Troup Wood

Stranger Than Fiction Discussion Notes:

How does Augusto in *Mist* and Crick in *Stranger than Fiction* compare and contrast?
- -The character tries to turn the tables on the author.
- -Both characters switch stances on whether or not they want to die.

Derrida's Big Other: There are sets of symbols, such as {the alphabet} {language} {all social norms} {body language} {natural numbers} {fashion tends} and all these sets make up an infinite set called the big Other. If the big Other is the fabric that makes up our notion of reality and of our society, we hope that some ultimate force is behind it— something that transcends the system (God, for instance).

Tl;dr – People want God as an infinite set.

- -In the movie, this ultimate force can be **mortality** because of how Eiffel and Hilbert emphasize it.

- -There are many levels of sets. First, Crick's small, controlled life $\subseteq$ Crick. Second, Crick himself and all events in his life $\subseteq$ Eiffel's book. Eiffel and the movie characters $\subseteq$ mortality.

Tl;dr – Metafiction/postmodernism = Math (sets & functions)

- -Benefit of infinite sets - Just as God is the answer to many people's troubles, the fact that his life in the hands of Eiffel frees Crick to live happily.

How does math die away once Crick's life changes? How does this opposition between math and the presence of a higher power echo *Logicomix*?

What is the significance of not killing Crick? Giving up perfection to save a life?

Crazy mathematicians – is Crick another mathematician who has lost it?

Mist:

-In *Mist*, the author emphasizes his belief in Spain and in God... two transcendent signifiers/infinite sets.

-Unamuno's Mist: "He who creates, creates himself, and he who creates himself dies." ...this quote echoes "God created man in His own image," but it also echoes Nietzsche: "God is dead." Does this suggest that God is not the ultimate author, just as Eiffel isn't?

Arthur Cayley – posited a theorem & coined the mathematical usage of "group."
Gösta Mittag-Leffler – mathematician, feminist, and member of countless math-science societies.
Francis Crick – known for discovering DNA.
Gustave Eiffel – Engineer who built the Eiffel tower.
Pascal and Hilbert