Questions to reflect on about *The Truman Show*

1. Throughout the film, Christof suggests that his created world is as real and full of truth as the outside world in which we live. Is this correct? If so, what are the significant similarities? If not, what are significant differences?

2. Christof also suggests that even if Truman has lived in a fabricated world, he has still lived a real life. Is this correct? Is it possible to live a real life even though one remains in a cave or a dream? Why or why not?

3. Why does it take so long for Truman to figure out that he is living in Christof’s constructed world? What criteria do you use to detect the difference between living in a dream and living in the real world?

4. What and/or who prompts Truman to begin suspecting that he is not living in a real world? Compare & contrast his process of leaving Christof’s Cave to Plato’s account of the prisoner who leaves the Cave.

5. Prior to these suspicions, are Truman’s beliefs about his life rationally justified or not?

6. Throughout the film, characters, events and certain emotions conspire to keep Truman from leaving Seahaven. What people, events, or emotions keep you and others from wanting to find out whether beliefs held for a lifetime are actually true and/or rationally justified?

7. Christof maintains that he has tried to create the best of all possible worlds for Truman, yet Truman yearns to leave. What, if anything, is wrong with Christof’s world? Would you want to live there? Why or why not?

8. Plato and Descartes are both rationalists. For rationalists, it is the intellect working alone, rather than appealing to sense perception or the imagination, that provides the best rational justification for one’s beliefs. Does The Truman Show support the rationalist’s position or not? If you had experienced what Truman experienced, what evidence or methods would you now rely on in order to form your beliefs about the world?

9. At one point in the film, a character (Marlon) claims that “Nothing is fake, it’s merely controlled”. Do you agree there is a distinction between a fake world and a highly controlled world? You might want to reflect here on our previous discussion about God’s omnipotence & omniscience and whether this is compatible with considering ourselves truly free and responsible moral agents.