

# Private Selves and Public Personae

## The Philosophy of Identities & The Sciences of the Mind

Honors 399 – CRN 16326

Fall Term 2019 – Purdue University

Professor: Daniel Kelly

(Last updated 11/14/19)

Good, Relevant, Interesting Art

### Novels / Books

- 1) *Freshwater* by Akwaeke Emezi, a coming of age story that wrestles with being multiple, gender fluid, and figuring it out using a non-Western conceptual framework  
<https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/akwaeke-emezi-startling-debut-novel-explores-the-freedom-of-being-multiple>
- 2) *Butcher's Crossing* by John Williams—self-consciously taking Emersonian self-reliance to its absurd extremes
- 3) *The Neapolitan quartet* by Elena Ferrante—a magisterial look at the intertwining of two selves, identities, and lives
- 4) *The Mirror Thief* by Martin Seay—identity and mirrors and magic and gambling in three different iterations of Venice  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/29/books/review/the-mirror-thief-by-martin-seay.html>
- 5) *Infinite Jest* (and most everything else) by David Foster Wallace, individualism, choice and how it is affected by addiction, the pitfalls of too much self-consciousness, etc.
- 6) “The Truth of Fact, The Truth of Feeling” by Ted Chiang—what would happen if technology allowed us to faithfully record and publicize our episodic memories?
- 7) *The Circle* by David Eggers, on identity on the internet and the role or import of online anonymity

### Documentaries

- 1) *The Devil Next Door* on Netflix, about John Demjanjuk and whether or not he is (was?) actually Nazi prison guard known as Ivan the Terrible
- 2) *Hamilton's Pharmacopeia* on Hulu, on drugs and the hallucinating mind

### Movies

- 1) *Hasan Minbaj: Homecoming King*
- 2) *Eternal Sunshine of a Spotless Mind* – what is if you could pay a company to wipe away your memories of a relationship gone bad?
- 3) *The Talented Mr. Ripley* – the ultimate imposter villain

### TV Series

- 1) *Living with Yourself* on Netflix

- 2) *Fleabag* on Amazon Prime—the first season is great; the second season is transcendent, as close to perfect as TV is gonna get
- 3) *American Vandal* on Netflix
- 4) *13 Reasons Why Not...* on Netflix
- 5) *Bojack Horseman* on Netflix
- 6) “When Keeping It Real Goes Wrong” series of skits from the Dave Chapelle Show

### **Other Media**

- 1) *OK Computer* by Radiohead
- 2) *Aparna Nancharla's* standup, twitter feed, and general awesomeness