

***** There are four artifacts for this tournament. The round order will be different from the order they appear on this file. *****

***** Each round will have four discussion questions that will be revealed by the judge during the round. Discussers are encouraged to cover all four questions during the hour, but are not required to. *****

Artifact A:

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2024/06/18/republicans-democrats-one-party-state-rule/>

Indiana is revealing the real consequences of one-party rule

Competition, always and everywhere, fosters innovation.

By Mitch Daniels

My home state's citizens last month [elected their next governor](#). No, I misspeak. Five percent of them elected him. Seven percent preferred a different candidate, and 88 percent never had a say in the decision.

The party now dominant in Indiana held its May primary, in which 12 percent of the [4.7 million registered voters](#) participated. The winner captured 39 percent of that vote, or 5 percent of the electorate. November's general election will be a laydown formality; the polls are basically closed, six months ahead of time, with a Republican assured of victory. This is "early voting" of a kind no one should advocate.

We have watched the national polarization that divides Americans in eerily equal numbers play out in vastly uneven ways, state to state. But talk of "red" and "blue" doesn't capture either the full extent of the imbalance, or the knock-on consequences for the formation and pursuit of sound public policy.

The issue isn't simply that states lean reliably Republican or Democratic. It's that now a big majority are heavily, maybe irrevocably, tilted in one direction or the other. Where that obtains, office seekers pitch their initial appeals to the hard core on their side, as primary

candidates always have. The difference is that, instead of the winner's traditional post-primary imperative, to reach out to nonpartisans and even open-minded members of the opposing party, now their job is finished.

It happened pretty quickly. In the early 2000s, [three-fifths of the states](#) saw reasonable political balance between the two major parties. Today, “trifecta” government, meaning one-party control of the governorship and both legislative bodies, has become the norm across the 50 states. In 40 states, [containing 83 percent of the American population](#), one party enjoys trifecta dominance, and often by overwhelming margins.

The roots of this phenomenon have been well studied. They include the cultural aggression of elite institutions and the predictable reaction to it, the nationalization of issues abetted by the [collapse of local media](#) and the pernicious effects of the [antisocial media](#).

The gerrymandering that once exaggerated a dominant party's political margin is [no longer much of a factor](#); social clustering and these other factors have often done a more effective job than the political bosses ever did. In many jurisdictions today, one [would have to reverse gerrymander](#), mixing geographies and crossing all kinds of legal boundary lines, to produce a truly competitive electorate.

Political campaigns need not necessarily be dispiriting, narrowcasting mudfests. They can be vehicles, in fact the best possible vehicles, for floating constructive ideas to an attentive public. Ideas proposed by a successful campaign have a higher likelihood of enactment after the election. Ideas fashioned not to stroke the erogenous zones of a riled-up minority of left or right, but to speak to the broader public in pursuit of a general election victory, evoke our common interest

instead of our differences and antagonisms. But such campaigns rarely make sense these days.

In 2024, [30 states feature](#) not only trifecta government but [2-to-1 majorities](#) in at least one house. In that setting, both campaigns and governance look totally different than they do in genuine two-party polities.

Artifact B:

<https://westridgespyglass.org/4435/op-ed/why-i-quit-speech-debate/>

Why I Quit Speech & Debate

The alarm from my Amazon Alexa woke me up in a panic. *It shouldn't be like this*, I thought to myself. It was 5:00 am on a cold November morning. Outside, it was pitch black and my house was silent. I felt sick; it seemed as if my stomach was trying to squeeze itself out of my body, and I didn't feel ready for the upcoming day. The only thought rushing through my head was *tik tok, tik tok, only three hours until I have to perform*. Slowly, I headed over to my living room ready to watch an episode of *Gilmore Girls* and drink a hopefully calming cup of hot chocolate. I was ready to gauge my eyes out.

Over the weekend of November 21, 2020, I competed in three separate events in an online speech and debate tournament. It was one of the worst experiences of my life. That tournament wasn't the first I'd ever been in, or the last. Nonetheless, it was a turning point for me. I simply wasn't enjoying the activity anymore. That was the beginning of the end for my speech and debate career.

The season continued on, and it didn't get much better. On April 18, 2021, I competed in my last speech and debate tournament. Similarly to the one in November, I also presented in three events. After my final round of congressional debate, I closed my computer and said goodbye.

Quitting the extracurricular that consumed the majority of my life for two years was one of the hardest decisions of my life. Ultimately, I felt I deserved more, my mental health deserved more. I chose my well-being over an activity that may or may not get me into a big-name college. The harms of continuing the elective were not worth it to me anymore.

I left the team for various reasons, but most importantly, my relationship with the activity was toxic. I wanted to do too much, I expected too much out of myself, and I didn't know where or when to stop. These are my own mistakes and not the program itself. When I was writing a pros and cons list, I realized that the only reasons I'd want to stay were to make *other* people happy. In the end, I came to my senses and looked at the reasons for why I should leave the team.

I was told that speech and debate would make me a better speaker and help build confidence, but that was not the case for me. While competing

in events, I saw my performance anxiety develop and then worsen. My speaking skills did somewhat improve, but the more I competed, the worse my nerves became. I'm an incredibly competitive person, and I have been since birth. Going to my soccer games or swim meets, my stomach began to start twisting before I competed, all because I started getting anxious before I performed a speech.

The intense workload wasn't my deciding factor for quitting, but it was certainly a factor. Saying no to birthday invitations and not being able to make plans due to a tournament wasn't fun for me. The whole point of the activity *for me* was to have fun. That was why I joined in the first place, but I didn't have room to be the teenager I wanted to be. If I wanted to continue, I was going to have to make some sacrifices I didn't know if I wanted to make.

The activity I thought I loved took too much of me. I didn't realize how much effort and time I put into speech and debate until later. I normalized declining an invitation to a family movie night or staying up until 11:00 p.m. on an assignment. For someone who was so busy and had such a strong desire for fulfilling teenage years, speech and debate was not for me.

At the beginning of my story, I liked the activity. I might've even loved it, but when it came down to the wire, reciting the same 10-minute speech over and over didn't make me happy. Speech and debate, for how much hard work I put into it, did not give me enough joy to keep going. I no longer cared about what it offered to my resumé. I just wanted to be able to enjoy high school. I truly felt that in my two years of rigorous practice and competition, I had learned enough. I could answer questions quickly and in a mature way, could debate someone well enough, and present a speech well *enough*.

Reflecting now, several months after coming to this conclusion, my stance says relatively the same. Only now, I have a point of reference where I can compare life with speech and debate and life without it. And I choose life without it. I choose to play sports six days a week, to write for the school newspaper, and to spend quality time with my friends and family. I am proud of the decision I made because I ultimately chose Ella and what brings her the most joy.

Artifact C:

Fire and Ice

By Robert Frost

Some say the world will end in fire,

Some say in ice.

From what I've tasted of desire

I hold with those who favor fire.

But if it had to perish twice,

I think I know enough of hate

To say that for destruction ice

Is also great

And would suffice.

Artifact D:

INSTAGRAM: Murder is not the answer!

FACEBOOK: This is just a distraction so they can take our guns!

TWITTER: Fake News. Conspiracy. He was Framed.

TIKTOK: 👁️💋👁️ I can fix him.

[#LuigiMangione](#) [#LuigiCrave](#)

