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*Stranger than Fiction* Discussion

- Significance of characters' names:
  - Harold Crick might be a reference to Francis Crick, who was involved in publishing the first description of the double helix structure of DNA. What could be the significance of this?
  - Ana Pascal is probably a reference to Blaise Pascal, largely known for Pascal's Triangle and his contributions to the philosophy of mathematics. What could be the significance of this?
  - What might these references say about these characters as a pair?
  - What might these references say about these characters as characters in a novel?
  - Karen Eiffel: Gustave Eiffel was an engineer and architectural designer (designed the Eiffel tower). Significance?
- Compare/Contrast *MIST* with *Stranger than Fiction*:
  - How does the relationship between Harold and Karen differ from that between Augusto and Unamuno?
  - In *MIST*, Unamuno explains to Augusto that he is fictional therefore cannot kill himself. Augusto retorts by saying that he can control his own life, and threatens to kill Unamuno. How much control do you think Harold has over his life/death?
  - Who ultimately has more control over the other, Harold over Karen or vice versa?
- Harold Crick as a mathematical character:
  - What makes him mathematical?
  - Why is his being mathematical essential to the plot?
  - How is he a typical representation of a mathematician? How is he not?
  - Does he exhibit signs of madness common in other mathematical characters? Explain.
- Harold Crick's death:
  - Why did his author find his "imminent death" so crucial to the plot? What significance did it end up having for the film?
  - Do you agree with the characters in the film that his survival worsened his story? Why/why not?
  - How would you interpret the phenomenon of his survival? (A shard of metal from his wristwatch blocking a severed artery, thus preventing death)

## Bibliography:

Wikipedia: Blaise Pascal

Wikipedia: Francis Crick

*MIST* by Miguel Unamuno (available in class reader)

## Mathematical References

- Ana Pascal-Blaise Pascal: mathematician responsible for Pascal's triangle and other contributions to the philosophy of mathematics
- Harold Crick-Francis Crick: worked on publishing first description of DNA as a double helix and other related contributions.
- Karen Eiffel-Gustave Eiffel: engineer and architect, designed the Eiffel tower.
- Penny Escher-M.C. Escher: mathematical artist
- Professor Jules Hilbert: German mathematician
- Kronecker Bus Line: Leopold Kronecker: German mathematician and logician
- Baneker Press: Benjamin Baneker: African American mathematician and clockmaker
- Euclid Street: Euclidean Geometry
- Soundtrack: "My Mathematical Mind" by Spoon