**Prof. Mark Nyvlt Notes**

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-ancient Greek philosophy… Plato… larger questions… realization that you are always searching

-fear holds back the big questions…

-Plato’s “The Republic” contains 10 books and two views of human nature:

1. Individual/enlightenment (eg. “The Allegory of the Cave” (common theme in modern film such as *The Truman Show* and *The Matrix*). Here, the mind adjusts to truth, like the man in the cave that sees sunlight for the first time. The mind adjusts= seeing the truth (goes back to the cave and the others think that he is a fool and should be killed. *Side-note: Socrates was killed in real life similarly*.

2. Illusion of ethics: Goodness is conditioned (eg. “The Lord of the Rings”) (analogy: would a student, given 10 seconds to decide, choose to change their grade if they could knowing that they would never get caught?) In Plato’s “Republic”: we fear doing what we desire most.

-Freud theory: dreams are your true self. Your ego is the net result of violence/sex drive/materialism v. artificial larger society, thus people don’t like violence as it reminds us of our true nature).

-TV= low intellect, predictable v. film & books where sometimes you can learn about courage and communication skills which are characteristics of philosophers.

-Rousseau: 1750, wrote an essay: Most people shouldn’t go to university… notion of virtue illusion where it turns out that it’s what you have and what you wear v. courage and big questions v. conformity… Mask of civilization & virtue… Symptom of modern time= split-personality of society. Most people come out of university unhappy because they missed their call. “Better to be a good tailor then a bad \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.” $ is the wrong motive and security is the wrong motive. Nature protects the person most free. Nature protects you from the trap of civilization. University came out as an escape from mediocrity.

-Prof: “I’ve met four brilliant people in my life; that’s all you get.”

-**Conclusion**: excitement of learning/liberation of mind is more pleasurable than eating chocolate mousse cake! There’s no script for the “good life” but don’t give into conventional thought, this is lazy and the opposite of happiness. For those going to university: for every hour of lecture, you should put in 2 hours of research and/or reading.