

The Media and Democracy #1

Democracy is in _____ all around the world. After the 2020 US _____ elections, supporters of Donald Trump stormed and occupied the Capitol, claiming that the election had been _____. _____ and _____ could not agree on even the result of the elections and could _____ hold a _____ conversation _____ to violence. Not only in the US but also in other democracies such as the United Kingdom, France, and Germany, political views have been _____, _____ conflict has _____, and civil _____ has become difficult. Perhaps democracy, _____, is not something that is easily established. Democracy is not a _____; as early as the 6th century BC, small _____ - _____ like _____ were known for their democratic governance. However, it was only after the _____ that we could _____ democracy in large nations, and we may not continue to do so in the 21st century. For democracy to _____, there must be _____ mass-communication technology, the media has to _____, and each citizen must _____ information literacy skills. As technology _____ and the nature of the media changes, how can we sustain a healthy democratic society?

Democracy is in peril all around the world. After the 2020 US presidential elections, supporters of Donald Trump stormed and occupied the Capitol, claiming that the election had been rigged. Democrats and Republicans could not agree on even the result of the elections and could hardly hold a civil conversation without appealing to violence. Not only in the US but also in other democracies such as the United Kingdom, France, and Germany, political views have been polarized, partisan conflict has intensified, and civil dialogue has become difficult. Perhaps democracy, by its very nature, is not something that is easily established. Democracy is not a modern invention; as early as the 6th century BC, small city-states like Athens were known for their democratic governance. However, it was only after the modern era that we could witness democracy in large nations, and we may not continue to do so in the 21st century. For democracy to thrive, there must be adequate mass-communication technology, the media has to fulfill its role, and each citizen must possess sound information literacy skills. As technology advances and the nature of the media changes, how can we sustain a healthy democratic society?

peril	危機、危険	invention	発明、創出
rigged	不正操作された、不正に仕組まれた	governance	統治、ガバナンス
civil	文明的な、礼儀正しい	thrive	繁栄する、活躍する
polarized	分極化した、対立した	adequate	十分な、適切な
partisan	党派的な、偏った	literacy	読み書き能力、リテラシー
intensified	激化した、強まった	sustain	維持する、支える

The Media and Democracy #2

Democracy is not only a matter of ideology but also technology. For democracy to _____, citizens must be able to engage in public debate _____. _____, it requires the _____ ability to talk _____ and respect, but they are not enough. People need to be _____ of one another, and have _____ a basic understanding of what they are talking about. This is increasingly difficult as the scale of community grows. For example, _____ Rome, which started as a tiny _____, had long been governed with a democratic ideal, but it shifted toward _____ the 1st Century BC. As the territory expanded and the members increased and diversified, people could not make their voice _____ to each other, and citizens in each region could not share the basic understanding of all issues _____ the empire. People in the Iberian _____ and Sicily could not have dialogue across the Mediterranean, _____ could they learn their political issues from one another. The rise of imperial rule is not because Caesar and Augustus _____ wanted to be a dictator; it is because they _____ mass-communication technology to enable democracy in a large society. This was already _____ by ancient Greek philosophers like Plato and Aristotle, arguing that democracy is only possible in small-scale city-states. In the _____, many countries _____ democracy _____ it was _____ possible. The rise of mass media, such as newspapers, the radio and TV, allows us to know issues across the nation. When Florida is _____ a _____, people in California can learn the _____ and reconstruction. When a newly elected President _____ an _____, citizens can listen to it in real time, and the _____ responds with a wide _____ of opinions, representing the public. Through the media as a gatekeeper, people can learn and share their views on various issues. Without this technology, how can we choose _____ to _____?

Democracy is not only a matter of ideology but also technology. For democracy to thrive, citizens must be able to engage in public debate on important issues. Obviously, it requires the attitude and ability to talk with humility and respect, but they are not enough. People need to be within hearing range of one another, and have at least a basic understanding of what they are talking about. This is increasingly difficult as the scale of community grows. For example, ancient Rome, which started as a tiny city-state, had long been governed with a democratic ideal, but it shifted toward imperial rule during the 1st Century BC. As the territory expanded and the members increased and diversified, people could not make their voice heard to each other, and citizens in each region could not share the basic understanding of all issues across the empire. People in the Iberian Peninsula and Sicily could not have dialogue across the Mediterranean, nor could they learn their political issues from one another. The rise of imperial rule is not because Caesar and Augustus personally wanted to be a dictator; it is because they lacked mass-communication technology to enable democracy in a large society. This was already acknowledged by ancient Greek philosophers like Plato and Aristotle, arguing that democracy is only possible in small-scale city-states. In the modern era, many countries adopted democracy partly because it was technically possible. The rise of mass media, such as newspapers, the radio and TV, allows us to know issues across the nation. When Florida is hit by a hurricane, people in California can learn the damage and reconstruction. When a newly elected President delivers an inaugural address, citizens can listen to it in real time, and the press responds with a wide range of opinions, representing the public. Through the media as a gatekeeper, people can learn and share their views on various issues. Without this technology, how can we choose whom to vote for?

ideology	イデオロギー、思想体系	acknowledge	認める、認識する
humility	謙虚さ、控えめな態度	inaugural	就任の、開始の
diversified	多様化した、多様な	reconstruction	再建、復興
dialogue	対話、意見交換	gatekeeper	門番、仲介者
dictator	独裁者、専制君主	adopt	採用する、取り入れる
mass-communication	大衆伝達	deliver	(演説などを) 行う、伝える

The Media and Democracy #3

The media is responsible for democracy in three ways. First, they ____ the _____. Since our time and _____ are limited, we cannot be _____ everything happening within the community. The media _____ decides which topic is to be _____ and discussed. When the newspapers _____ an _____ on the front page instead of a _____ scandal, people are directed to learn about the disaster and _____ the scandal. Secondly, the media represents the public opinions. For example, when the Prime Minister makes a speech, media outlets carry various views, including both _____ and criticism. Since it is impossible for millions of residents to gather in a place and exchange their opinions, the media _____ their political stances _____ the public, _____ people can _____ engage in political discussions. Thirdly, they _____ opportunities for _____ political learning. When you _____ the TV for whatever the purpose—_____ the sports news or the weather forecast, you _____ watching the news for politics and the economy. Those who reach for the paper to check the TV _____ being _____ the main topics featured on the front page. Scholars argue that this has _____ the basic level of political interest and understanding among the public. We will _____ discussing whether the media have _____ sincerely and effectively. At least, however, modern information technology has enabled the mass media, and democracy in large nations has been impossible without the media. _____ the _____ the Internet and the development of IT technology, the media _____ to the Web, and _____ news and _____ information have changed. Modern democracy has been enabled by information and mass-communication technology. _____, _____ democracy be impossible because information technology is becoming too sophisticated?

The media is responsible for democracy in three ways. First, they set the agenda. Since our time and mental capacity are limited, we cannot be aware of everything happening within the community. The media coverage effectively decides which topic is to be informed and discussed. When the newspapers report an earthquake on the front page instead of a celebrity scandal, people are directed to learn about the disaster and ignore the scandal. Secondly, the media represents the public opinions. For example, when the Prime Minister makes a speech, media outlets carry various views, including both praise and criticism. Since it is impossible for millions of residents to gather in a place and exchange their opinions, the media speak for their political stances on behalf of the public, by which people can indirectly engage in political discussions. Thirdly, they provide us with opportunities for incidental political learning. When you turn on the TV for whatever the purpose—be it the sports news or the weather forecast, you end up watching the news for politics and the economy. Those who reach for the paper to check the TV schedule end up being exposed to the main topics featured on the front page. Scholars argue that this has helped sustain the basic level of political interest and understanding among the public. We will refrain from discussing whether the media have fulfilled these roles sincerely and effectively. At least, however, modern information technology has enabled the mass media, and democracy in large nations has been impossible without the media. With the spread of the Internet and the development of IT technology, the media gradually shifted to the Web, and the way we get news and handle information have changed. Modern democracy has been enabled by information and mass-communication technology. Ironically, will democracy be impossible because information technology is becoming too sophisticated?

agenda	議題、課題	incidental	偶発的な、ついでの
coverage	報道、取材	refrain	控える、自制する
scandal	スキャンダル、不祥事	sophisticated	高度な、洗練された
outlet	メディア媒体、発信源	ironically	皮肉にも、逆説的に
on behalf of	～を代表して	enable	可能にする、実現させる

The Media and Democracy #4

In democratic nations, the media are mostly _____ - _____ companies. _____ their independence _____ the government, _____ the media a _____ in the commercial sector. Any private business must _____ to survive and grow, which requires their service and products to be _____ and used. The media cannot _____ their business unless their contents are viewed or _____. The problem is that the more sensational and _____ to public interest the content is, the more likely _____ to _____. This fact often _____ with the mission of the media to deliver _____ and high-quality information. The Spanish-American war in 1898 was _____ by an intense _____ among mass media that _____ commercial _____. At the time, The New York Journal and The New York World were _____ competing to increase their _____. Even before the war, the two papers were spreading _____ and sensational lies. As the _____ for independence was growing in Cuba, which was _____ a Spanish colony, both newspapers exaggerated the _____ of the Spanish military _____ stories and _____. Many citizens were _____ by their _____ of justice and _____ to buy their papers. When the US battleship Maine _____ in Havana Harbor by an _____ explosion, killing 268 _____, The New York Journal _____ Spain _____ this incident before any _____ was completed, and further intensified the public _____. The US government gave in to the public sentiment and _____ decided to go to war. After the _____, these papers reporting the war sold like _____. Business has to be _____ to society and _____ is just a _____ to continue and develop. If the mission and _____ are _____ and profit becomes the _____, business could rather _____ society. This dilemma is particularly the case with the media. On the _____, problems of the media are, _____, problems of the _____ as well. The media outlets provide sensational content _____ because there is a public that _____ it.

In democratic nations, the media are mostly for-profit private companies. It allows their independence from the government, but it also brings the media a dilemma inherent in the commercial sector. Any private business must earn profit to survive and grow, which requires their service and products to be purchased and used. The media cannot carry on their business unless their contents are viewed or subscribed. The problem is that the more sensational and tailored to public interest the content is, the more likely it is to sell. This fact often conflicts with the mission of the media to deliver accurate and high-quality information. The Spanish-American war in 1898 was triggered by an intense competition among mass media that lacked commercial ethics. At the time, The New York Journal and The New York World were fiercely competing to increase their circulation. Even before the war, the two papers were spreading intriguing exaggerations and sensational lies. As the momentum for independence was growing in Cuba, which was then a Spanish colony, both newspapers exaggerated the brutality of the Spanish military with fabricated stories and dramatic imagery. Many citizens were stimulated by their sense of justice and driven to buy their papers. When the US battleship Maine sank in Havana Harbor by an unexplained explosion, killing 268 sailors, The New York Journal accused Spain of this incident before any inquiry was completed, and further intensified the public outrage. The US government gave in to the public sentiment and reluctantly decided to go to war. After the outbreak, these papers reporting the war sold like hot cakes. Business has to be what brings benefit to society and profit is just a means to continue and develop. If the mission and ethics are neglected and profit becomes the end in itself, business could rather harm society. This dilemma is particularly the case with the media. On the flip side, problems of the media are, in turn, problems of the general audience as well. The media outlets provide sensational content precisely because there is a public that consumes it. (340 words)

dilemma	ジレンマ、板挟み	fabricated	でっち上げられた、偽造の
inherent	本質的な、生まれつきの	brutality	残虐さ、残酷な行為
sensational	扇情的な、センセーショナルな	inquiry	調査、審問
tailored	合わせた、調整された	outrage	激怒、憤慨
conflict	対立する、矛盾する	reluctantly	しぶしぶ、いやいやながら
exaggeration	誇張、誇大表現	flip side	裏側、反対の面

The Media and Democracy #5

Being a citizen of democracy is not easy. _____ various skills and attitudes, such as having an interest and understanding in public issues, listening _____ to different opinions, and being able to talk _____ respect. These are becoming even more difficult since the _____ the Internet and social media services. _____ TV and newspapers, _____ a _____ at a _____ time, online platforms like Facebook and YouTube let you consume only the content you like. Even more _____, the business model of Internet media is usually engagement-based _____; the longer users stay on the platform and the more views and likes they _____, the more _____ it becomes. Therefore, the _____ of social media are designed to learn the _____ of each user and only show the content they _____. Also, social media tends to be _____ with _____, sensational opinions for two reasons; people with strong and _____ views are usually more motivated to _____ content, and emotionally _____ content are more likely to go _____. As a result, one's _____ is _____ with extreme and _____ opinions. _____ such comfortable and stimulating information environments often _____ difficult to listen _____ to opposing views or to _____ everyone with love and respect regardless of their backgrounds and political _____. Essentially, democracy is about making _____ by listening patiently to each other, so a _____ of _____ and _____ is not a _____ in democracy, but a _____. Winston Churchill famously said, "Democracy is the _____ form of Government _____ for all those other forms that have been _____." In a sense, we avoid the harm of _____ and _____ for the discomfort of listening and _____. As an individual, we might only see what we want and _____ with only those we can agree, but _____ democracy will _____, and consequently, we all would _____. As information technology and the media are constantly changing, how can we maintain _____ democracy? How should each citizen approach information?

Being a citizen of democracy is not easy. It requires various skills and attitudes, such as having an interest and understanding in public issues, listening humbly to different opinions, and being able to talk with respect. These are becoming even more difficult since the spread of the Internet and social media services. Unlike TV and newspapers, which offer a limited selection at a given time, online platforms like Facebook and YouTube let you consume only the content you like. Even more seriously, the business model of Internet media is usually engagement-based advertising; the longer users stay on the platform and the more views and likes they generate, the more profitable it becomes. Therefore, the algorithms of social media are designed to learn the preference of each user and only show the content they prefer. Also, social media tends to be flooded with intense, sensational opinions for two reasons; people with strong and polarized views are usually more motivated to post content, and emotionally provocative content are more likely to go viral. As a result, one's newsfeed is filled with extreme and agreeable opinions. Those spoiled with such comfortable and stimulating information environments often find it difficult to listen calmly to opposing views or to treat everyone with love and respect regardless of their backgrounds and political beliefs. Essentially, democracy is about making compromises by listening patiently to each other, so a certain degree of discomfort and frustration is not a flaw in democracy, but a feature by design. Winston Churchill famously said, "Democracy is the worst form of Government except for all those other forms that have been tried." In a sense, we avoid the harm of dictatorship and totalitarianism in exchange for the discomfort of listening and effort of dialogue. As an individual, we might only see what we want and associate with only those we can agree, but then democracy will inevitably fail, and consequently, we all would suffer in the end. As information technology and the media are constantly changing, how can we maintain robust democracy? How should each citizen approach information?

engagement	関与、エンゲージメント	agreeable	快い、好ましい、同意できる
algorithm	アルゴリズム、計算手順	compromise	妥協、歩み寄り
preference	好み、選好	dictatorship	独裁、専制政治
provocative	挑発的な、刺激的な	totalitarianism	全体主義
viral	バズる、急速に拡散する	robust	強固な、しっかりした