**Essay 03**

**Fordybelsestid:** 5 timer (ligesom til eksamen – her vil teksten dog være længere, op til 2400 ord, og uden så mange gloser. Denne tekst er kun 1770 ord)

**Afleveringen består både af et essay** [**og et opgavesæt på Minlæring**](https://app.minlaering.dk/lektier?vis=290555)**. Begge dele skal være færdige inden fristen.**

Write an analytical essay (900-1200 words) in which you analyze David French’s foreword “A House Divided” (2020) and discuss whether American unity is in danger.

Part of your essay must focus on the structure of the text. In addition, your essay must include an analysis of the style of writing in ll. 7-26.

Your essay must include references to:

* David French’s foreword
* Video: “[What can be done about polarization in the United States?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F_Z5Rx-XiE8)” (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2023)

**Tips til arbejdet:**

* **Læs teksten flere gange grundigt. Slå relevante gloser op og skriv dem ned, så du har en grundig forståelse af teksten.**
* **Skriv grundige noter til teksten og analysen af den, før du begynder at skrive essayet.**
* **Brug analysebegreber relevant og tydeligt i dit essay.**
* **Husk strukturen: Indledning, analyseafsnit med PEE-struktur, diskussion, afrunding.**
* **Brug din feedback fra første aflevering + hvad du har lært om at skrive diskussion**
* **Find hjælp til at skrive non-fiction essay generelt på fx** [**Minlæring: *Do it, Write!***](https://app.minlaering.dk/bog/25/kapitel/15352/sektion/15494)
* **Hjælp til analyse af “structure” fra** [**Minlæring**](https://app.minlaering.dk/bog/25/kapitel/15352/sektion/15494#section-15537)**:**



**Retteskema, som jeg bruger til feedback:**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **02** ***Tilstrækkeligt***  | **4 *Jævnt* (okay)** | **7** ***Godt***  | **10*****Fortrinligt*** | **12** ***Fremragende***  |
| Elevens tekst er noget usammenhængende men forståelig.  |  | Elevens tekst er struktureret og sammenhængende.  |  | Elevens tekst er flydende og velstruktureret.  |
| Indholdet viser, at tekstmateriale og emne er forstået, men der er metodiske mangler og klare begrænsninger i emnebehandlingen. Faglig viden anvendes kun i begrænset omfang.  |  | Indholdet viser overvejende god forståelse af tekstmaterialet, nogen metodik i opgaveløsningen og en god emnebehandling med nogen inddragelse af relevant faglig viden.  |  | Indholdet viser en præcis forståelse af tekstmaterialet, en sikker metodik i opgaveløsningen og en nuanceret emnebehandling, der omfatter redegørelse, analyse, vurdering og perspektivering med inddragelse af relevant faglig viden.  |
| Sprogbeherskelsen viser usikkerhed. Der optræder mange fejl, hvoraf enkelte er meningsforstyrrende. Ordforrådet er begrænset og mangler variation. (…) |  | Eleven har en god sprogbeherskelse med en del fejl (…) Det faglige og almene ordforråd er overvejende varieret og nuanceret.  |  | Eleven har en sikker sprog-beherskelse med kun ubetydelige fejl (…). Det faglige og almene ordforråd er varieret og nuanceret.  |
| Elevens viden om grammatik er usikker. |  | Eleven har overvejende sikker viden om grammatik. |  | Eleven har en sikker viden om grammatik |
| Hvilke af de påkrævede punkter inddrages? (Krydset sættes i parentes, hvis det nævnes, men ikke anvendes meningsfuldt)* Analysis:
	+ The structure of the text:
* Style of language: ll. 7-26:
* “Discuss whether American unity is in danger”:
* intention/purpose (ikke et direkte krav, men en god idé):
* references to the foreword:
* references to the video:

Overordnet kommentar: |

**“A House Divided” (excerpt from the book *Divided We Fall*)**

It’s time for Americans to wake up to a fundamental reality: the continued unity of the United States of America cannot be guaranteed. At this moment in history, there is not a single important cultural, religious, political, or social force that is pulling Americans together more than it is pushing us apart. We cannot assume that a continent-sized, multi-ethnic, multi-faith democracy can remain united forever, and it will not remain united if our political class cannot and will not adapt to an increasingly diverse and divided American public.

We lack a common popular culture. Depending on where we live and what we believe, we watch different kinds of television, we listen to different kinds of music, and we often even watch different sports.

We increasingly live separate from each other. The number of Americans who live in so-called landslide counties—counties where one presidential candidate wins by at least twenty points—is at an all-time high. The geography that a person calls their home, whether it be rural, exurban[[1]](#footnote-1), suburban[[2]](#footnote-2), or urban, is increasingly predictive of voting habits.

We increasingly believe different things. America is secularizing at a rapid rate, but it is still the most religious nation in the developed world, and is set to remain so for the indefinite future. While the “religious nones” (those with no particular religious affiliation) grow in number, many of America’s most religiously fervent denominations are growing as well, some rapidly. Moreover, America’s secular and religious citizens are increasingly concentrated in different parts of the country, supplementing geographic separation with religious separation.

We increasingly loathe our political opponents. The United States is in the grip of a phenomenon called “negative polarization.” In plain English this means that a person belongs to their political party not so much because they like their own party but because they hate and fear the other side. Republicans don’t embrace Republican policies so much as they despise Democrats and Democratic policies. Democrats don’t embrace Democratic policies as much as they vote to defend themselves from Republicans. At this point, huge majorities actively dislike their political opponents and significant minorities see them as possessing subhuman characteristics.

Moreover, each of these realities is set to get worse. Absent[[3]](#footnote-3) unforeseen developments, the present trends are self-reinforcing. Clustering[[4]](#footnote-4) is feeding extremism, extremism is feeding anger, and anger is feeding fear. The class of Americans who care the most about politics is, perversely enough, the class of Americans most likely to make negative misjudgments about their fellow citizens. Our political and cultural leaders are leading us apart.

Given this reality, why should we presume that our nation is immune from the same cultural and historical forces that have caused disunion in this nation before and in other nations countless times?

I’m writing this book from a unique position. For the first time in my life, I’m a man without a party. I have no “tribe.” And I must confess that it has opened my eyes. I see things differently than I used to, and I understand the perspective of my political opponents better than I did before.

For a long time you didn’t have to convince me of the problems with the American left. As a Christian conservative lawyer, I dedicated much of my professional life to protecting free speech and religious freedom. I’ve been a pro-life activist my entire adult life. In 1992, I formed a pro-life student group at Harvard Law School, and I’ve been writing, speaking, fundraising, and litigating[[5]](#footnote-5) to protect unborn children ever since.

I filed my first constitutional case[[6]](#footnote-6) more than twenty years ago. I represented my local church in a dispute with our local zoning board[[7]](#footnote-7) and was grateful to win a victory that launched a litigation career that took me into federal courts from coast to coast. But I wasn’t just a civil liberties lawyer[[8]](#footnote-8); I was a proud Republican. I bought the whole package—or what I thought was the package. […]

It’s not that I believed my opponents were evil. In fact, I zealously defended the civil liberties of my political opponents. I believed then (and still believe) that the blessings of liberty accrue to all Americans, and the rights of my political opponents are every bit as precious as the rights of my political allies. Yet nothing truly shook my deep conviction that the GOP[[9]](#footnote-9) was just better. It was the party of better people and better ideas. It was the party of my friends and neighbors, and my friends and neighbors were people I loved and often admired.

My political opponents, by contrast, I saw as increasingly angry—increasingly unhinged at the extremes—and dangerous for the long-term health of the republic. I believed that even when my progressive friends were sterling individuals in their personal and professional lives, their political ideas were deeply misguided, and their bad ideas were leading to bad outcomes for America.



Photo: Getty Images / Owen Franken

By the middle of the second George W. Bush administration, I was so deeply entrenched in partisanship[[10]](#footnote-10) that shortly before I deployed to Iraq (I was then a captain in the Army Reserve) in 2007, I gave a speech at a conservative conference where I actually made this ridiculous statement: “I believe the two greatest threats to America are university leftism at home and jihadism abroad, and I feel called to fight both.”

Then I went to war. And now I’m ashamed of those words.

It’s one thing to understand intellectually William Tecumseh Sherman’s[[11]](#footnote-11) observation that “war is hell.” It’s another thing entirely to see it up close. Let me be clear: I served as a JAG officer (Army lawyer) for an armored cavalry regiment. I am not in any way comparing my service to the cavalry scouts[[12]](#footnote-12) and armor officers[[13]](#footnote-13) who went outside the wire every day, facing IEDs[[14]](#footnote-14), mortars, and snipers. But I lost friends. I felt the tension of driving across uncleared roads deep into enemy-held territory. I know what it’s like to patrol through hostile towns and villages.

And I saw what one human being can do to another. The atrocities were horrifying. […]

As I interacted with Iraqi police officers, soldiers, and translators, there were two things I noticed about the hatred that was then dominating Iraqi life. First, each side had its own substantially true narrative of grievance and atrocity. For every single example of Shiite[[15]](#footnote-15) violence, one could muster up a story of Sunni viciousness. And while it was absolutely correct that Saddam Hussein[[16]](#footnote-16) had brutally repressed the Shiite population, by 2007 the Shiite militias had made it abundantly clear that they could give as good as they got.

Second, the conflict itself thus became reason enough for sustaining the conflict. While the combatants may have had some sense of the ultimate policy differences in a Sunni- or Shiite-dominated Iraq, as a general rule the motive for the fight was much more primal—those horrible people cannot be permitted to win. The person who killed a brother, son, mother, or uncle had to die. It’s trite to say “violence begets violence,” but it’s quite often simply true. When a militia slaughters a family member, it’s human to seek vengeance. Across the scope of human history it’s normal to seek vengeance. The aberration is the modern embrace of the rule of law and the shedding of revenge for justice. […]

My time in Iraq had changed me. It had also educated me. It changed my regard for my fellow citizens, especially my political opponents. If I had been willing to die for them while wearing the uniform of my country, why should I regard them as mortal enemies today? Wrong on the law and on policy, yes. But a threat to the country in the way I’d framed them before I went to war? No. Absolutely not. It was my responsibility to prioritize their liberty, prosperity, and human flourishing every bit as much as I prioritized those virtues for members of my own political tribe.

But I found myself woefully out of step with the times. My partisan polarization was decreasing just as years of cultural, religious, and geographic separation began to bear their bitter fruit. By 2016, the Republican Party I’d grown up in was barely recognizable to me. The party I perceived to be a party of hope had clearly become a party of rage. Concern about the course of American law, politics, and culture had become alarm[[17]](#footnote-17), and alarm in some quarters turned to panic.

I heard the same comments time and time again: “If Hillary[[18]](#footnote-18) wins, America is over.” Or “If Hillary wins, America is a socialist country.” Or “If Hillary wins, we lose the Constitution.” […]

By the midpoint of the Trump presidency, left and right were locked in a culture war so intense that even basic virtues like civility and decency were scorned. On the left, radicals[[19]](#footnote-19) mocked civility as “respectability politics.” On the right, Trump apologists[[20]](#footnote-20) declared that in the face of the present emergency, decency[[21]](#footnote-21) was a “secondary” value. And like a (thankfully) milder version of the two sides of the Iraq War, both sides could recount a litany of moral atrocities, from actual acts of violence to online outrages and political perfidy[[22]](#footnote-22). [...]

At the core of each narrative is the burning conviction that the other side doesn’t just want its opponents to lose political races, but rather wishes for them to exist in a state of permanent, dangerous (perhaps even deadly) subordination. And, really, if you’re steeped in[[23]](#footnote-23) your own side’s narrative, shouldn’t your opponent not just lose but also be cast down from American politics and culture? Why should you tolerate such hate? Why should you respect their institutions and their autonomy? One does not respect evil. One defeats evil. Justice requires nothing less.

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| ***Divided We Fall* by David French**David French is an Evangelical conservative and columnist for *The New York Times*. He was educated at Harvard Law School and worked in constitutional law before he became an army lawyer and later helped start the conservative media company The Dispatch. In his non-fiction book *Divided We Fall* (2020), French warns the American public about the possible consequences of polarization. This text, “A House Divided,” is the foreword to his book. Source: <https://libertygunsandbabies.ibog.forlagetcolumbus.dk/?id=149>  |

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1. forstadslignende (velhavende) område, der ligger i mere landlige områder [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. forstads- [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. her: bortset fra [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. at samle sig i klynger [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. gå rettens vej [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. en sag, der har med den lovmæssige fortolkning af forfatningen at gøre [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. udvalg, der inddeler områder i valgdistrikter [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. advokat, der arbejder med frihedsrettigheder; I USA handler det typisk om sager, der relaterer sig til the First Amendment (ytringsfrihed, religionsfrihed, forsamlingsfrihed) [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Grand Old Party = det republikanske parti [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. partibundethed [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. general i nordstaternes hær under borgerkrigen [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. soldat, der står for rekognoscering af fjendtligt terræn [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. officer i pansertropper (fx kampvogne) [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. vejsidebombe [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Shiite/Sunni shia/sunni; de to hovedgrupper inden for islam, hvoraf sunni er størst [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. irakisk præsident fra 1979-2003 [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. her: ængstelse [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Hillary Clinton: demokratisk præsidentkandidat i 2016 [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. (venstreorienterede) rødder [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. forsvarere [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. anstændighed [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. troløshed, forræderi [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. være gennemsyret af [↑](#footnote-ref-23)