

Stress Less

cut-short tutorials lectures seminars webinars at the University of New South Wales
make salient the profound truth-claims of their courage-teachers

but Fredric Jameson whimpers, second-hand, used
lodged in the free bookshelf plastered with self-help mantras outside Webster 327
This Too Shall Pass—

i'm running late i'm running late

to meet the 80% mandatory attendance requirement
before the mid-mid-term break before the mid-term break before the summer

This essay will analyse how Tender Buttons enacts a syntactic destabilisation of literary form—
the thesis is verbose and underdeveloped
a pass granted at least thank God i can't bother redoing the course
taught by second-hand David Foster Wallace with cobwebs on his ghost
boasting 'bout the accuracy of his multitudinous predictions

something about TV
something about bureaucracy
something about creeping addiction

but i'm busy in the back row with two-factor authentication opening the student portal clicking
on my grade for the quiz i did last midnight
submitted a mosquito-blink from deadline—
Wallace's bespectacled glare brings me back to

the fluorescence of the room

his perspiring bandana-wrapped forehead turns to me and—

*I quite liked your piece it's nicely fragmented and sardonic have you done my other course it's on semiotics
really i think it'd help fill out one or two lacunae in the piece — not that there are actual holes in it exactly
because the structure is admittedly already fairly sui generis and i mean that in the sense of it being its own
slightly odd organism rather than, like, a problem — anyway i think you'd excel no? you haven't? well
please do enrol (before census date) just look for page 856 of the handbook under Bachelors of Media/Arts
third tab level 2 scroll down register select classes find the waitlist and*

be patient

sprinting now move out the way 11:59 is coming beware beware of 11:59

but why? mid-term break mid-term break mid-term break mid-term—
before the summer before the summer before i graduate
the bachelor's before the master's before the PhD before the agony
the Dean rakes in the international student fees
no no what am i saying? how dare i? UNSW is ranked no. 1 in graduate employability
Scientia Corde Manu et Mente — Knowledge by Heart, Hand and Mind
that's what the Board tells me — i say thanks
for this paintbrush my God! it's genius! outdoor painting activities are just what i need
Stress-Less Week i await your trimesterly visit you distract me so
from my neuroses from

Stress Less

the word count from
the fees from
the ads from
the truth of Wallace's suicide

which echoes in my mind
informs my image of him

My laptop dies, fingers poised on the keys. I pan my head back to his ghost
recounting to us a decades-old Illinois afternoon—

*I scratched pen against paper, really one of the only times — the only ways —
I could let them out. “Demons” would be the dramatic word, but those thoughts certainly
took me to dark places. I love that memory, nebulous as it is. Downing Diet Dr Peppers.
Hours swimming by as the snow fell slowly outside. I realise now it was only in those moments
that I didn't hear the hiss of the windows as winds pressed in.*

As the other students withdraw from the room
and Wallace phases back into the walls,
I lean back, feel the rising of my chest, and really listen
to nothing, nothing at all.