Class #14: *The Talented Mr. Ripley* 2/3

ENGL 10: Global Fictions

Ask me about majoring in English! jjjeon@uci.edu
In Tom Ripley, we find the strange pairing of confidence man and tourist. Tom plots to remain within the realm of the illusory image and the ideal.

Tourism is thus a kind of *worlding*.
Worlding

*Worlding* here is a way of being in the world that is also a way of remaking the world, which, on the one hand, *serves* a very particular set of needs, desires, or interests while, on the other hand, *hiding* those particular needs, desires, or interests such that the *vision of the world seems universal*. 
it off even when he showered at the house. He would do it the very last day. Tom thought. Tom stared at Dickie’s closed eyelids. A crazy emotion of hate, of affection, of impatience and frustration was swelling in him, hampering his breathing. He wanted to kill Dickie. It was not the first time he had thought of it. Before, once or twice or three times, it had been an impulse caused by anger or disappointment, an impulse that vanished immediately and left him with a feeling of shame. Now he thought about it for an entire minute, two minutes, because he was leaving Dickie anyway, and what was there to be ashamed of anymore? He had failed with Dickie, in every way. He hated Dickie, because, however he looked at what had happened, his failing had not been his own fault, not due to anything he had done, but due to Dickie’s inhuman stubbornness. And his blatant rudeness! He had offered Dickie friendship, companionship, and respect, everything he had to offer, and Dickie had replied with ingratitude and now hostility. Dickie was just shoving him out in the cold. If he killed him on this trip, Tom thought, he could simply say that some accident had happened. He could— He had just thought of something brilliant: he could become Dickie Greenleaf himself. He could do everything that Dickie did. He could go back to Mongibello first and collect Dickie’s things, tell Marge any damned story, set up an apartment in Rome or Paris, receive Dickie’s check every month and forge Dickie’s signature on it. He could step right into Dickie’s shoes. He could have Mr. Greenleaf, Sr., eating out of his hand. The danger of it, even the inevitable temporariness of it which he vaguely realized, only made him more enthusiastic. He began to think of how

The water. But Dickie was such a good swimmer. The cliffs. It would be easy to push Dickie off some cliff when they took a walk, but he imagined Dickie grabbing at him and pulling him off with him, and he tensed in his seat until his thighs ached and his nails cut red scallops in his thumbs. He would have to get the other ring off, too. He would have to tint his hair a little lighter. But he wouldn’t live in a place, of course, where anybody who knew Dickie lived. He had only to look enough like Dickie to be able to use his passport. Well, he did. If he—
“Good clean sport.” (17)

“He began to think of how.” (96)

*Logistics.*
Logistics as narrative genre
20th century logistics revolution
“the world as worldview.”

- Mark Seltzer, *The Official World*

“in our present historical circumstances we are very concerned about not simply what modern society is but how it observes and describes itself and its environment.”

- Niklas Luhmann

“The space of the game, the scene of the crime, and the form of the work of art are today (I’ve suggested) the ideal-typical models of these reenactment zones. These spaces incorporate technologies that shift, moment to moment, from the backdrop to the stage and back again. They indicate the way in which the official world is not exactly the designation of a space but a way of designating spaces: positions, lines, sites, zones, communication routes, routines, impasses, and bypasses. It is a self-designating way of functioning as a function. So it has its epitomic places—the office, for example. But the office, we know, is not one place among others: stage and backstage at once, it’s a switchboard of the social.”

- Mark Seltzer, *The Official World*
none of it went on to his shirtfront, but Tom didn't think the blood in the police would actually make a blood test to see how drunk Freddie had been. Tom let his eyes rest absentmindedly on Freddie's limp, very pale face for a moment, and his stomach contracted sickeningly and he quickly looked away. He couldn't do that again. His head had begun ringing as if he were going to faint.

That's a fine thing, Tom thought as he wobbled across the room toward the window, to faint now! He frowned at the black coal down below, and breathed the fresh air in deeply. He wasn't going to faint, he told himself. He knew exactly what he was going to do. At the last minute, the Pernod, for both of them. Two fatal glasses with their fingerprints and Pernod. And the ashtrays must be full. Freddie smoked Chesterfields. Then the Appian Way. One of those dark places behind the tombs. There weren't any overflights for long stretches on the Appian Way. Freddie's wallet would be missing. Objective: robbery.

He had hours of time, but he didn't sleep until the room was tidy, the dozen lighted Chesterfields and the dozen or so Lucky Strikes burnt down and stabbed out in the ashtrays, and a glass of Pernod broken and only half cleaned up from the bathroom tiles.

and the curious thing was that as he set his scene so carefully, he pictured having hours more to clean it up—say between nine that evening when the body might be found, and midnight, when the police just might decide he was worth questioning, because somebody just might have known that Freddie Miles was going to sell on Dickie Greenleaf today— and he knew that he would have to be done up by eight o'clock, probably, because according to the story he was going to tell, Freddie would have left his house by seven (indeed, Freddie was going to leave his house by seven), and Dickie Greenleaf was a fairly tidy young man, even with a few drinks in him. But the power of the navy house was that the business substantiated merely for his own benefit the story that he was going to tell, and that therefore he had to believe himself.

And he would still leave for Naples and Palma at ten-thirty.