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**Els 74: argumentation**

**Learning Outcome. Formulating Propositions**

Jane Irish E. Ayop

BAELS3B

**36 years after ousting Marcos, Filipinos elect son as president**

The dictator's son mounts a strong comeback from a 2016 defeat – bringing jubilation to loyalists and wounding a generation that ousted his father.

MANILA, Philippines – With 94.23% of precincts already accounted for, Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr., the only son and namesake of the late Philippine dictator, is the presumptive winner of the 2022 presidential elections in the Philippines.

It is a historic win nearly four decades after Filipinos booted his family out of power, ending a well-oiled campaign that sought to bury the past, rally for unity, and evade scrutiny.

As of 4:41 am on Tuesday, May 10, partial and unofficial results from the Commission on Elections’ transparency server showed Marcos Jr. with 30,015,540 votes so far, representing 58.86% of total votes reported for all presidential candidates.

The 64-year-old Marcos Jr. is set to become the 17th president of the Philippines, as he receives more than double the votes of his closest opponent, Vice President Leni Robredo, who has garnered 14,309,524 votes or 28.06% as of the latest update.

He will succeed the strongman Rodrigo Duterte, winning without his outright support. The President’s daughter, Davao City Mayor Sara Duterte, was Marcos Jr.’s running mate, getting 30,310,743 votes or 61.08%, as of 4:06 am on Tuesday.

It’s the first presidential elections since the rebirth of democracy in 1986 where the outgoing president did not endorse a candidate. “He is a spoiled child…. He’s a weak leader*at may bagahe siya* (and he has baggage),” the outgoing president Duterte [had said of Marcos.](https://www.rappler.com/nation/elections/duterte-speech-november-18-bongbong-marcos-weak-leader/)

Marcos will lead the Philippines for the next six years, and will have to steer the country into economic recovery after a global pandemic. He is now the country’s chief diplomat, who [flip-flopped on standing with Ukraine](https://www.rappler.com/nation/ferdinand-bongbong-marcos-junior-flips-now-stands-ukraine-reversal-messes-anti-leni-robredo-messaging/) amid a Russian invasion that threatens security in the whole of Europe.

“This is bad for the country. There would be no good governance as we know it. Cronyism and dynasty will thrive,” said jailed opposition leader Leila De Lima.

Marcos has promised to continue Duterte’s [warm ties to superpower China](https://www.rappler.com/nation/elections/ferdinand-bongbong-marcos-jr-will-set-aside-hague-ruling-united-states-treaty-dealing-china/), and will [keep at bay the International Criminal Court](https://www.rappler.com/nation/bongbong-marcos-will-continue-drug-war-shield-from-international-criminal-court/) investigating the President and his men for alleged crimes against humanity for the thousands of killings during the drug war.

As president, Marcos will have power over executive agencies involved in recovering his family’s ill-gotten wealth, such as the Presidential Commission on Good Government and the Office of the Solicitor General (OSG). The PCGG was still trying to recover [P125 billion more](https://www.rappler.com/newsbreak/iq/breakdown-billions-recovered-marcos-ill-gotten-wealth-by-pcgg-more-to-get/)in stolen wealth.

Marcos also has[a standing contempt order](https://www.rappler.com/nation/bongbong-marcos-evades-millions-dollars-contempt-judgment-united-states/) in the United States – among other cases that he and his mother Imelda are facing. The business community [fears](https://www.rappler.com/nation/elections/ferdinand-bongbong-marcos-jr-shrugs-robredo-ratings-economists-investors/) that investors will steer clear of the Philippines under a Marcos presidency.

“Well, we’ll just have to prove them wrong if we get the opportunity and we will,” said Marcos in an interview with[One PH](https://web.facebook.com/OnePHonCignal/videos/642755940357380) on March 21.

Strong from start to finish

Marcos started and finished strong, peaking at 60% in a Pulse Asia survey in January 2022, and securing a huge lead at 56% in April before election day. Robredo could only manage a peak of 24%.

Like his father before him, Marcos built his clout first as congressman of Ilocos Norte, and then senator. Many believe his vice presidential run in 2016 was a test drive – to be more prepared to go for the gold.

“[Returning to] Malacanang would be a great help,” said his mother Imelda in 2014.

It seems it has been a lifelong family plan, as Imelda herself ran for president in 1992 after their family were allowed to return from their exile in Hawaii.

Learning the hard lessons from his defeat in his 2016 vice presidential run, Marcos sought to consolidate his base by getting a strong running mate. With the help of former president Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, he managed to convince Duterte’s daughter Sara to be his vice president – even if Sara’s was performing better in presidential opinion polls last year.

He also managed to get the [support of powerful dynasties](https://www.rappler.com/nation/elections/bongbong-marcos-sara-duterte-uniteam-seal-alliance-2022/) and big business, such as the magnate Manny Villar. Next, he courted the[transport](https://www.rappler.com/nation/transport-factions-loyalist-backs-bongbong-marcos-activist-does-not-buy-promise/) and [workers](https://www.rappler.com/nation/elections/ferdinand-bongbong-marcos-jr-gets-tucp-backing-labor-agenda-still-in-works-february-2022/) sectors, but not without backlash from the other factions who highlighted that Marcos the dictator was the one who sunk those sectors in the first place.

Marcos showed this as proof of the image he wanted to sell: that he’s the unifying factor in Philippine politics.

Alongside his campaign of unity is the policy of evading scrutiny, as he snubbed all the debates and ran away from the independent press. This way, he was able to preserve his bubble by capturing a craving among Filipinos to have a more positive feel of politics.

It’s “part of the mood of the times,” said political analyst Julio Teehankee.

“Given the pandemic, we were thinking, after what we experienced in the pandemic and how the government handled the pandemic, we would long for a more technocratic good governance, reformist approach, but instead the opposite happens – *pagod na ang tao, wala na rin silang pasensiya, so ano ang solusyon? Magkaisa tayo* (people are tired, they don’t have patience, so what is the solution? Let’s unite.),” said Teehankee

Teehankee added: “It may be illogical for us, but there’s that inherent logic, there’s a rationale with the masses.”

Simple but effective

It also helped that the message was so simple, said Ronnie Holmes, president of polling firm Pulse Asia, which predicted the win, projecting a big-margin preferential rate for Marcos as early as December 2021.

“It defuses the extent by which he is perceived by his opponents as a polarizing figure, by expressing himself as the unity candidate, and what he does is tell people who are open to support him that I will not anymore be the person who will polarize the nation,” said Holmes.

Marcos stuck to that message so firmly, he never bothered to answer pressing issues about him: [his direct liability](https://www.rappler.com/nation/elections/marcos-jr-evades-tax-question-supporters-spread-false-claims/) as executor to pay their estate’s long overdue P203 billion tax, his criminal conviction for[not filing his own tax returns](https://www.rappler.com/nation/elections/records-bongbong-marcos-1997-tax-conviction-hounds-presidential-campaign-2022-polls/), and even the bad reviews from his constituents in Ilocos Norte calling him an [absentee governor.](https://www.rappler.com/newsbreak/in-depth/ferdinand-bongbong-marcos-jr-ilocos-norte-absentee-governor/)

So disciplined that he is able to lie in the select television interviews he grants: he lied about being [accessible to media](https://www.rappler.com/nation/elections/marcos-jr-faces-media-cagayan-de-oro-press-conference-controlled-cnn-philippines-skips-estate-tax-issues/?_thumbnail_id=1667454), about his[Oxford education](https://www.rappler.com/nation/ferdinand-marcos-officials-lobbied-oxford-to-give-bongbong-diploma-up-vera-files-reports/), and backpedaling on his [family’s claim of owning gold.](https://www.rappler.com/nation/elections/ferdinand-bongbong-marcos-jr-never-saw-gold-told-court-source-wealth/)

“*Alam po natin, ang isang tao kahit gaano kagaling, kahit gaano kasipag, kahit gaano kamahal ang Pilipinas, siya ay isang tao lamang. Ngunit kapag tayo ay nagkaisa, katulad ng nangyayari sa kasaysayan ng Pilipinas, kapag may dumarating na sakuna, kahirapan o problema, ito po ay ating hinaharap at tayong mga Pilipino ay nakakaraos,*” Marcos said in a stump speech at the homestretch sortie in Pampanga April 29.

(We know that no matter how brilliant a person is, no matter how hardworking, no matter how much they love the Philippines, that person is only one person. But if we unite, like what we’ve seen in the history of the Philippines, if we face crisis, difficulty or problem, we face it together and we as Filipinos overcome it.)

**Disinformation network**

Researchers documented a well-entrenched social media network benefitting Marcos and undermining all his opponents, some networks are a clear disinformation web, while some focused on rebranding like hyping up Marcos Jr.’s eldest son Sandro.

Yet Marcos Jr. denied time and time again he had any direct link to the trolls, although those critical of him, even journalists, were subjected to red-tagging and other targeted online attacks.

“He gets away with it, in large part, because of this massive disinformation infrastructure he has built around himself. Even if he evades real journalists, his vloggers can easily do damage control, mainly by gaslighting and attacking journalists,” said political journalist Christian Esguerra.

Senator Migz Zubiri, his backer, told the Filipino people: [Marcos will not become a dictator.](https://www.rappler.com/nation/elections/zubiri-says-marcos-will-not-be-dictator-roque-dangles-media-franchise/) Cagayan Governor Manuel Mamba, under party instruction of the Villars to support Marcos, was less sure .

Buan Lian. (2022). *36 years after ousting Marcos, Filipinos elect son as president.* Rappler 2022 Philippine Elections. <https://www.rappler.com/nation/elections/ferdinand-bongbong-marcos-jr-wins-president-philippines-may-2022/>

**Resolved: That Marcos Jr. will follow his father’s steps and be the new dictator**

Proposition of Value

**The Duterte Family's Plan for the Next Election Highlights the Problem of Political Dynasties in the Philippines**

Outgoing [Philippine](https://time.com/tag/philippines/) president [Rodrigo Duterte](https://time.com/tag/rodrigo-duterte/) finalized his candidacy Monday for a senate seat in elections scheduled for May 2022, just days after his daughter Sara Duterte-Carpio filed her bid for the vice presidency.

The move is seen as an effort by the Dutertes to enhance their prominence in a country notorious for its dynastic politics—as well as an attempt by the the 76-year-old leader to evade accountability for his [war on drugs](https://time.com/4462352/rodrigo-duterte-drug-war-drugs-philippines-killing/). The brutal crackdown has left more than 20,000 dead, by some estimates, and seen Duterte become the focus of an International Criminal Court probe.

Philippine presidents [enjoy legal immunity](https://lawphil.net/consti/cons1973.html) while in office, but are constitutionally barred from serving more than a single six-year term. While immunity won’t continue in the senate, securing a seat in the upper chamber would still afford Duterte important protections: [privilege from arrest](https://legacy.senate.gov.ph/senators/terms.asp#Parliamentary_Immunities_) for certain crimes while congress is in session, and formidable political clout.

“Maybe he still wants to be in the mix—to be a Senate President, to still be a player,” says Richard Heydarian, associate professor of politics at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines.

True, Duterte may have to surrender his dream of a dynastic successor—at least for now. His daughter, Duterte-Carpio, has been edged out of the top spot in pre-election polling by the son (and namesake) of [late dictator Ferdinand Marcos](https://time.com/4583037/philippines-marcos-burial-duterte-human-rights-protest/), who is now the top choice to become the Philippines’ next leader.

But by not vying with Marcos Jr., and instead standing for vice president alongside him, Duterte-Carpio will bolster the positions of both families in the country of 110 million.

The Dutertes “have now settled for silver,” Heydarian tells TIME. “It seems contesting the gold would be a lose-lose for both sides, because that would have split the vote of the pro-administration side between the Marcoses and the Dutertes.”

For Philippine voters, however, the long-standing problem of dynastic politics remains. If she wins the vice presidency, Duterte-Carpio might also shield her father from legal battles, ensuring a long wait in store for those hoping for [swift justice for abuses](https://time.com/5330071/philippines-mayors-political-assassination-duterte/) carried out during his bloody reign.

**Dynastic politics in the Philippines**

Global politics is rife with dynasties, from the Shinawatras of Thailand, to the Bushes and Kennedys of the U.S., and the Nehru-Gandhis of India. But what makes the Philippines unique, according to the dean of the Ateneo School of Government (ASOG), Ronald Mendoza, is the sheer extent to which such families run the country—even though the constitution specifically requires the state to “prohibit political dynasties as may be defined by law.”

“I don’t think it’s matched anywhere else in the world,” he tells TIME. As if to prove the point, Duterte’s two sons are eyeing congressional and mayoral seats in the upcoming elections.

[Research](https://poseidon01.ssrn.com/delivery.php?ID=815017127117093117001122093110071023063027086039084088067084010023007116112070066104099039034045048124109003102031078092126075005070053014040091113029023003014125028069045045004083112001001030102006001084023093119123110097125110113082091111112125093085&EXT=pdf&INDEX=TRUE) by ASOG showed that 80% of the governors, 67% of congressmen, and 53% of mayors who won office in the 2019 Philippine elections belonged to “fat dynasties”—the name given to families holding multiple elective posts.

Many businesses are also concentrated in the hands of relatives or cronies of political families, adds Mendoza, who observes “blatant” increases in wealth among politicians while in office. “The overlap between politics and economics is not a very healthy one, because it’s the same overlap that will actually snuff out competition,” he says.

[A report](https://pcij.org/article/1472/duterte-sara-paolo-mark-big-spikes-br-in-wealth-cash-while-in-public-office)by the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism in 2019 claimed to find spikes in the wealth of members of the Duterte family after they entered public office. The family denied wrongdoing, countered that the money came from private ventures. But whatever the truth, it seems clear that rule by political families has been generally associated with negative outcomes—whether [in the Philippines](https://asiapacific.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/Teresa%20Tadem%20Political%20Dynasty.pdfhttps:/asiapacific.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/Teresa%20Tadem%20Political%20Dynasty.pdf) or [elsewhere](https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/whats-wrong-with-dynastic-politics).

Dynasties tend to thrive in the [poorest Philippine regions](https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/48380/1/MPRA_paper_48380.pdf), where politicians find it easier to wield patronage. Once in office, families gain access to government coffers. That’s why the fight for regional power can be stiff, and in areas with two or more competing clans, it can even become bloody: the [warring of two political families](http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1943191,00.html) in the southern province of Maguindanao caused the deaths of 58 people, including 32 journalists, in 2009.

Bills have been proposed to impose term limits on government officials who are related to each other, but these have languished when tabled before congressmen—many of whom belong to political dynasties themselves.

**The Duterte family on the national stage**

Duterte-Carpio was vice mayor to her father in 2007, during one of his terms as the mayor of the southern Philippine city of Davao, and she is the city’s mayor today. With her vice presidential bid, she will be hoping to make the same leap into countrywide politics that her father did in 2015.

If she succeeds, and if her brothers follow the same path, the Dutertes may emerge as the next national dynasty of consequence.

The other Duterte children certainly don’t seem short of ambition. Paolo Duterte has faced accusations from political opponents of links to [drug smuggling](https://www.rappler.com/nation/paolo-duterte-smuggling-documents-2007) and [organized crime](https://www.rappler.com/newsbreak/inside-track/trillanes-paolo-duterte-tattoo-triad-customs)—allegations that he was [eventually cleared of](https://www.efe.com/efe/english/world/duterte-s-son-cleared-of-involvement-in-drug-trafficking-case-philippines/50000262-3602861)—but he has managed to acquire congressional experience and for a time was deputy speaker of the house for political affairs. The youngest sibling, Sebastian, was elected vice mayor of Davao City in 2019.

Critics argue that family politics, and the machinations of the leading dynasties, are ultimately a distraction from the real issues facing the Philippines—from [pandemic recovery](https://time.com/6073420/covid-philippines-medical-populism/) and graft to lagging infrastructure and poverty—preventing the emergence of the kind of leadership required to take the country forward.

Says Mendoza: “What we get is the *telenovela* that captures our imaginations and distracts us from the deeper questions that we must ask them to answer in order to be better judges of who would be the best leader for us in May 2022.”

De Guzman, C. (2021). *The Duterte Family's Plan for the Next Election Highlights the Problem of Political Dynasties in the Philippines.* TIME. <https://time.com/6119256/duterte-election-philippines-dynasty/>

**Resolved: That the political dynasties in the Philippines have an effect on political and economic status of Philippine society**

Proposition of Fact

**Panama allows transgender women to compete in beauty pageant**

The organizers of Panama's national beauty contest announced this week that transgender women who "have completed all their legal and medical procedures" can take part in its competition from this year.

"Miss Panama will permit women officially legally recognized in the country," said Señorita Panama. "Guaranteed to be an inclusive organization, we approved this decision based on strict legal guidelines and according to previous international agreements," the organization added.

The Señorita Panama pageant sends a contestant from Panama each year to the international Miss Universe competition.

Change is coming

The organizers said that the decision was made "after plenty of conversations" and was in line with the rules of the Miss Universe organization.

Panama now joins Spain, Canada and Nepal, among others, in allowing transgender contestants to take part in the international beauty pageant.

The Miss Universe competition lifted a ban on transgender contestants in 2012 and the first transgender woman, Angela Ponce, participated in the competition in 2018.

DW. (2021). *Panama allows transgender women to compete in beauty pageant.* <https://www.dw.com/en/panama-allows-transgender-women-to-compete-in-beauty-pageant/a-56752761>

**Resolved: That Philippines should legally recognize trans women to join beauty pageants for natural-born women**

Proposition of Policy