1. David Foster Wallace e il suo rapporto con il Postmodernismo letterario anglo-americano:

The postmodern founders’ patricidal work was great, but patricide produces orphans, and no amount of revelry can make up for the fact that writers my age have been literary orphans throughout our formative years. We're kind of wishing some parents would come back. And of course we're uneasy about the fact that we wish they’d come back. [...] And then the uneasiest feeling of all, as we start gradually to realize that parents in fact aren't ever coming back--which means “we're” going to have to be the parents.


2. La progressiva inefficacia dell’ironia postmodernista nel corso degli anni Novanta:

2.1 The rebellious irony in the best postmodern fiction wasn't only credible as art; it seemed downright socially useful in its capacity for what counterculture critics call a critical negation that would make it self-evident to everyone that the world is not as it seems. [...] The assumptions behind early postmodern irony, on the other hand, were still frankly idealistic: it was assumed that etiology and diagnosis pointed toward cure, that a revelation of imprisonment led to freedom.


2.2 "No one sees the barn," he said finally.
A long silence followed.
"Once you've seen the signs about the barn, it becomes impossible to see the barn."

He fell silent once more. People with cameras left the elevated site, replaced at once by others.
"We're not here to capture an image, we're here to maintain one. Every photograph reinforces the aura. Can you feel it, Jack? [...] They are taking pictures of taking pictures," he said.
He did not speak for a while. We listened to the incessant clicking of shutter release buttons, the rustling crank of levers that advanced the film.
"What was the barn like before it was photographed?" he said. "What did it look like, how was it different from other barns, how was it similar to other barns? We can't answer these questions because we've read the signs, seen the people snapping the pictures. We can't get outside the aura. We're part of the aura. We're here, we're now."

He seemed immensely pleased by this.
2.3
The reason why today's imagist fiction isn't the rescue from a passive, addictive TV-psychology that it tries so hard to be is that most imagist writers render their material with the same tone of irony and self-consciousness that their ancestors, the literary insurgents of Beat and postmodernism, used so effectively to rebel against their own world and context. And the reason why this irreverent postmodern approach fails to help the new Imagists transfigure TV is simply that TV has beaten the new Imagists to the punch. The fact is that for at least ten years now television has been ingeniously absorbing, homogenizing, and re-presenting the very cynical postmodern aesthetic that was once the best alternative to the appeal of low, over-easy, mass-marketed narrative.

3. La critica nei confronti della metafiction:

3.1
Metafiction is a required postmodern convention aimed at drawing the poor old reader's emotional attention to the fact that the narrative bought and paid for and now under time-consuming scrutiny is not in fact a barely-there window onto a different and truly diverting world, but rather in fact an “artifact,” an object, a plain old this-worldly thing, composed of emulsified wood pulp and horizontal chorus-lines of dye, and conventions, and is thus in a “deep” sense just an opaque forgery of a transfiguring window, not a real window, a gag, and thus in a deep (but intentional, now) sense artificial, which is to say fabricated, false, a fiction [...].

3.2
After the pioneers always come the crank turners, the little gray people who take the machines others have built and just turn the crank, and little pellets of metafiction come out the other end. [...] And now the whole thing's become a hollow form, just another institution of fashion».

3.3
Metafiction is untrue, as a lover. It cannot betray. It can only reveal. Itself is its only object. It's the act of a lonely solipsist’s self-love.

Please don't tell anybody, but Mark Nechtr desires, some distant hard-earned day, to write something that stabs you in the heart. That pierces you, makes you think you're going to die. Maybe it's called metalife. Or metafiction. Or realism. Or ghfrytytu. He doesn't know. He wonders who the hell really cares. Maybe it's not called anything. Maybe it's just the involved revelation of betrayal.
WALLACE, Westward the Course of Empire Takes its Way, op. cit., pp. 332-333.

4. Cinismo e ingenuità:

4.1
We already "know” U.S. culture is materialistic. This diagnosis can be done in about two lines. It doesn't engage anybody. What's engaging and artistically real is, taking it as axiomatic that the present is grotesquely materialistic, how is it that we as human beings still have the capacity for joy, charity, genuine connections, for stuff that doesn't have a price? And can these capacities be made to thrive? And if so, how, and if not why not?

4.2
It's of some interest that the lively arts of the millennial U.S.A. treat anhedonia and internal emptiness as hip and cool. [...]The U.S. arts are our guide to inclusion. A how-to. We are shown how to fashion masks of ennui and jaded irony at a young age where the face is fictile enough to assume the shape of whatever it
wears. And then it's stuck there, the weary cynicism that saves us from gooey sentiment and unsophisticated naïveté. Sentiment equals naïveté on this continent […]. That queerly persistent U.S. myth that cynicism and naïveté are mutually exclusive.


5. I nuovi autori anglo-americani come anti-ribelli:

The next real literary "rebels" in this country might well emerge as some weird bunch of "anti-rebels," born oglers who dare to back away from ironic watching, who have the childish gall actually to endorse single-entendre values. Who treat old untrendy human troubles and emotions in U.S. life with reverence and conviction. Who eschew self-consciousness and fatigue. These anti-rebels would be outdated, of course, before they even started. Too sincere. Clearly repressed. Backward, quaint, naive, anachronistic. Maybe that'll be the point, why they'll be the next real rebels. Real rebels, as far as I can see, risk things. Risk disapproval. The old postmodern insurgents risked the gasp and squeal: shock, disgust, outrage, censorship, accusations of socialism, anarchism, nihilism. The new rebels might be the ones willing to risk the yawn, the rolled eyes, […] the "How banal." Accusations of sentimentality, melodrama. Credulity. Willingness to be suckered by a world of lurkers and starers who fear gaze and ridicule above imprisonment without law.


6. L'importanza della libertà positiva e dell'attenzione all'Altro:

6.1 'Always with you this freedom! For your walled-up country, always to shout "Freedom! Freedom!" as if it were obvious to all people what it wants to mean, this word. But look: it is not so simple as that. Your freedom is the freedom-from: no one tells your precious individual U.S.A. selves what they must do. It is this meaning only, this freedom from constraint and forced duress.' […] 'But what of the freedom-to? Not just free-from. Not all compulsion comes from without. You pretend you do not see this. What of freedom-to. How for the person to freely choose? How to choose any but a child's greedy choices if there is no loving-filled father to guide, inform, teach the person how to choose? How is there freedom to choose if one does not learn how to choose?'


6.2 The so-called real world will not discourage you from operating on your default settings, because the so-called real world of men and money and power hums merrily along in a pool of fear and anger and frustration and craving and worship of self. Our own present culture has harnessed these forces in ways that have yielded extraordinary wealth and comfort and personal freedom. The freedom all to be lords of our tiny skull-sized kingdoms, alone at the center of all creation. This kind of freedom has much to recommend it. But of course there are all different kinds of freedom, and the kind that is most precious you will not hear much talk about much in the great outside world of wanting and achieving […]. The really important kind of freedom involves attention and awareness and discipline, and being able truly to care about other people and to sacrifice for them over and over in myriad petty, unsexy ways every day. That is real freedom. That is being educated, and understanding how to think. The alternative is unconsciouness, the default setting, the rat race, the constant gnawing sense of having had, and lost, some infinite thing.