (including the title) along with a 150-word biography (including name, affiliation, and contact information) via email to the attention of scientific committee chair Adriano Ardivino ([dfwconference@unich.it](mailto:dfwconference@unich.it)). Please, also mention if you are in contact with scholars or research groups involved in Wallace studies, or if you are currently working on

research projects about David Foster Wallace. The languages of the conference are English and Italian. All submissions should be formatted as a ".doc" or ".docx" or ".pdf" attachment. Please, indicate "CFP - DFW CONFERENCE" in the subject line. Selected authors will receive a communication of acceptance by 20<sup>th</sup> January 2018. The number of accepted proposals will be limited. Selected authors should confirm their participation by 1<sup>st</sup> February 2018. Papers should not exceed twenty minutes.

Attendance and participation are free of charge.

Information about transportation and accommodation will be provided via email. For further information, please do not hesitate to contact us [dfwconference@unich.it](mailto:dfwconference@unich.it)

### **IMPORTANT DATES**

Application deadline: 20<sup>th</sup> December 2017

Committee Decision: 20<sup>th</sup> January 2018

Participation Acceptance: 1<sup>st</sup> February 2018

Conference days: 18-20 April 2018

### **SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE**

Adriano Ardivino, Theoretical Philosophy (Department of Philosophical, Pedagogical and Economic-Quantitative Sciences – G. d'Annunzio University of Chieti-Pescara)

Mariaconcetta Costantini, English Literature (Department of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures – G. d'Annunzio University of Chieti-Pescara)

Aldo Marroni, Aesthetics (Department of Literature, Arts and Social Sciences – G. d'Annunzio University of Chieti-Pescara)

Francesco Marroni, English Literature (Department of Philosophical, Pedagogical and Economic-Quantitative Sciences – G. d'Annunzio University of Chieti-Pescara)

Carlo Martinez, North-American Literature (Department of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures – G. d'Annunzio University of Chieti-Pescara)

Pia Masiero, North-American Literature (Department of Linguistics and Comparative Cultural Studies – University of Venice, Ca' Foscari)

### **ORGANIZING OFFICE**

Chiara Scarlato, PhD Candidate in Human Sciences (School of Advanced Studies – G. d'Annunzio University of Chieti-Pescara)