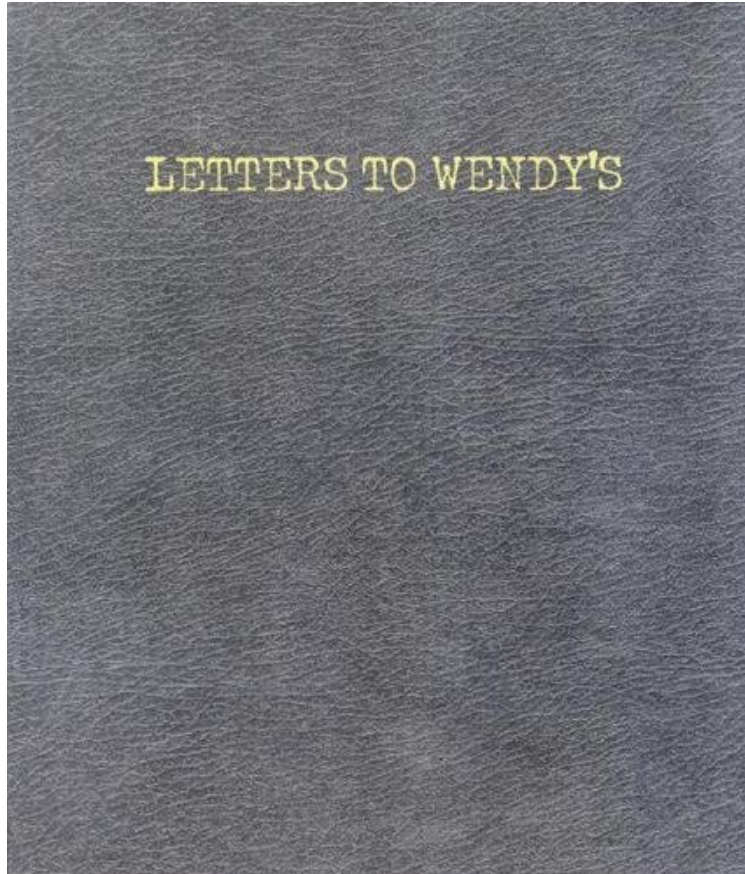


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Letters to Wendy's

Joe Wenderoth

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Joe Wenderoth : Letters to Wendy's before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Letters to Wendy's:

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Letters to Wendys is an outrageous, tragic, genre-bending novel written over the course of a year on comment cards from the fast-food chain restaurant Wendys. Through the letters, the book traces a year in the life and thoughts of an unnamed narrator obsessed not only by Biggies and Frosties, but also by consumerism, pornography, and mortality.

From Publishers WeeklyWhat kind of person is inspired by a fast-food restaurant? If this new book is any indication, it's one who is by turns worshipful, disturbing and just plain weird. Conceived as a series of comment cards to a local

Wendy's, this unconventional fiction chronicles the life (or lack thereof) of an unnamed narrator who spends his days drinking oversized sodas and contemplating the meaning of the fast-food icon. In his more lucid moments, the narrator imagines Wendy's as a cradle-to-grave institution, supplying IV nourishment for a person's last days in the form of "liquid fries." He also posits that Wendy's would serve well as a site for state-sponsored executions, providing both the correct quality of light and an abundance of refreshments. He's just as likely, however, to devolve into soft-porn daydreams involving the counter help and prepackaged foods. About the narrator himself, we learn very little: no name, no profession, no home address: just an Everyman as fast-food customer. In its best moments, the book delivers some insights into the social mores of people thrown together in a public place of business, people who share the same space and general eating habits but are unwilling to share much else. In short snippets, the narrative can be intriguing; excerpts have appeared on the Web site Nerve.com. But there's no plot to speak of, and spending time with this voyeuristic stranger quickly grows both creepy and tedious. (Dec. 15) FYI: Letters to Wendy's is Verse Press's debut publication. The press will devote itself to releasing innovative works in all genres by poets (Wenderoth is the author of two poetry collections, *Disfortune* and *It Is if I Speak*). Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. A perverse, sometimes pretty, obscene and confounding collection of one page meditative missives... trimmed with lunatic fringe. -- Rolling Stone Charting the narrator's daily routine the work reveals an obsession with sexuality, isolation and consumerism run amok. -- Valley Advocate, February 8th, 2001 I couldn't have loved this book any more than I did. So good. -- kottke.org, April 2, 2001 Letters to Wendy's, believe it or not, is a work of genius. -- Philadelphia Weekly, February 8th, 2001 Likely to be known... as the most apt, able, and adventurous ars poetica produced for and by Generation X. -- John D'Agata, Boston These postmodern koans work, in part, because they conjure images so incongruous in the context of a Wendy's visit. -- Feed Magazine, feedmag.com, February 8th, 2001 Wenderoth's first book of fiction ... offers a poetic figure uniquely in tune with what is simultaneously perverse and glorious. -- Rain Taxi, April 2001 About the Author Joe Wenderoth grew up near Baltimore. He is the author of five books of prose and poetry, including *Letters to Wendy's* (Verse Press, 2000). He teaches at the University of California, Davis.