

# リベラルアーツ予備校FORUM-ICU

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Part I (03:04-)

Now let's begin.

1.

M: Hey, were you eating lunch with the professor the other day?

W: I don't think so. Oh, yeah, that was Sarah. She's a little older than us, but she's a student.

2.

W: Hi, Ken. Are you coming to the cafeteria?

M: No, I need to study.

W: Then why don't you go to the library? It's much quieter.

M: Uh, I can concentrate better up here in a shade.

3.

W: George, we haven't seen you in class for a while. Where have you been?

M: I've been around. It's just that I finished all the required courses. I only have to write my senior thesis.

W: Lucky you! Everyone else seems to be taking at least one or two courses as well.

4.

M: Satsuki, I heard you're from this area.

W: Yes, I actually lived here all my life.

M: Is there a good restaurant near here? My aunt is coming next week, and she really likes tempura.

W: Then I recommend Sakura. It's delicious and not so expensive. It's next to the city hall.

M: Thank you. I'll check it out.

5:

W: I'm looking for the textbook for Economics 101. Is this it?

M: Let me see. I'm afraid not. This is for Economics 201.

W: But I thought the textbook for Economics 101 was *Modern Economics*.

M: No, it's not. The one you're looking for is *Contemporary Economics*.

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ICU EAT 2018 スクリプト  
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W: Yeah, you're right. Thank you very much.

6.

M: Hey, have you done the homework for Dr. Mizuno's class?

W: Yes. Why? Haven't you finished it yet?

M: I wanted to do yesterday, but I didn't know what to write.

W: But Dr. Mizuno gave us a paper to read and a topic to write about.

M: Yeah, but the topic is moral values and ethics. I don't know much about it.

7.

M: Professor Williams, I'm Shota from your Introduction to Academic Writing class. I got a D from my last essay. Could you please give me some advice about how to improve my writing?

W: Well, do you have the essay now?

M: Sorry, I don't.

W: Then, why don't you come back with it during my office hour.

M: OK, I will. Thank you, Professor.

8.

M: Hi, Haruka. I didn't see you this morning.

W: Yeah, sorry I was absent. My alarm didn't go off.

M: Again? You should buy a new one.

W: Actually, I use my smartphone, but last night the battery died.

9.

M1: Oops, sorry, I thought this is my room.

M2: Are you James? This *is* your room. I'm your new roommate, Ken.

M1: Oh. Hi, Ken. Nice to meet you. Yeah, I heard about you from Ms. Saito.

M2: Nice to meet you James. Sorry if I surprised you.

M1: No problem.

10.

W: Hi everyone. Let's start today's lesson. First, as a warm-up, I want you to discuss

ICU EAT 2018 スクリプト  
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how public transportation can be improved.

M: Excuse me, Professor Shimizu.

W: Yes, Ray?

M: I don't think we finished discussing designs of tree-lined streets from the previous chapter.

W: Yeah, you're right. Thank you for pointing that out.

Part II

Questions 11-12. (8:37-)

W: Hello. I'm Emma Tanaka. I have an appointment with an academic counselor at 2:30.

M: Hello, Emma. I'm Tim. I'm actually the counselor working this afternoon. Let me check the schedule. Sorry, I can't find your name.

W: But I definitely made an appointment. I remember I called last Thursday.

M: Oh, you called instead of using the online signup sheet. Let me double-check. Yes, I found your name. Someone wrote down Emi, not Emma.

W: That's a relief. So, can I talk to you right now?

M: Sure, how can I help you?

W: Um, I was just wondering whether I could take Biology 201 next term.

M: Well, let me see. You can if you already completed Biology 101 and 102.

W: Actually, I just entered this university and haven't taken any biology courses here. But I completed Advanced Biology classes in high school.

M: Well, Emma. I'm sure you understand that university is a lot more demanding than high school.

W: Sure, I do. But I also represented my prefecture in the Biology Olympiad.

M: In that case, you might be exempt from the introductory course. But first, you have to get an official permission from the Department of Biology. To do so, you have to have an interview with the Department Chair and submit some paperwork.

W: OK, how can I contact the Department Chair?

M: The head of the biology department is Dr. Pat Kim. Do you want me to call her now?

W: Oh, yes, if you can, that'd be great.

ICU EAT 2018 スクリプト  
(作成 : FORUM-ICU)

Questions 13-15. (10:37-) \*Question 15 は大学により非公開扱い。

M: Hi, Nina. I've just finished the first-year-student library orientation. Have you gone yet?

W: Well, no. Is it required?

M: No. It's just recommended. But I think it's good to do it.

W: I don't think I'll borrow so many books. I usually read e-books on my tablet.

M: But you've never been to university before. How can you be so sure that you won't borrow books? We'll probably be required to read a lot of academic books and papers.

W: I'd download papers from the library website. I already know how to do that.

M: But at the university library, you can do more than just borrow books or use databases. The librarians are very helpful when we don't know what to read.

W: Right. But we can get that kind of information from our professors, can't we?

M: Why don't you get the information from both your professors *and* the librarians? Oh, the library also has the writing support desk.

W: Writing support desk?

M: Yeah, it's kind of a learning center where students can ask for help when writing an essay.

W: Oh, I didn't have that at high school.

M: Neither did I.

W: That sounds really useful. Then I should go to the orientation. Is it still being held?

M: Yeah, it's held during 4th period every weekday until the end of the week. You can signup on the library website.

W: Thanks. I'll do that.

Part III (13:26-)

*Questions 16-20.*

*Listen to the lecture.*

How are our opinions formed? I guess we'd like to think that they're based on facts. However, this may not be the case for a large number of people. The Oxford Dictionary's Word of the Year 2016 was "post-truth." The word is defined as "relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief." Does "post-truth"

ICU EAT 2018 スクリプト  
(作成 : FORUM-ICU)

represent a new phenomenon? Of course public opinion has rarely ever been formed by evidence alone. But what is currently so alarming is how much the influence of emotion is increasing in significance while the influence of facts is in decline. Some even suggest that this is a threat to democracy itself. So, today, I'd like to talk about some possible causes of this recent shift.

Firstly, since the 2008 financial crisis, which took the global economy to the brink of collapse, income inequality has increased. While the richest in society have gotten richer, living standards have generally remained the same or fallen for most people. Consequently, many people feel frustrated with the economic system which seems to increase inequality. It is argued that this anger with the economic system has made it easier to inflame people's emotions.

Secondly, the spread of social media and the algorithms it uses has meant that people increasingly tend to communicate with others who share the same views as them. As a result, rather than being exposed to opposing ideas and evidence, people tend to communicate in so-called "echo chambers," online environments which repeat and reinforce their views. This leads to people only accepting information if it supports their opinions. While some see these recent events as the main reasons for the shift to a post-truth world, others identify the post-modernist movement of the mid- to late-20th century as a possible cause. Post-modernists argue that as the truth is something people create, different people can believe different things and all can be correct. Such a way of thinking may seem much easier for people to disregard evidence that does not support their opinions. A similar idea was proposed about a hundred years earlier by the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche. Some contend that when he famously argued that there were no facts, only interpretations, he laid the foundations for a post-truth world. For Nietzsche there are different perspectives in the world, and for people who hold a particular perspective there are views which cannot be changed, even if evidence is provided to challenge that perspective.

We can see this in the arguments about global warming. Even if experts provide evidence which shows that global warming is caused by human activity, some people see this as just one perspective and ignore the evidence. This is because they believe that the experts who provided the evidence have their own biases. Though this all may seem very negative, I'd like to finish on a more positive note, one that was also provided by Nietzsche. He suggested that by familiarizing ourselves with more

ICU EAT 2018 スクリプト  
(作成 : FORUM-ICU)

perspectives, it is more likely that we'll become more objective. Therefore, what we need to do is leave our echo chambers and listen to the other side as much as we can.

*Questions 21-25. (18:41-)*

*Listen to the lecture.*

We often hear the word “refugees” in the media. But what do we really know about them? How many refugees are there? What are their lives like? According to the United Nations Refugee Agency as of June 2017, about 22.5 million people have been classified as refugees, with more than half under the age of eighteen. The long civil war in Syria has created the largest number of refugees, 5.5 million. The next largest sources of refugees are **Afghanistan** and South Sudan, which have **generated 2.5 million** and 1.4 million respectively.

So what is a refugee? Although there are different definitions of the word, for the purpose of this lecture, I’m defining a refugee as “someone who is fleeing their home country due to conflict or persecution.” After fleeing their home countries, refugees often go to neighboring countries. For example, many Syrian refugees escaped to Turkey and Lebanon. Some refugees attempt to reach other more distant destinations in search of shelter and the new life. However, their hope is not always realized. In 2016 alone, thousands of refugees died trying to cross the Mediterranean Sea to reach various destinations in Europe. Those who do succeed face many challenges. **Many do not speak the local language, so job opportunities are scarce.** Also a lack of familiarity with local institutions makes it difficult for them to receive basic services such as health care and housing. Lastly, a difference in cultural values leaves many new arrivals feeling isolated. As we can see, there are many obstacles in adapting to their new environment.

In response to these challenges, NGOs, companies, and individuals are helping refugees through various initiatives. For example, there is a project in Finland called Startup Refugees. **This initiative provides selective refugees with an allowance of about 33 euros every month to improve their living conditions and to help them find jobs.** Another initiative can be found across the Atlantic Ocean. In the United States an organization called the Refugee Education Initiative assists highly motivated refugee students by providing money, tutoring and mentoring. In this way, refugee students are given educational opportunities that can lead to employment.

ICU EAT 2018 スクリプト  
(作成 : FORUM-ICU)

Finally, there is a wide-ranging initiative in the United Kingdom led by an organization called Refugee Action. This organization supports and advises refugees on issues such as poverty and homelessness. It also works with families during their first year in the UK, helping them settle in, integrate into their new community, and safely rebuild their lives. **What is characteristic about this organization is that it not only supports refugees directly but also shares its best practices with other organizations to help them build capacity and deliver more life-changing services to refugees.** These initiatives recognize both the potential of refugees and their needs. Refugees have families, stories, and hopes for the future. It is important to protect refugees and their families, remember their stories, and keep their dreams alive. Nobody chooses to be a refugee. They have had their lives disrupted by circumstances beyond their control. **As global citizens, what should our response be to the growing refugee crisis?**

*Questions 26-30. (24:28-)*

*Listen to the lecture.*

Today, we are going to contemplate a profound question that perpetually fascinates cosmologists and astrophysicists; “Are we alone in the Universe?” Our sun is one of the estimated 400 billion stars in the Milky Way, which is itself one of **a hundred billion galaxies in the Universe.** Each star is assumed to have at least one planet in orbit around it. That means there are thought to be more planets in the Universe than there are grains of sand on every beach on Planet Earth.

Although there is some disagreement about how many planets might be habitable, a recent study by the National Academy of Science in the United States estimated that approximately 1% of planets may have the requisite conditions to support life. In other words, there are more than one hundred billion-billion potentially life-supporting planets. This enormous number and the age of the Universe let the Italian Nobel Prize-winning physicist Enrico Fermi to speculate that we should have made contact with an intelligent extraterrestrial life by now. At a lunch meeting with other prominent scientists, while chatting about the possibility of alien life, Fermi look to the sky and asked the seemingly innocuous question, “Where is everybody?” **The apparent contradiction between the statistical likelihood of extraterrestrial life and the lack of evidence for it** has become known as the Fermi paradox, and

ICU EAT 2018 スクリプト  
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many interesting and creative solutions have been put forward.

One solution, the conspiracy theory, suggests that we have made contact with intelligent extraterrestrial life but governments or small group of elites keep it from public knowledge. Some people take this idea further and suggest that we are actually in regular contact with aliens but it is a closely guarded secret.

An even more outlandish response, the so-called Zoo hypothesis, compares Planet Earth to a managed wildlife park. In this scenario, intelligent life is aware of our existence and watching, perhaps even visiting us sometimes. Like endangered species living in a sanctuary, we humans are completely unaware that our life takes place in a protected part of the universe, being watched over by celestial gamekeepers.

Another proposal uses the metaphor of an anthill that suggests that human kind might not be an advanced civilization but in fact a relatively primitive one, just as ants living in an anthill cannot discern a six-lane highway next to them. This theory poses that the human race does not yet have the capacity to perceive the more advanced civilizations all around. What is more, advanced alien civilizations have no interest in unsophisticated earthlings.

Perhaps the most realistic explanation is an unavoidable cosmic risk. According to this theory, asteroid strikes and solar flares are common throughout the universe and periodically destroying intelligent life. Within the enormous amount of time it takes for life to evolve, and for that life to develop interstellar technology, there is a certainty that a catastrophe from space will cause a mass extinction event on each planet. Therefore, civilizations will be destroyed before they are able to communicate with one another.

It may be that some of these assumptions that underlie the Fermi paradox are mistaken, and we are alone on a tiny rock spinning through a desolate universe. It is true that human kind has made a great deal of technological progress, but perhaps our understanding of life and universe is far more limited than we realize, and there is much more to the story than we have begun to comprehend.