

Introduction	3
I. David Foster Wallace and Postmodernism	5
A. Wallace's Justification of Postmodernism	6
B. Wallace's Social Criticism	6
C. Postmodernism and Power	8
II. An Existentialist Reading of <i>Infinite Jest</i>	11
A. Søren Kierkegaard	15
B. Jean-Paul Sartre	21
C. Diagnosis	25
1. Addiction	25
a. Addiction to the Self	26
b. Addiction to Objects	35
(1) TV and Consumption	35
(2) Substances	36
2. Anhedonia and Desire	42
3. "Anxiety" and "Despair"	44
a. "Anxiety"	44
b. Escape from "Anxiety"	48
4. "Unconscious Despair" in <i>Infinite Jest</i>	49
a. Escape into the Finite	49
b. Escape into the Infinite	51
5. "Shame" and "The Look"	54
6. "Conscious Despair" in <i>Infinite Jest</i>	57
7. "Freedom in Chains"	64
8. Self-Consciousness, "Nausea" and Addiction	68
9. Addiction as "Despair"	71
10. "Despair of Weakness and Defiance"	75
11. Postmodernism and "Despair"	79
12. "Abjection"	92
D. Therapy	95
1. <i>Les Assassins des Fauteuils Rollents</i>	96
2. The Enfield Tennis Academy	97
3. Alcoholics Anonymous	99
a. Self-Surrender	100
b. Authority	101
c. The "Illusion of Autonomy"	103
d. Honesty, Openness and Clichés	105
e. Choice	108
f. Concrete vs. Abstract	112
g. AA and American Freedom	115
4. Alcoholics Anonymous and T.S. Eliot	117
III. Wallace's Aesthetics in <i>Infinite Jest</i>	120
A. Literature	120
B. Poststructuralism	123
C. Ludwig Wittgenstein	126

D. Mikhail Bakhtin	128
E. Alcoholics Anonymous as a Narrative Model	131
F. <i>Infinite Jest</i> and Postmodernism	134
G. Postmodernism or "New Realism"?	142
Summary	147
List of Works Cited	150