**The Truman Show**

**Part I - Sociology Concepts in the Film**

1. **Socialization-** the process that prepares humans to function in social life. It should be re-iterated here that socialization is culturally relative - people in different cultures are socialized differently. It is also a predominately an unconscious process by which a newborn child learns the values, beliefs, rules and regulations of society or internalizes the culture in which it is born.
2. **Anticipatory socialization** - informal adoption of [norms](http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1O88-norm.html) or behavior appropriate to a [status](http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1O88-status.html) not yet achieved by the individuals concerned, so providing them with experience of a [role](http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1O88-role.html) they have yet to assume. For example, children may anticipate parenthood by observing their parents as role models, and the careerist may anticipate promotion by emulating the occupational behavior of his or her superiors. Social learning that prepares us for the roles we are likely to assume in the future.
3. **Looking-glass self** - We see ourselves through the eyes of other people, even to the extent of incorporating their views of us into our own self-concept.
4. **Self-concept** - The mental image or perception that one has of oneself.

1. **Peer Group** -

a social group consisting of people who are equal in such respects as age, education or social class. Members of a particular peer group often have similar interests and backgrounds, bonded by the premise of sameness. However, some peer groups are very diverse, crossing social divides such as [socioeconomic status](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Socioeconomic_status), level of [education](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education), [race](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Racial_group), [creed](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Creed), [culture](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture), or [religion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion).

1. **Reference group** - a concept referring to a [group](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Group_%28sociology%29) to which an individual or another group is compared or a group with which an individual identifies and whose values the individual accepts as guiding principles.
2. **De-socialization**- The unlearning of previous normative expectations and roles.
3. **Resocialization** - Learning a new set of norms, attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors.
4. **Role Taking** - A social interaction in which people adopt and act out a particular social role. If, adapting Shakespeare, society is a stage, then people may be thought of as social actors performing roles, each the other's fellow player.
5. **Significant others** - A person, such as a family member or close friend, who is important or influential in one's life.
6. **Generalized other** - a concept used in the [social sciences](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_sciences), especially in a field called [symbolic interactionism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Symbolic_interactionism). It is the general notion that a person has of the common expectations that others have about actions and thoughts within a particular society.
7. **Total Institutions**- term introduced by Erving [Goffman](http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1O88-GoffmanErving.html) in *Asylums* (1961) to analyse a range of institutions in which whole blocks of people are bureaucratically processed, whilst being physically isolated from the normal round of activities, by being required to sleep, work, and play within the confines of the same institution. Prisons and mental hospitals are Goffman's key examples, but he suggests others including concentration camps, boarding schools, barracks, and monasteries.

**Part 2 - Give an example from the movie of each:**

A. LOOKING-GLASS SELF:

B. SOCIALIZATION:

C. DEVIATION:

D. NEGATIVE SANCTIONS:

E. HIDDEN CURRICULUM:

F. REFERENCE GROUP:

**Part 3 - Questions**

1. Although Truman lived in a controlled environment, some elements and events were beyond the command of authority. List some events which the director Christof was unable to control. Why were they out of his control?

2. How was Truman kept in the artificial environment? How was he socialized to stay on the “island”?

3. What were some elements of Truman’s environment which were artificial and **YOU** would have recognized as false?

4. The director believed that Truman would never guess the artificiality of his world and life, that Truman believed in the reality of the only world he had ever known. Do you think this is a true statement? Why or why not?

5. List and briefly describe three of the characters in the Truman television show. How do these characters attempt to control Truman’s life?

6. At the end of the movie, once Truman knows that his world has been created around him, Christof attempts to convince Truman, not only to stay, but that he would be happier and better off staying in “the dome”. What are your thoughts on this? Explain.

7. What was the symbolism found in Sylvia’s sweater when Truman smelled it? Was his response to her socialized or a “genetic” response?

8. The most important line of the movie came from an interview Christof was giving. He stated, “We accept the reality of the world which we’re presented-it’s as simple as that”. What did he mean by that and do you deem that a true statement? Why or why not? (5 points)

9. You may have noticed that the creator Christof has a root word of, “Christ”. This is intentional to show him as a God figure. How was Christof like God? Give examples.

10. How are today’s modern reality shows like *The Truman Show*? Bearing in mind, the first major reality show hit television just one year after The Truman Show was made? Do these better or worsen our ability to socialize properly?