

Bonnie Nadell:

An Inventory of Her David Foster Wallace Collection at the Harry Ransom Center

Descriptive Summary

Creator:	Nadell, Bonnie
Title:	Bonnie Nadell Collection of David Foster Wallace
Dates:	1980-2011
Extent:	8 boxes (3.36 linear feet)
Abstract:	Spanning nearly thirty years, the Bonnie Nadell Collection of David Foster Wallace documents Nadell's literary representation of Wallace, primarily with personal and professional correspondence between Nadell, Wallace, and publishing insiders. Also present are serial publications containing pieces by or about Wallace.
Call Number:	Manuscript Collection MS-05218
Language:	English
Access:	Open for research. Researchers must create an online Research Account and agree to the Materials Use Policy before using archival materials.
Use Policies:	Ransom Center collections may contain material with sensitive or confidential information that is protected under federal or state right to privacy laws and regulations. Researchers are advised that the disclosure of certain information pertaining to identifiable living individuals represented in the collections without the consent of those individuals may have legal ramifications (e.g., a cause of action under common law for invasion of privacy may arise if facts concerning an individual's private life are published that would be deemed highly offensive to a reasonable person) for which the Ransom Center and The University of Texas at Austin assume no responsibility.
Restrictions on Use:	Authorization for publication is given on behalf of the University of Texas as the owner of the collection and is not intended to include or imply permission of the copyright holder which must be obtained by the researcher. For more information please see the Ransom Centers' Open Access and Use Policies.

Administrative Information

Acquisition: Purchases, 2011 (2011-01-015-P), 2016 (2016-09-007-P)

Processed by: Stephen Cooper, 2011; Christine Bethke, 2018

Repository: [Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin](#)

Biographical Sketch

Bonnie Nadell worked in publishing for Simon & Schuster in New York City during the early 1980's. She moved to San Francisco around 1985, becoming a literary agent for Frederick Hill at Frederick Hill Associates. Lacking clients as a new agent, Nadell answered the phones and went through the slush file, a group of unsolicited manuscript submissions, where an excerpt of what was to become David Foster Wallace's *The Broom of the System* caught her attention. Wallace became her first client and she his first and only U. S. literary agent. Nadell had a large influence on Wallace's writing career, guiding him as an agent and as a close friend. With Nadell's assistance, Wallace published three novels, three short story collections, and numerous short fiction, essays, and nonfiction works with, among many others, Little, Brown and Company, Viking Press, W. W. Norton & Company, the *New Yorker*, *GQ*, *Playboy*, *Rolling Stone*, *Harper's Magazine*, and the *Atlantic Monthly*. In addition to Wallace, Nadell has represented Sonia Nazario, Antonya Nelson, and Rebecca Solnit. She is now the vice president of Hill Nadel Literary Agency, based in Los Angeles.

Sources:

"David Foster Wallace." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Foster_Wallace (accessed 4/4/2011).

DeMarco-Barrett, Barbara. "Voices on Writing: Bonnie Nadell." <http://www.asja.org/newspub/files/xl200903.pdf> [accessed 4/1/2011].

Neyfakh, Leon. "Remembering David Foster Wallace: 'David Would Never Stop Caring' Says Lifelong Agent." <http://www.observer.com/2008/arts-culture/david-foster-wallaces-agent> [accessed 4/1/2011].

Scope and Contents

Spanning nearly thirty years, the Bonnie Nadell Collection of David Foster Wallace documents Nadell's literary representation of Wallace, primarily with personal and professional correspondence between Nadell, Wallace, and publishing insiders. The collection is organized in two series: Series I. Correspondence, and Series II. Agent files. Series I. contains over forty letters (1985-2008) from Wallace to Nadell and about twenty-four email printouts between the two discussing personal and publishing issues. In a 1989 letter, Wallace voices his anticipation of a Nadell visit: ". . . Boston is fun; we'll have laughs, listen to rap and James Brown. . ." In the most recent email (2008), Wallace discusses plans to begin an article for *GQ* on the just-nominated Barack Obama, stressing his need for "close, candid access to a couple of Obama's junior speech guys"

before they become too involved in the campaign. Additional correspondence in Series I. is between Wallace or Nadell and various translators and publishing world colleagues and acquaintances. The content of this correspondence is almost entirely professionally-oriented. In the earliest letter (1985) of the collection, a twenty-three year old Wallace introduces himself and a "representative" chapter of *The Broom of the System* to Frederick Hill.

Series II. contains files relating to *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men*, *The Broom of the System*, *Consider the Lobster*, *Everything and More*, *Girl With Curious Hair*, *Infinite Jest*, *Signifying Rappers*, and 'periodical publications.' The files mostly contain correspondence between Nadell and editors and publishers, with some Wallace correspondence as well. Interspersed are unmarked, and often undated, typescript copies of various short Wallace pieces that most likely were meant for submission to editors. These typescripts remain in their original locations within the respective folders in which they arrived, perhaps indicating the approximate date Nadell was sending them out. Also present is an essay, "Ralph and the Legal Milestone" (1980), which Wallace wrote for a creative writing class, receiving an A+.

Series III. is a collection of magazines containing articles and stories by and about David Foster Wallace. It is divided into three subseries: A. Pieces by Wallace, B. Pieces about Wallace, and C. Unidentified. The materials in this series were acquired in 2016, and are an addition to the original acquisition in 2011.

The collection remains predominately organized as it arrived at the Ransom Center, with some minor corrections to the rough chronological order of the correspondence in each folder.

Related Material

Additional Wallace materials are located in the Ransom Center in the David Foster Wallace Papers, the David Foster Wallace Collection, the Don DeLillo Papers, and the James Linville *Paris Review* Collection.

Index Terms

People

DeLillo, Don.
Nadell, Bonnie.
Pietsch, Michael.
Turner, Alice K.
Wallace, David Foster.

Subjects

American Literature.

Authors, American--Fiction.

Authors, American--20th century.

Authors, American--21st century.

Modernism (Literature)--United States.

Document Types

Correspondence.

Manuscripts.

Postcards.

Publications.

Scripts.

Serials (publications).

Series I. Correspondence, 1980-2008, undated

'Wallace correspondence,' 1980-2005, undated

Container
1.1-1.2

'Selected emails,' 2006-2008, undated

Container 1.3

Series II. Agent files, 1985-2005, undated

Brief Interviews with Hideous Men, 1997-1999, undated	Container 1.4
Broom of the System, 1985-2004, undated	Container 1.5
Consider the Lobster, 2003-2005, undated	Container 1.6
Everything and More, 2000-2003, undated	Container 1.7
Girl With Curious Hair, 1988-1995, undated	Container 1.8
Infinite Jest, 1992-2000, undated	Container 1.9
'Periodical publication,' 1986-1989, undated	Container 1.10
Signifying Rappers, 1989-1991, undated	Container 1.11

Series III. Serials, 1987-2011, undated

Subseries A. Articles By Wallace

- Adult World (I), Esquire, July 1998, pg. 76. **Container 3.4-5**
- Adult World (II), Esquire, July 1998, pg. 100.
- Adventures in Regret (IV), Los Angeles Times Magazine, 4 June 1995, pg. 22. **Container 7.4-5**
- All That, The New Yorker, 14 December 2009, pg. 76. **Container 5.4-5**
- Asset, The New Yorker, 21 and 28 June 1999, pg. 93. **Container 5.1-2**
- The Awakening of My Interest in Annular Systems, Harper's, September 1993, pg. 60. **Container 3.10**
- Backbone, The New Yorker, 7 March 2011, pg. 66. **Container 5.6-7**
- Borges on the Couch, The New York Times Book Review, 7 November 2004, pg. 10. **Container 8.3-4**
- Brief Interviews with Hideous Men, Harper's, October 1998, pg. 41. **Container 4.1**
- The Capital-T Truth, The Oprah Magazine, December 2006 pg. 306. **Container 5.8-9**
- The Compliance Branch, Harper's, February 2008, pg. 17. **Container 4.4-5**
- Consider the Lobster, Gourmet, August 2004, pg. 50. **Container 3.8-9**
- Consider the Lobster, Pomona College Magazine, Winter 2007, pg. 34. **Container 5.11**
- David Lynch Keeps His Head, Premiere, September 1996, pg. 90. **Container 6.1**
- Democracy and Commerce at the U. S. Open, Tennis, September 2006, pg. 70. **Container 6.6-7**

The Depressed Person, Harper's, January 1998, pg. 57.	Container 3.14-15
Derivative Sport in Tornado Alley, The Midwesterner, February 1997, pg. 20.	Container 4.10
Everything is Green, Harper's, September 1989, pg. 36.	Container 4.2
Federer as Religious Experience: How One Player's Grace, Speed, Power, Precision, Kinesthetic Virtuosity, and Seriously Wicked Topspin are Transfiguring Men's Tennis, Play, September 2006, pg. 47.	Container 7.7
Feodor's Guide, Voice Literary Supplement, April 1996, pg. 15.	Container 8.5
The Future of Fiction: A Forum Edited by David Foster Wallace, The Review of Contemporary Fiction, Spring 1996, pg. 7.	Container 6.4
Good People, The New Yorker, 5 February 2007, pg. 66.	Container 5.3
Here and There, Fiction, 1987, Vol. 8 # 2 and 3. pg. 188.	Container 3.7
High Regret Ink (from Infinite Jest), Puncture, No. 35, pg. 17.	Container 6.3
Host, The Atlantic, April 2005, pg. 51.	Container 3.1
Impediments to Passion: The Joy of Sex in the age of AIDS, Might, November/December 1996, pg. 50.	Container 4.11
An Interval, The New Yorker, 30 January 1995, pg. 80.	Container 4.13
It All Gets Quite Tricky, Harper's, November 2008, pg. 31.	Container 4.6-7
It Was a Great Marvel That He Was in the Father Without Knowing Him (I), The Iowa Review, 1994, Vol. 24 # 3, pg. 114.	Container 4.9
Late Night, Playboy, June 1988, pg. 66.	Container 5.10
Laughing with Kafka, Harper's, July 1998 pg. 23.	Container 3.16
Neither Adult not Entertainment, Premiere, September 1998 pg. 88.	Container 6.2
A New Examiner, Harper's, September 2010, pg. 23.	Container 4.8

- On His Deathbed, Holding Your Hand, The Acclaimed New Young
Off-Broadway Playwright's Father Begs a Boon, Tin House Magazine, Spring
1999, Vol. 1 # 1, pg. 46. **Container**
6.8
- Passion, Digitally, The New York Times Magazine, 29 September 1996, pg. 189. **Container**
7.6
- Rhetoric and the Math Melodrama, Science, 22 December 2000, pg. 2263. **Container**
6.5
- Several Birds, The New Yorker, 27 June /4 July 1994, pg. 164. **Container**
4.12
- Shipping Out: On the (Nearly Lethal) Comforts of a Luxury Cruise, Harper's,
January 1996, pg. 33. **Container**
3.13
- The String Theory, Esquire, July 1996, pg. 56. **Container** 3.2-3
- Tennis, Trigonometry, Tornadoes: A Midwestern Boyhood, Harper's, December
1991, pg. 68. **Container**
3.11
- Tense Present: Democracy, English, and the Wars over Usage, Harper's, April
2001, pg. 39. **Container**
4.3
- They Also Serve, The Sunday Review, 25 August 1996, pg. 8. **Container**
8.6
- Ticket to the Fair, Harper's, July 1994, pg. 35. **Container** 3.12
- The View From Mrs. Thompson's, Rolling Stone, 25 October 2001, pg. 92. **Container**
7.10-11
- The Weasel, Twelve Monkeys and the Shrub: Seven Days in the Life of the Late,
Great John McCain, Rolling Stone, 13 April 2000, pg. 53. **Container**
7.8-9
- Yet Another Example of the Porousness of Certain Borders (XII), Esquire,
November 1998, pg. 188. **Container**
3.6

Subseries B. Articles About Wallace

- Apocalypse Now: David Foster Wallace has a Vision of the End, Los Angeles
Reader, 1 March 1996, pg. 13. **Container**
7.1
- Brief Interview with a Five Draft Man, Amherst, Spring 1999, p.10. **Container**
2.1
- Brief Interviews with Hideous Men, San Francisco Chronicle Book Review, 21
November 1999, pg. 3. **Container**
7.3

David Foster Wallace, City Pages, 28 December 1994, pg. 15.	Container 8.2
David Foster Wallace, Gentlemen's Quarterly, October 2007, pg. 394.	Container 2.3
The Grunge American Novel, The New York Times Magazine, 24 March 1996, pg. 38.	Container 7.2
Long Hot Novel, New York, 12 February 1996, pg. 54.	Container 2.4
Postscript, David Foster Wallace, The New Yorker, 29 September 2008, pg. 29.	Container 2.5
Infinite Jest, Time, 19 February 1996, pg. 72.	Container 2.7
712,000 Typos!, Time, 19 February 1996, pg. 70.	
A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again, Voice Literary Supplement, Winter 1997, pg. 15.	Container 8.1
Surely You Jest..., Puncture, # 35 pg. 19.	Container 6.3
Unnamed, Open City, Winter 1999, No.7, pg. 19.	Container 2.6
VLS Bestsellers, Voice Literary Supplement, April 1996, pg. 5.	Container 8.5
The Wasted Land, Details, March 1996, pg.122.	Container 2.2
Subseries C. Unidentified	
The New York Times Magazine, 9 December 2007	Container 7.12

Index of Correspondents

- Incoming to Nadell/Wallace
- Aguado, Joan (MGM/UA Communications Co.)--1.5
- Bialosky, Jill (W. W. Norton)--1.3
- Bittner, Marlena (Hatchette Book Group)--1.3
- Blythe, Will (*Esquire*)--1.8
- Chearney, Lee Ann, 1959- (Antaeus, The Ecco Press)--1.11
- Cho, Renée (Kings Road Productions)--1.5
- Cioni, Adelaide--1.3
- Close, Ann (Alfred A. Knopf)--1.5
- Cohen, Jesse (Lipper Publications)--1.7
- Conroy, Frank, 1936-2005 (The University of Iowa)--1.10
- Curtis, C. Michael (*The Atlantic*)--1.10
- Dach, Cindy (Phoenix Central Library)--1.4
- DeLillo, Don--1.2
- Diez, Georg (*Die Zeit*)--1.3
- Donadio, Rachel (*New York Times Book Review*)--1.3
- Elman, Richard--1.10
- Fadiman, Anne, 1953- --1.3
- Garrison, Deborah (*New Yorker*)--1.9
- Goode, James (*University Man*)--1.5
- Gordon, Jaimy, 1944- (Western Michigan University)--1.8
- Hagler, Jr., Warren M. (*Wittenberg Review of Literature and Art*)--1.8
- Hills, L. Rust (*Esquire*)--1.10
- Hine, Andy (Time Warner Book Group)--1.6
- Hitt, Jack (*Harper's*)--1.11
- Holbein, Chris (PETA)--1.6
- Howard, Gerald (Viking Penguin Inc.)--1.5, 1.8, 1.10
- Jewell, C. S. (Cathy S.), 1967- (Antaeus, The Ecco Press)--1.11
- Karmodi, Ostap--1.3
- Kernochan, Rose (*Granta*)--1.9
- Kinard, Anne (*Granta*)--1.11
- Kipen, David--1.4
- Klayman, Rachel (Avon Books)--1.5
- Laurans, Penelope (*The Yale Review*)--1.10
- Lish, Gordon (*The Quarterly*)--1.10
- Loewenthal, Linda (Quality Paperback Book Club)--1.2
- Lovell, Joel (Condé Nast)--1.3
- McNamara, Jane (The New York Public Library)--1.4
- Metz, Sylvia, (Edima)--1.11
- Morgan, Speer, 1946- (*The Missouri Review*)--1.11
- Mourits, Bertram (Contact Publishers)--1.3
- Nadell, Bonnie--1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.10, 1.11
- Nesi, Edoardo, 1964- --1.9
- Nijssen, Joost (Uitgeverij Nijgh & Van Ditmar)--1.11
- Nozieres, Claire--1.5
- Perroni, Sergio Claudio--1.5
- Pevitt, Christine (Viking Penguin Inc.)--1.8
- Pietsch, Michael--1.3, 1.9, 1.10
- Radziewicz, John (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich)--1.5

- Silverman, Ilena B. (*Harper's*)--1.10
- Smith, Lee, 1962- (Antaeus, The Ecco Press)--1.11
- Sullivan, Robert, 1953- (*Life*)--1.3
- Toyne, Becky (The Harvill Press)--1.6
- Treisman, Deborah, 1970- (*New Yorker*)--1.4
- Turner, Alice K. (*Playboy Magazine*)--1.10
- Wallace, David Foster--1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.6, 1.8
- Watson, Lucia (Viking Penguin Inc.)--1.5
- Wilder, Corina (PETA)--1.6
- Wille, Andrew (Little Brown & Company [UK])--1.5
- Zuckerman, Jocelyn (Condé Nast)--1.6

- Outgoing from Nadell/Wallace
 - Abrahams, William Miller, 1919-1998--1.5
 - Chearney, Lee Ann, 1959- (Antaeus, The Ecco Press)--1.11
 - Cioni, Adeleide--1.3
 - Clemmey, Mary--1.5, 1.9
 - Curtis, C. Michael (*The Atlantic Monthly*)--1.10
 - Davey, Beth (Little Brown & Company)--1.9
 - DeLillo, Don--1.2
 - Donald, Roger (Little Brown & Company)--1.5
 - Fadiman, Anne, 1953--1.3
 - Finnegan, Edward F. (Illinois State University)--1.2
 - Gaber, Jason (Jewish Community Center)--1.5
 - Hill, Frederick (Frederick Hill Associates)--1.1, 1.2
 - Hills, L. Rust (*Esquire*)--1.10
 - Howard, Gerald (Viking Penguin Inc.)--1.5, 1.8
 - Jacob, Didier (*Le Nouvel Observateur*)--1.2
 - Jenks, Tom, 1950- (Charles Scribners & Sons)--1.5
 - Karmodi, Ostap--1.3
 - Katz, Paul (Zomba Records)--1.11
 - Kipen, David--1.4
 - Kramer, Scott (Alliance Productions)--1.5
 - Lish, Gordon (*The Quarterly*)--1.10
 - Lovell, Joel (Condé Nast)--1.3
 - Magnuson, James (Michener Center)--1.3
 - Marchese, Paola (Andrew Nurnberg Associates)--1.2, 1.9
 - Moore, Irene (Frederick Hill Associates)--1.2, 1.9
 - Mourits, Bertram (Contact Publishers)--1.3
 - Nadell, Bonnie--1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5
 - Nadell, Mr. and Mrs.--1.1
 - Nesi, Edoardo, 1964- --1.9
 - Ostuni, Signor Vincenzo--1.2
 - Perroni, Sergio Claudio--1.5
 - *Prairie Schooner*--1.10
 - Sidelsky, Russell (Def Jam Records)--1.11
 - Sparrow, David (*Tennis Magazine*)--1.2
 - Sullivan, Robert, 1953- (*Life*)--1.3
 - Treisman, Deborah, 1970- (*New Yorker*)--1.4
 - Turner, Alice K. (*Playboy Magazine*)--1.2, 1.5
 - Wallace, David Foster--1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5, 1.11

- Zuckerman, Jocelyn (Condé Nast)--1.6

Index of Works

- Adult World (I)--3.4-5
- Adult World (II)--3.4-5
- Adventures in Regret (IV)--7.4-5
- All That--5.4-5
- Asset--5.1-2
- "Authority and American Usage"--1.2
- The Awakening of My Interest in Annular Systems--3.102
- Backbone--5.6-7
- Borges on the Couch--8.3-4
- The Broom of the System: Theatrical Movie, Sample Outline--1.5
- The Capital-T Truth--5.8-9
- The Compliance Branch--4.4-5
- Consider the Lobster--1.6, 3.8-9, 5.11
- David Lynch Keeps His Head--6.1
- Democracy and Commerce at the U. S. Open--6.6-7
- The Depressed Person--3.14-15
- Derivative Sport in Tornado Alley--4.10
- Everything and More--1.7
- Everything is Green--4.2
- Federer as Religious Experience: How One Player's Grace, Speed, Power, Precision, Kinesthetic Virtuosity, and Seriously Wicked Topspin are Transfiguring Men's Tennis--7.7
- Feodor's Guide--8.5
- The Future of Fiction: A Forum Edited by David Foster Wallace--6.4
- Girl With Curious Hair--1.8
- Good People--5.3
- Here and There--1.1, 3.7
- High Regret Ink (from Infinite Jest)--6.3
- Host--3.1
- Impediments to Passion: The Joy of Sex in the age of AIDS
- Infinite Jest--1.9
- An Interval--4.13
- It All Gets Quite Tricky--4.6-7
- It Was a Great Marvel That He Was in the Father Without Knowing Him (I)--4.9
- Las Meniñas--1.2
- Late Night, Playboy--5.10
- Laughing with Kafka--3.16
- Neither Adult nor Entertainment--6.2
- A New Examiner--4.8
- On His Deathbed, Holding Your Hand, The Acclaimed New Young Off- Broadway Playwright's Father Begs a Boon--6.8
- Passion, Digitally--7.6
- Ralph and the Legal Milestone--1.1
- Rhetoric and the Math Melodrama--6.5
- Say Never--1.1
- Several Birds--4.12
- Shipping Out: On the (Nearly Lethal) Comforts of a Luxury Cruise--3.13
- Signifying Rappers--1.11
- Solomon Silverfish--1.1
- The String Theory--3.2-3

- Tennis, Trigonometry, Tornadoes: A Midwestern Boyhood--3.11
- Tense Present: Democracy, English, and the Wars over Usage--4.3
- They Also Serve, The Sunday Review--8.6
- Ticket to the Fair--3.12
- The View From Mrs. Thompson's--7.10-11
- The Weasel, Twelve Monkeys and the Shrub: Seven Days in the Life of the Late, Great John McCain--7.8-9
- Yet Another Example of the Porousness of Certain Borders (XII)--3.6