

## RESPONDING THE NEOLIBERAL AMERICA: A JAMESONIAN READING OF DAVID FOSTER WALLACE'S BRIEF INTERVIEWS WITH HIDEOUS MEN

RESPONDENDO À AMÉRICA NEOLIBERAL: UMA LEITURA JAMESONIANA DAS BREVES ENTREVISTAS DE DAVID FOSTER WALLACE COM HOMENS HIDEOÇOS

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**Resumo.** O objetivo principal deste artigo é discutir a Garota de Cabelo Curioso e Breves Entrevistas com Homens Horríveis e analisar seu conteúdo em relação às teorias do pós-modernismo. Este trabalho de pesquisa é uma pesquisa bibliográfica, que revisa a leitura jamesoniana de *Girl with Curious Hair* e *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men* para investigar o pós-modernismo. Nas obras pós-modernistas, o leitor pode perceber a associação de objetos, que não são semelhantes ou relacionados. Esse estilo é chamado de "colagem". Não há conexão intencional entre esses objetos e eles apenas se juntam aleatoriamente. Na poesia, os escritores pós-modernistas apresentam a ideia de "poesia em prosa" que pode parecer contraditória, mas é bastante popular no pós-modernismo. Breves Entrevistas com Homens Horríveis, mostra que Wallace tentou transmitir suas idéias sobre ser horrível, pois é sua preocupação encontrar o significado da humanidade e tentou mostrar o significado da humanidade às pessoas. Wallace tem inovações nas técnicas narrativas por exemplo ele tem metanarração e narração múltipla e o narrador questiona o leitor e pede ao leitor para adicionar seus próprios sentimentos ao trabalho ou o narrador fala sobre as dificuldades de colocar as histórias uma após a outra.

**Palavras-chave:** Pós-modernismo, Garota com Cabelo Curioso, Breves Entrevistas com Homens Horríveis, Romance, Jamesoniano, pesquisa em biblioteca

**Abstract.** The main objective of this paper is to discuss the *Girl with Curious Hair* and *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men* and analyses their content regarding the postmodernism theories. This research paper is library research, which reviews the A Jamesonian Reading of *Girl with Curious Hair* and *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men* to investigate the postmodernism. In postmodernist works, the reader can see the association of objects, which are not similar or related. This style is called "collage". There is no intentional connection between these objects and they only come together randomly. In poetry, the postmodernist writers come up with the idea of "prose poetry" that may seem contradictory but it is quite popular in postmodernism. *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men*, shows that Wallace has tried to convey his ideas on being hideous as it is his concern to find the meaning of humanity and has tried to show the meaning of humanity to people. Wallace has innovations in narrative techniques for example he has meta narration and multiple narration and the narrator questions the reader and asks the reader to add his own feelings to work or narrator talks about the difficulties of putting the stories one after another.

**Keywords:** Postmodernism, *Girl with Curious Hair*, *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men*, Novel, Jamesonian, library research

### INTRODUCTION

The second half of the 20th century is the time when neoliberalism was at work in America and the majority of people had difficult life conditions. Lots of them couldn't afford to pay their hospital bills and many people were struggling hard to pay the taxes and have an acceptable life condition (Boswell 2020; Kim et al., 2020). It was the time when irony entered people's life and the government and the industry used it to make fun of the faults and shortcomings in the system of their government or the system of their production and after making fun of these shortcomings, they make the problem neutralized. People could no longer consider them serious or even if they do, they get trapped in their own understanding of the irony and in either case they stay inactive and there is no resistance or rebel. After 9/11, "Wallace's work became more political, and more pointed, the political partisanship of the new century replacing pop-culture irony in his work as the source of our isolation and failure to find real meaning and purpose in our life" (Galens, 2009).

Jameson's insistence on historicizing can show why Wallace used irony in his works. Wallace focuses on the matter of irony in this short story collection and tries to show how irony has penetrated the American culture in the second half of the 20th century and how it has affected the life of postmodern man. "In other words, whereas *Girl with Curious Hair* used its detailed analysis of postwar fiction and pop culture to say something urgent about the state of contemporary culture, *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men* directly dramatizes how completely the dis-ease of self-consciousness and irony has infiltrated the culture of the

new millennium" (Giroux, 2004). As a tool for examining the complications of human behavior and psychology, Wallace shows the dichotomy or difference between the intention and the action of the characters. In *Brief Interviews*, there are instances that the reader can see that there is a gap between what the character is doing and what his intentions are and how he tries to reach these intentions. The reader does not expect and does not notice the hypocrisy in what the character is doing and by reading to the end of the story he understands the true intention of the reader. In *Brief Interviews # 11*, "In the form of another one-sided dialogue in which the male explains he is leaving in order to avoid hurting his lover down the road when, as he freely admits, he projects he actually will want to leave her, based on his history" (Jamalpour & Yaghoobi-Derabi, 2022).

It is the intention of the man to leave the girl and he doesn't want to stay with her but his actions are in a way to make her feel that he loves her and he confesses that he is not courageous enough to stay with her because he fears to hurt her. And he leaves her because she is all the time afraid of his leaving due to his moody character. What he does is quite contradictory because he says I love you but I leave you because you are afraid one day, I will leave you. "But this every time I get moody or withdrawn you thinking I'm leaving or getting ready to ditch you—I can't take it. This thing of you being afraid all the time" (Campo et al., 2020). Or in the second group of the interviews, the character says "Maybe deep down I'm such a cowardly shit that I don't even want to make the commitment of pulling away myself, that I want to somehow force you into doing it" (Jameson, 1990). The character pretends to be honest but by honesty he intends to do something else which is making the girl leave her instead of leaving her himself. Wallace uses irony to show the complexities of human psyche. He offers the matter of being alienated and getting lonely and works on how irony is misused to give people a kind of inertia and stasis. He even applies "an ironic eye on the misuse of self-conscious irony" (Murphy et al., 2021).

In *Brief Interviews*, Wallace depicts characters who deceive others or deceive themselves to have a mask on their faces and their behavior and actions are different from their intentions and the things they have in mind. The reader faces lots of contradictions in what they say and what they do. Wallace focuses on these contradictions and shows how they affect human relations in the society and in the social life of people. The purpose of this study is to have a Jamesonian reading of the *Girl with Curious Hair* and *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men*.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

This research paper is going to read the mentioned literary works based on the ideas of Fredric Jameson, one of the most important cultural critics and a defender of Marxist ideas. He has written about and analyzed postmodernism in an influential way. Jameson's famous book (Jameson, 1994), *The Political Unconscious*, is his ideas on Marxism and his other book, *Postmodernism* is his ideas on postmodernism. He has always been a Marxist and has always shown tendencies to the left-wing perspectives on culture and literature. He was influenced by Jean-Paul Sartre who was influenced by Marx and Heidegger and was influential in shaping of existentialism. Existentialism puts great emphasis on and values the individual's existence. Sartre says with individuality there is freedom to choose but this matter of being free to choose is difficult because that choice changes the course of people's lives and brings commitment so there is a price to pay if one wants to have freedom of choice and authentic creative existence. It is difficult to do such a thing and many people lose their authenticity and creativity and live the routine of the life. Jameson has always tried to be creative and to keep his individuality and it is seen in his style and ideas. Even as a Marxist, he is being authentic and creative because in America there is hostility towards Marxism and it is out of norms to be a Marxist (Tian et al., 2021).

Every dominant power that existed has changed the identity of man to reach a form it assumes is the best form. In the modern world, in the 20th century, liberalism and neoliberalism, have promised to find a solution to the bad life condition of man after the Second World War and to set forth principles and ways following which man can live a better life. But the identity of man is lost and nothing is left but a destroyed self which is a mere puppet in society. Many writers and critics have tried to answer the question of identity. Fredric Jameson is a postmarxist who is a critic of neoliberalism and like David Foster Wallace (1999) tries to find a solution to the problem of man in American neoliberal society. Wallace questions liberal and neoliberal values and structures in his works and this research is going to read his works in the light of Fredric Jameson.

Industrial Revolution happened in America in the late 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century (Donoso et al., 2022; Jumintono et al., 2022). Economic development shifted from manual labor

and farm labor to industrialized labor. Modernism emerged and bourgeoisie took control of the economy and capitalism emerged in the shadow of liberalism. Liberalism set forth ideologies to improve man's condition of life. It is not something new. There has always been the description of Utopia from the time of Plato who tried to set principles for a desirable society, describing how a good citizen should be, what the society should do, and what the poets should write. However, through the ideologies of liberalism, the authorities were not trying to help flourish human beings but rather they were trying to develop capitalism. They used superstructures in society such as art, literature, school, and university to distribute the ideology they wanted and to control people. As life was never like before, there was a change in economy, politics, and literature (Shariati et al., 2013; Sharland et al., 2019). All cultural concepts in society changed to bourgeoisie cultural concepts and were spread in society by superstructure. Liberalism was not successful and helpful in finding the solution to the problems of society specifically the economic problems. As a result, neoliberalism comes after liberalism to fulfill the task. Fredric Jameson doesn't regard any of them as helpful since the superstructure imposed whatever ideology they wanted on people not for the wellbeing of people but for the improvement of capitalism. Wallace defies liberalism and neoliberalism and criticizes the values in such societies and believes that liberalism and neoliberalism help capitalism prosper therefore he defies them all. In his writings, he tries to show that there are other values in society that are more important and all the settings, characters, and events in his works are there to show this. Wallace doesn't accept the identity liberalism and neoliberalism have given man and all his characters and his works try to show this defiance (Haryadi, 2022). Fredric Jameson (1990) is a critic of liberalism and neoliberalism as well and talks about superstructure and ideology. Thus, reading Wallace's works with Jameson's perspectives and finding all the aspects Wallace defies and questions liberalism and neoliberalism is the main concern of this study.

According to Wallace (1999), for over 100 years men were puppets in the hands of liberalism and neoliberalism. They only wanted them to think they were living in modern and postmodern era. They had the latest versions of cell phones and cars and they had specific values and perspectives in their lives. But these are all ideologies imposed on them through superstructure in society. Wallace believes that in modern or postmodern society man is always at the beginning of the way, always paying for the things he has bought because he has only learned to be a consumer and it never ends. According to Wallace they even use whatever and whoever opposes them. For example, they use irony with any opposition and rejection to bring stasis to society. He says everything in society has turned into a superstructure to distribute certain ideologies to control people. He believes that the authority imposes an ideology on the minds of people to have a concept of their identity but it is a false self and identity.

Neoliberalism is in fact late capitalism. It is a new system of economy rendered after capitalism. In the last few decades of the 20th century, liberalism has captured state power in different grand cities of the world. Being a political project and a form of capitalism, neoliberalism reinforces elite class power and redistributes wealth to the upper class by structural and ideological means. Charles Peters and Philip Keisling believe that in the late 20th century the American people were dissatisfied with the traditional Democrat and Republican ideas and couldn't see a relief in their solutions for the society. They needed new ideas and a new version of politics to find solutions for the existing problems such as defense, healthcare, education, and so on. People who believe in the growth and improvement of conventional beliefs agree on the ideas of neoliberalism to solve the problems (Borowska-Szerszun, 2019). According to David Harvey neoliberalism was a solution to the crisis of liberalism in the 1970s. Liberalism itself was the result of a class agreement between a strong working class and the bourgeois state and was intended to solve the crises of the 1930s that were in their own place the result of capitalism. A liberal state promised full employment, economic growth, and social welfare in healthcare, education, and so on, to keep the compromise between the working class and the bourgeois state. In the 1950s liberalism was somehow successful in producing high levels of economic growth but couldn't avoid the inflation crisis of the 1970s. Liberalism failed in keeping its promises and fulfilling people's demands. So, neoliberalism was offered as a solution. It gained public support through an ideological process and introduced itself as a solution to the economic problems the countries faced. The primary purpose of neoliberalism was to overcome inflation by any economic policy regardless of any consequences (Haryadi, 2022). The policies were and still are privatization and deregulation, taking the tax burden from the rich and sharing it with other people, and having drastic measures to take away the power of the unions and "has meant the financialization of everything" (Haryadi, 2022). To accomplish political-economic goals the state power uses methods like privatization and deregulation and so many others. By financialization of everything, that is to Harvey an essential feature of neoliberalism, many western companies are no longer industrial producers. They turned into financial

operations. But neoliberalism also didn't fulfill the promised economic growth for the working class and it led to the decomposition of working-class power and as a result international protest against it. Liberalists believe that liberalism has been exploited and misunderstood and has not applied perfectly and that's why it has failed to accomplish its promised ideas. Neoliberalism which is a redistribution of wealth from the poor to the very rich has its own supporters in countries like USA and Britain and the reason is that it has secured its place through ideological structures. These ideological structures make people blind to the reality of their situation and the government's exploitation of them.

Unlike what many people think, politics is not just attending an election and choosing a group to govern a country for a while. Politics controls everything in the lives of the citizens. It even controls the way people think and what they want and desire by different means one of which is ideology. As a result, a system like neoliberalism is not just an economic system that believes the private sector should be in charge of the welfare of the populace. It is more than an economic system in which ideologies are dealt with to shape the values of the society and control the minds and lives of people. Henry Giroux explains that democracy has lost its meaning and neoliberalism in the US government is trying to confine the youth in America because they are considered to be threats to the system. They are not "a symbol of the future" anymore. They form a generation that needs to be controlled and the government focuses on solving the threatening problem of the youth (Giroux 2004). All the system does to control this generation is to turn them into good obedient citizens who will never think of any rebellion. They use ideology and begin at schools which have turned into a place for examining and exercising politics, power, and authority.

The novels chosen to be discussed are five of Wallace's major novels, *The Broom of the System*, *Infinite Jest*, *The Pale King*, *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men* and *This is Water*. All his characters, settings, and jobs in his works put emphasis on this idea. He insists that man's identity is lost. There is no flourishing of man's self and elevation of man in a neoliberal society and man has not been successful in possessing a true self in the 20th and the 21st century.

## METHOD

The main concern of modernism is the movement of the society toward destruction and meaninglessness. Modernism is rooted in the rapid changes in technology and the new modes of thoughts coming from thinkers like Freud, Marx, Darwin, and Nietzsche. Most of previous beliefs and findings of man were challenged and man was left uncertain about lots of things. "Marx demonstrated that social class was created, not inherent; Freud reduced human individuality to an instinctive sex drive; Darwin provided fossil evidence that the Earth was much older than the estimate based on scripture; and Nietzsche argued that even the most deeply held ethical principles were simply constructions" (Boswell, 2020). Searching in the past for an inspiration to construct a new society, modernist writers tried to understand where humanity stood after such shattering of the ideas in their minds. Brian McHale claims that modernism is epistemological in nature. The important thing in modernism is the mechanics of knowledge and what it is and how people perceive it. What modernism privileges is the perceived knowledge over the objective truth (Galens, 2009).

The next feature of postmodern era is the change in sublime. Sublime used to be nature and its divine forces but in postmodern era it is, as Jameson states, technology. One result of the expansion of the capital is the technological development which Jameson called "multinational capitalism". "The technology of contemporary society is therefore mesmerizing and fascinating not so much in its own right but because it seems to offer some privileged representational shorthand for grasping a network of power and control even more difficult for our minds and imaginations to grasp: the whole new decentered global network [of late capitalism]" (Jameson, PM 37). This passage shows that technology is being used as a means of power and control and it helps the system apply power and control easier and faster. The authorities can control and shape people's minds and identities by using technology and by making people interested in technology and in using modern technological devices, the authorities do such a thing without people noticing the influence they are taking from technology.

Modernist fiction is a reaction to the Victorian/Edwardian conventions of linear, cause-and-effect narrative and by rejecting all these features, it affirms the discontinuous, the private, the subjective as its characteristics. According to Jameson, (1994), The writers of postmodern era were tired of all the innovations of modernism and the truth they claimed that was in fact coming from the subjective knowledge and perception they had. Thus, instead of finding a way to present the truth and perceived

knowledge, the postmodern writers tried to examine the relationship between the text and the truth it tries to convey by questioning and interrogating the text repeatedly.

Jameson is a critique of neoliberal system in America and wants people to resist this system. Neoliberalism is an economic system that allows market to make important political and social decisions. The state has no influence on the economy and the corporations have complete freedom and trade unions are limited and less social protection are given to the citizens and the market is the organizing principle for all the political, social, and economic decisions. Neoliberalism is a system that attacks democracy, public goods, and noncommodified values. This system prioritizes market and commodity and trade and the citizens are valuable only if they are consumers in the society. Their public and democratic rights are not important in this system. To turn the citizens into mere consumers, the system uses ideology to shape their culture and identity. It uses different institutions and decreases any chance of resistance. Jameson declares that by emergence of neoliberalism, it is not the end of capitalism but the end of the world. For example, they use the media to explain the past and present according to their own benefits and to explain everything in life to have a united mindset in the society and to define the future for people. The next significant theme in postmodernism is disintegration of the concepts. It refers to all the concepts, notions that were taken for granted and accepted by lots of people, and people rely on these concepts as the foundation of their lives. In postmodernism, as there is no definite universal truth, all the conventional and previous notions are disintegrated.

## RESULTS

Every dominant power that existed has changed the identity of man to reach a form it assumes is the best form. In the modern world, in the 20th century, liberalism and neoliberalism, have promised to find a solution to the bad life condition of man after the second world war and to set forth principles and ways following which man can live a better life. But the identity of man is lost and nothing is left but a destroyed self which is a mere puppet in society. Many writers and critics have tried to answer the question of identity. Fredric Jameson is a postmarxist who is a critic of neoliberalism and like David Foster Wallace tries to find a solution to the problem of man in American neoliberal society. Wallace questions liberal and neoliberal values and structures in his works and this research is going to read his works in the light of Fredric Jameson.

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One of the most important problems the new left deals with is in fact the matter of culture apparatus. Through different institutions in a society, the system tries to change the culture of people so that they approve whatever is done in the society by the government. So, there are new historical agents (student body) because they understand it. In the past, the working class was responsible to make changes in society; now the students are. And in fact, the new left movement was a student movement. They were not limited

to the traditional doctrinal and bureaucratic ideas of the old left but they didn't have an organization and it led to infightings. The new left emphasized personal integrity and authenticity with a strong overtone of Sartre and it was something different from the old left. They want personal authenticity and they follow existential values and that's when the individual defies the society and gets alienated. The new left tries to have its own personal and social discourse and experience that is different from previous ones in Old Marxism and the result is that alienation (Homer and Kellner 14). The new left sees educational institutions such as schools and universities as means in the hands of the authorities who have invested in a capitalist system. These institutions spread the ideas and viewpoints that are appropriate for this system. University is one of the most important key institutions in every society because it is where the knowledge comes from and where the attitudes and ideas of the youth take form. Regarding the importance of university, Jameson considers universities as good sites for social activism and believes that through literary studies, lots of defiance can begin because literary studies can challenge people's minds and can cause political interventions.

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### **Reification and Alienation in Brief Interviews with Hideous Men**

According to Fredric Jameson, reification causes lots of problems in societies and it happens due to the dominance of the ideologies of capitalism and the superiority of market and production over human relations (3). In a neoliberal society of America, after years of ideologies imposed on people's minds, people value everything based on their price and an object called money. Therefore, reification of human relations happens and people are caught in themselves and lack the ability to communicate with others and they get alienated in society. In *A Radically Condensed History of Postindustrial Life*, the first short story in *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men*, Wallace depicts two characters who go on a date and try to communicate but it goes nowhere and they fail in their human relations and go home separately and hopelessly. Wallace shows their lack of ability in communication in this way: "When they were introduced, he made a witticism, hoping to be liked. She laughed extremely hard, hoping to be liked. Then each drove home alone, staring straight ahead, with the very same twist to their faces" (Boswell, 2020).

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About the short story collection *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men*, Wallace has declared that it is "A parody (a feminist parody) of feminism" (Galens, 2009). He has tried to work on the complicated relationship between men and women in society since, as Clare Hayes-Brady claims, female experience of the world is quite strange to Wallace and he is alienated from the female world and her experiences (Jameson, 1997). Therefore, a study in which the role of women in a patriarchal society is considered and the ideologies that can help men maintain power in that society and the ways they preserve the power can be discussed here.

### **Ideology in Brief Interviews with Hideous Men**

Wallace works with the unconscious anxieties and desires of people in the society of his time. The unconscious desires and dreams and anxieties of people in the society are shaped by the political, social and economic conditions in the society and all these desires and anxieties are reflected in their life and in their cultural production because the cultural production in a society is influenced by the unconscious desires and anxieties of their creators. Wallace shows the anxieties and desires of hideous men to show the influences the society and its political, social and economic conditions have in their lives and minds and in a broader scale the influences they have in people's lives and minds. The hideous men depicted in Wallace's

short story collection are characteristics of men in a capitalist or better to say neoliberal society in which capital and production are the main concern of the authorities.

Wallace brings about the idea of blindness in one of these stories named "Yet Another Example of the Porousness of Certain Borders" and puts it this way in a dream: "As in all those other dreams, I'm with somebody I know but don't know how I know them, and now this person suddenly points out to me that I'm blind. In a neoliberal society that is another name for capitalist society, the ideologies are imposed on the minds of the citizens secretly and implicitly without letting them know what they are absorbing to their minds and without even knowing that they are accepting those ideas and they are changing their viewpoints according to them. They unknowingly adopt an identity and personality and their behavior would change according to the needs of the society. In the passage above, Wallace clearly mentions the idea of knowing something without knowing how that can be regarded as the attempt of the society to influence people's minds through media, art, literature or different institutions. What the character understands here in his dream is the matter of his blindness. Many times, in these stories, Wallace uses the words "blind" or "blindness" and this way he refers to the unconscious anxiety of people in a neoliberal society in which they have been blinded by the ideologies. The citizens who are objects in a neoliberal society and have turned into mere consumers are in fact blinded by all those advertisements and media effects and popular culture references' life styles and so on. These blind citizens cannot understand that they are blind and they only go for what they are meant to do and they never resist. The character understands about his blindness and responds to it with a heart full of sorrow. "I get sad. It makes me incredibly sad that I'm blind". Resisting such blindness is not simple and acquires effort and knowledge and according to what Wallace depicts here, very few people can resist and wake up from that blindness. Maybe even some people wake up temporarily and they become conscious of other people's blindness and their own ability to see and understand the world but they cannot stand this awareness and get back to that world of blindness again. They prefer to believe in what other people (the authorities) say about the truth of the world and they prefer to accept their perspectives about life and universe. In this story the character wakes up in a horrified manner and when he goes to work, he is sensitive to his power of eyesight and thinks about "those blind people I see on the subway" (3) and he understands that he can see but he cannot endure the open system and his awareness of the closed system and his being awake. He finds it "tiring as hell" (Kim et al., 2020) and desires to go back to the blindness of sleep.

## CONCLUSION

Regarding the style of writing and narration in postmodernism, a disruption of time line that Jameson calls "schizophrenia" is noteworthy. It is when the author presents a time line and when the reader gets used to it, he changes the time line and disrupts it and presents "discontinuous time" and the writer presents events in different time lines that are not even related. Another technique is the "recurring characters" that is when the author uses the same character in different works. The next technique is "irony" that is different from its previous uses which was provoking a change in the object of the irony.

Jameson argues that when there is no originality of thought and language, pastiche increases in the postmodernist works. Postmodernists apply Baudrillard's idea of "simulacra" in their writings that is the false copy or a mere reflection, which is inferior to the original one and "simulacrum" that is the perfect copy without having any original form. As an innovative technique, they imitate or copy others and use the reflections in their own work. The presence of machines that are exactly like humans is one example of simulacra. It can be concluded from Jameson's view and techniques that Wallace believes that the true self is there inside every human and people should be conscious of their self-consciousness. The self-consciousness or the identity they have created for themselves may be the result of what the authorities and the society want them to have and it may be their false identity but the true self always lives inside them. This is what Wallace asks his readers to do; to dive into their inner self and true self and disappear there and be united with their true self and be conscious of all the ideologies that are spread around them. In the end, the boy wonders which one is the real world and decides to jump into the new world he has found and to see a different world there. He dives into the pool and disappears into the reality. The last word of the story is "Hello" as if Wallace is welcoming the young boy when he has got out of the closed system and entered the open system.

## LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS

The idea to be discussed is prominent and the researcher will be able to find enough sources to challenge the idea in mind. The critic as well is a famous influential critic in social postmodernism and the researcher can find different books discussing his ideas and issues and the case studies are available and possible to work with. The writer to be discussed has vast range of ideas both in postmodernism and social matters and he has lots of both fiction and nonfiction. The idea is very vast and there are lots of critics and writers who have talked about modernism and postmodernism and the researcher needs to be familiar with all of them. As a result, it can be very time consuming and also there can be a lot to do and a lot to say. There are lots of books about the issue and lots of different ideas to be added. Therefore, because of lack of time and more importantly limited number of the pages, the researcher has to limit the number of books and ideas, working on the most important ones to be discussed. The novels chosen to be discussed are five of Wallace's major novels, *The Broom of the System*, *Infinite Jest*, *The Pale King*, *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men* and *This is Water*.

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