

Your last paper for this class will serve as the final exam. Each paper carries the same weight, so put as much effort into this one as those in the past. For this essay, you'll be asked to complete **one** of the following essay questions. Each essay will require you to use examples from *Loner*, *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, your own ideas, and your own, independent research. You only have to choose **one** of the topics. The essay is due on Blackboard by midnight, Friday, May 15th, in the Big Essay Submission folder.

These essay prompts require outside research. You'll need to use the online articles, PDFs, or books to help you. Make sure to clearly define concepts before you discuss how they relate to *Loner* and *The Talented Mr. Ripley*.

- 1) In modern psychology, “**the dark triad**” refers to a combination of three personality traits--**narcissism, Machiavellianism, psychopathy**--that are found in people with underlying malevolent tendencies. Some aspects of these traits can be inherited; others formed throughout one's life experiences. In *Loner*, does David engage in behaviors that intersect with “the dark triad”? What about Tom in *The Talented Mr. Ripley*? Provide examples from the text, scenes from the film, and demonstrate your understanding of “the dark triad”.
- 2) Tom, near the end of *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, says, “whatever you do, however terrible, however hurtful, it all makes sense...in your head, right? You never meet anybody who thinks they're a bad person.” Do you think David from *Loner* and Tom from *The Talented Mr. Ripley*--and people in general--are **inherently bad**, or just **products of circumstance**? You might want to consider how **power** and **the justice system** work to explain crimes and criminality. Provide examples from the text, scenes from the film, and outside research (preferably psychology or sociology) to support your findings.
- 3) The **antihero** is the protagonist of a story, film, or novel that displays characteristics that generally differ from those displayed by traditional heroes. Take David, Tom, or both, and put their character traits and values under the microscope. In which ways do they use **unheroic qualities** to get what they want? Provide examples from the text, scenes from the film, and outside research to demonstrate your understanding of **heroes**, **antiheroes**, and **villains**, and their roles in stories, films, and culture.

Your essay will be due on Blackboard, as stated earlier, by midnight on Friday, May 15. Please specify, in your header, which essay prompt you are writing on. Please adhere to MLA format; your paper should be in 12 pt. font, 3.5--7 pages of writing, with a Works Cited page. My advice is to compile research and make an outline before you write the essay.