ENG 1213: Plato’s “Allegory of the Cave”

***Contexts for Discussion***

**Due**

The first class meeting next week

**Assignment**

For this paper, you have to find a situation in society today where Plato's theory about enlightenment and escaping the cave is relevant. To get us thinking, please bring to class a list of 3 contexts where you see people imprisoned in a cave of darkness and/or any other context that you can draw a link to Plato's "Allegory of the Cave."

Here are 3 examples:

1. The fear of failure can keep people imprisoned, like when a person hates her job and wants to do something else, but she is so scared of failing and of going broke that she keeps working at a place that makes her miserable. The choice of happiness or financial security is a difficult one. Society frowns on people it sees as irresponsible or having thrown away a career and a good paying job.

2. People who won't vote for Barack Obama only because he's black, not necessarily because of any other disagreement with his politics or policies. These people live in a prison of prejudice. If they do become aware of their prejudice and change, then they often must face the painful realization of how they have hurt others, and they may also face disapproval from family and friends who still are prejudiced.

3. People addicted to drugs. They often lose a sense of reality, they are slaves to their need for more drugs, and getting off drugs is a painful process, with enlightenment being equal to clean and sober.