



# Third Parties, Political Movements *and* Interest Groups

## INSIDE

**9** Why Have  
The Fourteenth  
Amendment?

**16** 5 Myths  
About the  
'Tea Party'

**18** Is the GOP  
Shedding  
A Birthright?

**23** Interest-group  
Spending for  
Midterm Up

An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

## A Word About Third Parties, Political Movements and Interest Groups

One did not have an official party affiliation when elected. One was a Federalist, others were Whigs and Democratic-Republicans. And since 1856 U.S. presidents have been from either the Republican or Democratic Party. This does not mean that these two remain the only political parties active in the U.S.

Third parties continue to voice new points of view, educate the public on issues and influence government policy. These organized parties as well as interest groups and political movements are very much part of contemporary America.

This guide takes at look at the impact of the Tea Party movement, interest group funding, the Supreme Court's ruling in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, and the media itself on the 2010 campaigns and elections. Suggested activities incorporate *Post* news coverage, commentaries, editorial cartoons and graphics. Students are also guided to create a third party.

Although there are many issues that may be discussed, we focus on the debates surrounding the Fourteenth Amendment and receiving citizenship as a birthright.

A reminder to *Post* INSIDE program teachers: If you plan to use articles in this guide in the e-Replica format more than three months after their publication date, remember to bookmark them.



**Lessons:** Third parties, interest groups and political movements are not new to American politics. They add to the debate of issues, influence policies and educate the public. Supreme Court decisions, financial contributions and media coverage also impact elections.

**Level:** Mid to High

**Subjects:** Government, Social Studies, Political Science

**Related Activity:** Economics, Journalism

### NIE Online Guide

**Editor** — Carol Lange

Art Editor — Carol Porter

### Available Online

All Washington Post NIE guides may be downloaded at [www.washpost.com/nie](http://www.washpost.com/nie).

### Send comments about this guide to:

Margaret Kaplow, Educational Services Manager, [kaplowsm@washpost.com](mailto:kaplowsm@washpost.com)

## An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

### Third Parties, Political Movements and Interest Groups

*Third parties, interest groups and political movements are not new to American politics. All have added to the debate of issues, policy decisions and the attitudes of citizens toward their elected officials. This guide provides activities to examine their role, the media's influence and impact of finances on campaigns and elections. In addition, Post columnists and an activity address the current debate surrounding of the Fourteenth Amendment.*

#### Learn the Language

Review terms that will be used in discussion and are found in articles. In the Know sidebar provides a starting point to learn the vocabulary of politics.

#### Evaluate Media Influence

One job of the media is to inform the public. In a republican form of government, it is important that citizens vote for the candidates who will legislate and secure the kind of country they want. To accomplish both of these essentials in a democracy, the press needs to take seriously its responsibility to cover campaigns, candidates and the many aspects of elections.

How effectively does the media cover campaigns? Does the media give all candidates — not just Republicans and Democrats — equal coverage? How much does the media influence election participation and results?

Organize the class to cover different aspects of media coverage. With the expansion of media beyond print and Web coverage, this survey should have something for every class member to do. You may wish to limit your survey to *The Washington Post*, [www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com), a news radio station and a TV station. Or broaden the study to include more media.

Create a spreadsheet to tally data. Set up the methodology. This may be done by column inches and seconds on air. It may be done by mention of name and issues. Areas that are reviewed could include:

- Covering the candidates of the two major parties
- Covering third party candidates
- Covering political movements
- Informing readers of interest groups and their activities
- Informing readers of issues
- Interviewing campaign staffs and involved leaders
- Polling the public
- Serving as a watchdog to campaign finances

#### Explore Third Parties and Interest Groups

Give students "Political Impact." Teachers might begin by discussing the distinction between a "third party," "political interest group" and a "political movement." Discussion might include:

- Where and when have interest in an issue evolved into an interest group and/or political movement? Give examples.
- In addition to the third parties listed, several states have active third parties. Give students examples of ones that are active

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

### In the Know

**Campaign:** A series of planned events pursued to accomplish a purpose; these include speeches, public appearances, media use and advertising.

**Citizen:** Member of a political society who therefore owes allegiance to and is entitled to protection by and from the government

**Constituent:** A resident of a district or member of a group represented by an elected official

**Elect:** To select by vote for an office

**Franchise:** Right to vote

**Jus sanguinis:** a rule by which a child's citizenship is not determined by place of birth, but by its parents' citizenship

**Jus soli:** rule that the citizenship of a child is determined by the place of its birth

**Ideology:** Comprehensive and coherent set of basic beliefs about political, economic, social and cultural affairs that is held in common by a sizable group of people within a society

**Independent:** Affiliated with or loyal to no one political party

**Interest group:** Group of people who share common traits, attitudes, beliefs and/or objectives who have formed a formal organization to serve specific interests. They exist primarily for exerting political influence as a means of affecting government policies or legislation. Also called pressure group.

**Political efficacy:** Belief that one can be effective and have an impact on public affairs

**Political party:** An organized group that has as its fundamental aim the attainment of political power and public office for its designated leaders. Usually advertises a common commitment to a set of political, social, economic and/or cultural values that distinguish it from other parties

## An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

this election cycle. Why might these political groups exist?

- In what ways can third parties act as “spoilers” and change election results?
- Why is it difficult for a third party candidate to get media attention?

“Political Impact” provides a list for possible research by students. Members of the class might be divided into “third party,” “political interest group” and “political movement.” Students will get to know how these groups function and relate to the two dominant parties. Within each of the three groups, students will select an example to research further. Areas that might be included in research include:

- What were the causes that propelled the three movements listed (and others that teachers wish to add)?
- When and how did the movements gather the attention of the general public? In what ways did the media assist their visibility and help to convey their cause?
- How do the political interest groups convey their messages, recruit members and seek donations? Can students find examples of advocacy advertisements for any of these groups? To what extent are snail mailings being replaced by social networking?
- When was the third party organized? To further which issue(s) or ideology? If the third party is no longer active, why did it cease to exist?
- Which third parties tend to have a longer life?
- When was the political interest group organized? To further which issue(s) or ideology? Are there other interest groups that share

the same causes? Do they work together or compete?

- What methods do movements, political interest groups and third parties use to shape government policy and actions? Give examples. Research findings could be presented in research paper format; a written profile of a political group; panel discussions grouped by issues, time period of activity or size of membership; or a series of broadcasts (Web, radio, video).

### Get to Know the Tea Party

In addition to third parties, there have been political movements with a particular issue that drives its message. Avoiding the difficult process of getting on a state or D.C. ballot, proponents work to influence the selection and success of candidates in the dominant parties. The tea party movement is a contemporary example.

Read “5 Myths about the ‘tea party’” to discuss and clarify where, when, and why the Tea Party came to be. Discussion might include:

- Why would “myths” such as these be perpetuated?
- By whom and which ideological persuasion was the Tea Party movement begun?
- To what does the “Tea Party” name allude?
- What issue is the main focus of the Tea Party movement?
- What role has the media played in public awareness of its existence?
- What draws people to a movement — shared ideas, anger, or activism for a cause?
- Do leaders of movements need charisma, name-recognition and/or oratorical ability? What brings attention to their cause?

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

### In the Know | *continued*

**Political philosophy:** Study of ideas about government and politics; general attitude toward government’s role in personal, social, economic and cultural issues

**Political rights:** Rights to participate in the political process

**Rescind:** To remove, to make void by action of the enacting authority

**Register:** To enroll formally, especially as a voter or student

**Representative:** A member of the legislature chosen by popular vote; government by the ballot box

**Republican government:** System of governance in which power is held by the voters and is exercised by elected representatives responsible for promoting the common welfare

**Third party:** A major political party operating over a limited period of time in addition to two other major parties; political party organized as opposition to the existing parties in a two-party system

SOURCE: Center for Civic Education Glossary, A Glossary of Political Economy Terms, Merriam Webster Dictionary

## An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

- Do you think the Tea Party will fold into one of the major parties as has been done by previous movements or grow into its own political party?

### **Put the Tea Party Into Context**

Primaries in Delaware, New York, Kentucky and Nevada were watched. The primaries were career changers for Gov. Charlie Crist (I-Fla.), Sen. Bob Bennett (R-Utah) and Rep. Mike Castle (R-Del.). Some say this is all because of Tea Party endorsements of candidates. Do an e-Replica search or visit Post Politics to locate primary election results. Students might be asked to discuss the following:

- What happened in the latest primaries as a result of Tea Party activists and interests?
- What do wins by Tea Party-endorsed candidates mean? Are they a “sign of a civil war within the Republican Party, pitting the Tea Party against the Republican establishment” as George W. Bush ad man Mark McKinnon called it? Or is there “no difference between what Republicans believe in and what the Tea Party activists believe in,” according to Rep. John Boehner? Or something else? Explain your answer.
- What was the success rate of previous Republican primary candidates prior to affiliating with the Tea Party?

### **Read the Editorial Cartoons**

Two editorial cartoons by *The Washington Post's* editorial cartoonist are included in this guide. Tom Toles provides visual commentary on the Tea Party.

The May 24, 2010, cartoon ties the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico to the

increasing presence of the Tea Party movement. His cartoon reflects what was known at the time he drew it — concerns about oil merging with the Loop Current in the Gulf of Mexico and media attention being given groups of citizens across the U.S. who were collectively known as the Tea Party. Events that have taken place since May 24 may influence how students view the cartoon now. Give students a copy of the editorial cartoon and discuss the questions. Do students agree or disagree with Toles?

The September 14, 2010, political cartoon responds to the primary elections. Give students a copy of the editorial cartoon and discuss the questions. Do students agree or disagree with Toles?

### **Forecast and Follow the November Elections**

In a number of general elections in November, third party candidates and Tea Party movement-endorsed candidates are running. Have students compile a list of these candidates by state and D.C. How well do students think these candidates will do?

Read and discuss *Post* coverage, listen to and read other media reports and make a forecast. Perhaps, teachers could hold a class vote.

Follow election night coverage and read the November 3 *Post*. Compare your forecasts with election results. Did you understand the voters in these states and D.C.? Who were these voters — % of registered voters, age, and other demographics?

How are the results of congressional races likely to influence the Obama administration’s agenda for legislative action? The effectiveness of Congress to vote on issues?

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

## **On the Web**

[http://voices.washingtonpost.com/politics/campaigns.html?nid=roll\\_campaigns](http://voices.washingtonpost.com/politics/campaigns.html?nid=roll_campaigns)

### **Post Politics**

*The Washington Post* Political news coverage, Fast Fix column and special features: 2010 Campaign Maps, Follow the Money, Palin Endorsement Tracker and profiles

<http://politifact.com/>

### **PolitiFact**

*St. Petersburg Times* site seeks to assess the truth of statements, advertising and actions. The “Truth-O-Meter” takes statements and does research to find the truth. Ratings range from “All True,” “Mostly True” to “Pants on Fire!”

<http://www.democrats.org/>

### **Democrats**

Official Web site of the Democratic National Committee

<http://www.gop.com/>

### **GOP**

Official Web site of the Republican National Committee

### **Official Political Web sites**

<http://www.aipca.org/>  
**American Independent Party**

<http://www.gp.org/index.php>  
**Green Party of the United States**

<http://www.lp.org/>  
**Libertarian Party**

<http://socialistparty-usa.org/>  
**Socialist Party USA**

<http://teapartypatriots.ning.com/>  
**Tea Party Patriots**

## An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

### Register and Join — Perhaps?

Michel Martin's opinion piece, "Independent — and disenfranchised," focuses on her experience with voter registration and exercising her right to vote in D.C. Teachers may go from the specific example to a more general discussion of why and whether individuals should be asked to register their party affiliation.

Before giving students this guest commentary to read, ask them to answer these questions to get a sense of their understanding of being registered to vote and registered by party affiliation:

- How and when do you register to vote? Is this determined differently in various states and the District?"
- How do you join a political party?
- What are the requirements for membership, if any?
- What does registering as a party member mean?
- How do you participate as a member of a political party?

Read Michel Martin's commentary. Teachers may wish to distinguish closed and open primary elections.

- What does it mean to be disenfranchised?
- Do students agree that members of the press should not make their personal political opinions known? Even if this means they cannot vote in primary elections? What do students think of journalists who take the ethics so far as not to vote in any election?
- Do students agree or disagree with the policy of not allowing independents to vote in primary elections?

### Run for Office

Teachers may wish to remind students of the process that is required in your jurisdiction to run for office. Questions to be answered would include:

- How does an individual get on the ballot?
- Does one need to become the member of a political party to run for office?
- What are the advantages of being a member of a political party?
- What is the petition process to get an individual on the ballot?

Teachers could also explore individuals who currently hold office who switched parties or became independents to run and were successful. How many independents currently serve in Congress? How strictly should registration for a political party be guarded?

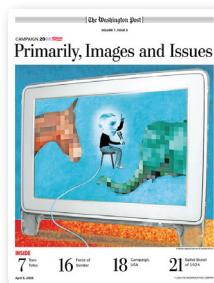
Another area of discussion might be the role of religious affiliation in American politics. Article VI of the U.S. Constitution prohibits any religious test for office. How important is religious affiliation to contemporary Americans?

In the Nixon-Kennedy presidential campaign, Sen. John F. Kennedy in a speech directly confronted voters who were concerned about his Catholic faith. From Jimmy Carter, presidents have expressed their religious convictions. President Obama is a Christian, yet e-mails continue to circulate on the Internet that he is a Muslim. In 2008, Mitt Romney, a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; Mike Huckabee, an ordained Southern Baptist minister; Sen. Joe Lieberman, an observant Jew; and Roman Catholic John Kerry faced varying degrees of scrutiny by the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

### Past Post Guides

#### Primarily, Images and Issues



Responsible citizens keep informed about current issues, demonstrate knowledge of the political process and evaluate the role of media in campaigns. This guide provides

*Post* articles and commentary, a role-play simulation, issue comparison activities, and editorial cartooning. Reading suggestions remain pertinent.

— April 8, 2008

#### Who Has the Right to Vote?



In "Who Has the Right to Vote?" students examine the right to vote and from whom this right may be taken. Voting patterns of American voters in presidential and off-year

congressional races are studied and used in planning a mayoral campaign that will increase voter turnout.

— September 27, 2004

#### Control of Congress



The 2002 election provides the faces and facts from which students can examine American citizens' involvement in the democratic process and the power and influence that comes with control of Congress. "From Bill to Law in 5 Easy Steps" handout makes the law-making process easy to understand.

— November 5, 2002

## An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

public, the press and leaders of their faiths. Should a candidate's faith matter? Should the media ask questions that relate to one's religion and a candidate's possible response to issues?

### **Debate the Fourteenth Amendment**

Introduce students to the Fourteenth Amendment and discuss the reasons it was adopted by the states. What issue(s) did it clarify? After providing the historic framework, teachers should discuss the current events that impact recent debate on the provisions of the Fourteenth Amendment. What are the arguments given by Rep. John Boehner and others who propose rescinding the amendment? What would be the effect of rescinding the amendment?

The worksheet "Why Have the Fourteenth Amendment?" introduces this amendment and the reasons some want to rescind it. Student also learn about the process that is in place to make such changes a matter of civic discourse.

"A 14th Amendment Difference of Opinion" provides a longer activity that requires research, comparison and contrast, and evaluation of concepts.

Two *Washington Post* columnists share their perspectives on the issue. Before reading, ask students to define "birthright." Read and discuss E.J. Dionne's "Is the GOP shedding a birthright?" and Michael Gerson's "Republicans are ramping up the birthright battle."

Teachers of government classes may also wish to contrast the current American birthright citizenship with the laws in other countries. Introduce students to the terms *jus soli* and *jus sanguinis*.

Teachers may give case studies to apply the rules of citizenship. What is the citizenship of a child who was recently born in the U.S.:

- His father is Irish by birth, his mother is British by birth
- Her father is Chilean by birth, her mother is Mexican by birth
- Is a child born of U.S. citizens in another country, an American citizen? A dual citizen?

Germany changed its citizenship policy in 2000. Who is a citizen of Argentina, Croatia, Ireland, Italy, Puerto Rico, South Africa, Switzerland and Vietnam? How have the rules governing birthright of individuals born in a country influenced the culture and relationships within the country?

### **Create Your Own Third Party**

Give students the project to create their own political party. They feel that the two dominant parties are too engaged in passive-aggressive behavior toward each other to enact meaningful legislation. They are not listening to citizens on important issues. What are these issues?

Based upon students' responses to the most important issues, group them to form a third party. Give students "Form a Third Party" to direct the activities of the Founding Congress and to establish the party's identity. For step 9, create an advocacy ad, teachers may wish to refer to the April 5, 2010, Post NIE guide, *Get an Ad-vantage*. The purpose of advocacy ads and examples are provided in this curriculum guide found at [www.washpost.com/nie](http://www.washpost.com/nie).

### **Spend Time on Finance**

The influence of the Supreme Court's 2010 ruling in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* is beginning to be seen. Review this case with students and the 5-4 decision. According to T.W. Farnam and Dan Eggen, "[i]nterest groups are spending five times as much on the 2010 congressional elections as

they did on the last midterms."

Before reading the article, review the bar graph with students. What information is provided in the comparison of four years? Why is the identity of the donor important to an informed public?

Give students "Interest-group spending for midterm up five-fold from 2006; many sources secret."

Read the map graphics to compare and contrast how much and where the different interest groups are contributing funds. For more information, visit Post Politics.

Read and discuss the article. Questions could include:

- What is an interest group?
- What does the \$80 million spent as of 39 days before election day reflect? In this economy, what groups and individuals would invest in advertising and other campaign expenses?
- How important is control of Congress to interest groups? Give some specific legislative examples.
- How do disclosure requirements differ for donations given to political parties and candidates from those given to interest groups?
- President Obama discouraged the forming of moneyed interest groups during his 2008 campaign. Why did he take this view of interest groups?
- Farnam and Eggen write, "Heightened spending by outside groups has given the Republican Party flexibility in choosing which races to focus on." Explain what this means.
- Interest groups often invest in advertising. How important is advertising in swaying voters?
- When the donors to interest groups are unknown, who can be held accountable for inaccurate, misleading or inflammatory advertisements?

# **Political Impact**

Political points of view are varied — conservative, liberal, moderate, independent, Democrat and Republican. They are expressed in organized political parties, in PACs and movements, in party platforms and guest commentaries.

## **Third Parties**

An organized political party other than the two major political parties. The party has a platform and its own candidates elected to run for office. Third-party candidates have been successful enough to receive electoral college votes. American third parties have included:

- American Party or Know-Nothing
- Anti-Federalist Party
- Communist Workers Party
- Constitution Party
- Federalist Party
- Green Party USA
- Libertarian Party
- Socialist Party USA
- People's Party or Populist
- Progressive Party or Bull Moose
- Whig Party

## **Political Interest Groups**

An organization with a defined political goal that works to influence the election of candidates that favor its position(s) and to influence party platforms and policies. These include:

- American Civil Liberties Union
- Americans for Democratic Action
- AARP
- Club for Growth
- Green Peace
- Heritage Foundation
- Move On
- National Organization for Women
- National Rifle Association
- The Sierra Club

## **Movements and Advocacy Groups**

A political movement is a group of people working together to achieve a political goal. International political movements have included Fascism, Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), Sinn Fein, and Red Guard. American political movements have included:

- Chicano
- Progressive
- Tea Party

An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

## Why Have the Fourteenth Amendment?

All persons born or naturalized in the United States and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

— Section 1, Fourteenth Amendment, Constitution of the United States

1. Why was the Fourteenth Amendment added to the U.S. Constitution?
2. What issue(s) did this amendment clarify?
3. What does it mean to rescind an amendment?
4. What process must take place to rescind an amendment to the U.S. Constitution?
5. Explain the current issues that are related to the Fourteenth Amendment?
6. State three reasons to keep the Fourteenth Amendment.
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
7. State three reasons to rescind the Fourteenth Amendment.
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
8. In two to five paragraphs tell why you would vote for or against rescinding the Fourteenth Amendment.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## A 14th Amendment Difference of Opinion

Before reading “Is the GOP shedding a birthright?” and “Ramping up the birthright battle,” check on your knowledge of documents, people and points of view. What do you know before doing research? If you are uncertain of the answers to the following questions, do some research.

### Step One: Establish the Involved Parties

1. What does the 14th Amendment state? What does this amendment add to the Constitution?
2. Who were the Radical Republicans of the 1860s — a movement, a separate party or a faction within the Republican party? What did they believe?
3. Do a search of the e-Replica edition of *The Washington Post* and research other sources to compile some background information on House Minority Leader John Boehner and Senator Lindsey Graham. What does their voting record reveal about them? What have been some of their legislative initiatives?
4. Do a Web search to locate video and other coverage of Rep. Boehner’s comments on the 14th Amendment. What is his stand on the 14th Amendment?
5. Beginning in 2007 with the Republican debates of those seeking to be the party’s nominee for president, what has been Sen. John McCain’s views on immigration and the 14th Amendment? Include the date and place of his statements. If his point of view changed, when did this take place?

### Step Two: Focus on the Columns of Michael Gerson and E.J. Dionne, Jr.

Read and analyze two columns: “Is the GOP shedding a birthright?” and “Ramping up the birthright battle.”

6. How accurately does Michael Gerson present the views of Rep. John Boehner (R-Ohio) on the 14th Amendment?
7. Does Gerson agree or disagree with Rep. Boehner?
8. Gerson has clearly done research. What historic examples does he provide readers?
9. A commentary is often a piece of persuasive writing. Review the arguments provided by Michael Gerson and rank these in order of their persuasiveness.
10. What does columnist E.J. Dionne believe to be “particularly depressing”?
11. What does Dionne think has influenced the stands being taken by Sen. Graham (R-S.C.) and Sen. McCain (D-Ariz.)?

### Step Three: Compare and Contrast

Compare and contrast the commentary written by Michael Gerson and that written by E.J. Dionne, Jr.

12. Both writers begin with background information. Dionne refers to the Republican party’s “greatest political legacy.” Gerson explains Ohio’s failure to ratify the 14th Amendment until 2003.
  - When does Dionne explain what he means by “greatest political legacy”?
  - How does giving the story of the Ohio’s action in 1867 help Gerson set up the focus of this commentary for readers?
13. Does Dionne give emotional or logical argumentation? Give examples to support your answer.
14. Select one historical evidence that both present to support their points of view. Which uses the example most effectively? Explain your answer.

### Step Four: Evaluate Your Point of View

Take a stand.

15. Write a guest commentary in which you agree/disagree with those who want to repeal the 14th Amendment.
  - Do you have enough information to make a stand?
  - If yes, write your commentary.
  - If no, what areas do you want to research more? Do some research. Write a commentary in which you express your point of view.

# Form a Third Party



You are concerned citizens. The two dominant parties are too engaged in passive-aggressive behavior toward each other to enact meaningful legislation. Too many of today's elected officials are not listening to citizens on important issues.

From reaction to your blog and tweets, you know there are many others who share your beliefs. Convene a Founding Congress.

Consider the following as you form a third party.

1. What is the name of the new party? Will it evoke a third party of the past or will you use a new name?
2. What are the key issues that bring you together?
3. Write a platform for your party. What is your position on the issues?
4. Write an introduction to your party. To which Americans are you speaking? Are you the party for a broad spectrum of Americans or a particular demographic?
5. Who would be the ideal candidate of your party to run for office? What traits do you want this person to have?
6. The candidates of your party will need money to finance a campaign. What interest groups might align with your party? What other sources of funding do you have?
7. The Democrats have the donkey and the Republicans have the elephant as an icon to represent their parties. What will be your icon?
8. Create a campaign button with a slogan and colors that help to convey your message. Are you a red, white and blue party? A green party? Or another combination of colors?
9. Create an advocacy advertisement.
10. Communication is essential to your success. Create a Web site to inform others of your party's stand on the issues, to introduce your candidates and to provide ways in which citizens can get involved.

# Running for Office Is Complicated

## *Party Affiliation, Finances, Media Attention and Candidates' History*

Since 1856 U.S. presidents have been from the Republican Party or the Democratic Party. This does not mean that they are the only political parties active in the U.S. Third parties, as parties other than the dominant two are known, have voiced other points of view, educated the public on issues and influenced government policy. With the expansion of Internet communication and social networking, these organized parties and political movements are very much part of contemporary America.

Some third parties have existed for more than 100 years. The members of these parties have defined principles and attract new members to their vision. The Prohibition Party is the oldest of these. Another type of third party gains enough strength in state and national politics to influence the stands of candidates eager to attract votes and revise a dominant party's strategies and platforms. The Reform Party of Ross Perot and the Independent Party of George Wallace are recent examples. The candidacy of Green Party leader Ralph Nader is an example of a third-party candidate who threatens election results by taking sufficient votes away from another candidate in a tight two-party race. The last type of third party is very active in local and state politics, but has little or no national impact.

### **Party Affiliation**

- What is the distinction between an independent running for office and a third-party candidate running for office?
- What are the benefits and disadvantages of running on a third-party ticket?
- In which states are third-party candidates running for office in the general election?
- In which states are independent candidates running for office?
- What impact might these candidates have on the election results?
- What are the chances of an independent or a third-party candidate winning office in D.C.?
- In which states are candidates who had tea party endorsement running for office?
- Who should determine which candidate is really a third-party-endorsed candidate?

This question becomes even more difficult to answer when the candidate on the ballot is identified with a political movement. For example, independent candidate for a New Jersey congressional seat Peter DeStefano has identified himself as "New Jersey Tea Party" on the Nov. 2 ballot. Leaders of the New Jersey tea party say he is a "charlatan."

### **Finances**

It cannot be denied that having a large campaign fund is helpful. On September 21, Amy Gardner reported in "Tea party works to build on momentum":

Fresh off primary wins in Delaware and Alaska, national "tea party" groups are redirecting the energy of the movement toward the November midterm elections, raising millions of dollars, expanding their advocacy into dozens of congressional races and building voter turnout operations nationwide.

Read Gardner's article for examples of endorsement and financial support in races as well as insight into the influence of interest groups and movements in campaigns.

- Should donations from individuals, companies and interest groups be capped?
- Would elections be more equitable if all candidates were allowed the same amount of money to spend? None could amass large pots with which they could outspend their opponents?

To get a snapshot of spending on campaigns, visit *The Post's* "Campaign cash: Who's spending where in 2010" ([www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/campaign/2010/spending/index.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/campaign/2010/spending/index.html)).

- Which candidates are spending the most by week?
- What do you know about the races in which these candidates are involved?
- Which groups are providing the most money by week?
- Why would these groups fund campaigns?

Having discussed the charts and the above questions, form 20 groups. Each group is either a candidate or a group from the two lists of top ten spenders. Groups are to click on their assigned candidate to review who is providing them with funds or click on their assigned group to review for whom it is providing funding. Analyze what one can deduce about candidates and organizations by following the money.

# **Running for Office Is Complicated** | *continued*

If you had \$2 million to spend on the general election, how would you budget the money? Among your expenditures will be transportation, advertising (print, Web, radio and television), and staff salaries. How will you attract volunteers? What is your get-out-the-vote strategy and how much will it cost?

## **Candidate's History and Character**

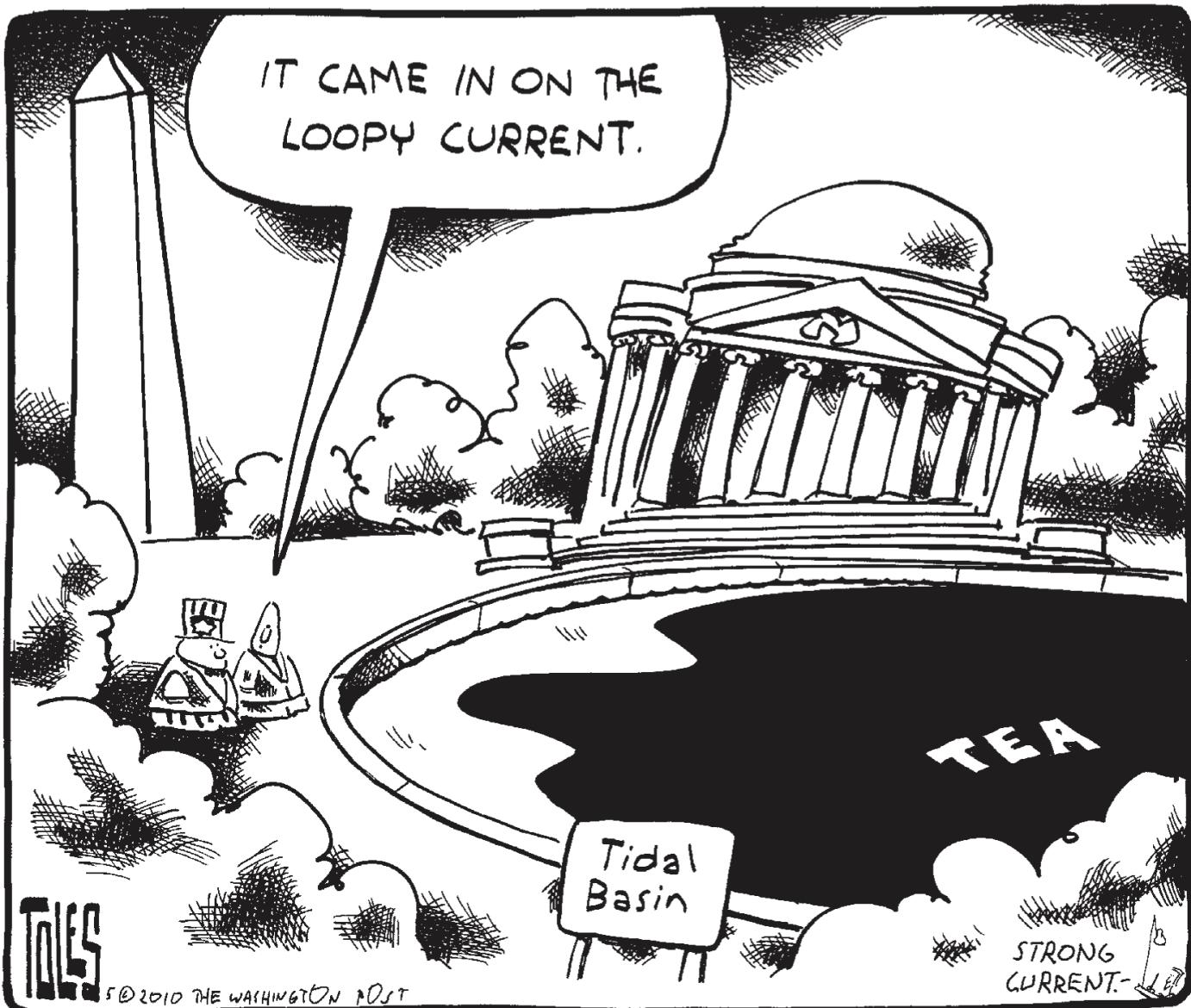
How far back into a candidate's past should opponents and reporters seek actions, statements or affiliations to broadcast? Trying to find "dirt" on one's opponent is not new to American campaigning. With the expansion of communication technology, it is even easier to spread true/misleading/false/nuanced information — and more complicated to respond or to refute it.

In 2010 elections a number of examples can be found. In the Colorado primary race for governor, former representative Scott McInnis (R) faced plagiarism charges, and in the race for senator, incumbent senator Michael Bennett (D) was accused of being involved in a risky financial deal when he was the Denver superintendent of schools. In the midst of this, race Ken Buck (R) called tea party activists "dumbasses." In Delaware, tea-party-backed Christine O'Donnell who won her bid to be the GOP nominee was confronted with her statements that she dabbled in witchcraft.

- Write guidelines for reporting a candidate's past.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

May 24, 2010



1. Editorial cartoonists know current events and often incorporate visual references. To what does "loopy current" refer?
2. Editorial cartoonists know history. To what historic event is Toles referring?
3. With what icons does Tom Toles establish the location?
4. What labels and images add to Toles' ability to communicate with readers?
5. The cartoonist's alter ego appears in the lower right corner. What does his comment communicate?
6. What is Tom Toles' point of view?

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

September 14, 2010



1. What icon indicates the victim of the accident?
2. The lanes of traffic are clearly indicated. From what exit lane did the driver swerve? In what direction did the driver head?
3. If you were to label the tree, what would you name it?
4. The cartoonist's alter ego appears in the lower right corner. What other "collision" has taken place? To what does this refer?
5. If there were an uncertainty of his point of view, Toles titles his cartoon. What point of view is he expressing in his visual commentary?

An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

# 5

## Myths about the ‘tea party’

BY DAVID WEIGEL

Sunday, August 8, 2010

The grass-roots conservative activists who march under the “Don’t tread on me” Gadsden flag and the “tea party” label have put a new twist on Gandhi’s maxim: First they were ignored; then they were ridiculed; then they began to fight. They battled health-care reform and then the Republican establishment, which became angry about the less-than seasoned candidates it was suddenly saddled with.

In short order, a movement that few people took seriously has become the most obsessed-over and overanalyzed political backlash since the 1960s. And as long as both parties are grappling with it and publishers are putting out tea party books every month, it’s worth busting a few myths about the movement.

### **The tea party isn’t a reaction to President Obama, it’s a reaction to the bank bailouts.**

There are some kernels of truth here. The first modern tea party events occurred in December 2007, long before Barack Obama took office, and they were organized by supporters of Rep. Ron Paul (R-Tex.) to raise money for his long-shot presidential bid. They received the respectful, hey-look-at-that coverage sometimes given a candidate flipping pancakes at a church social.

Some of the people recognized as leaders of the tea party movement, such as FreedomWorks Chairman Dick Armey, have loudly condemned the 2008 financial-sector rescue package. And several members of Congress, such as Sen. Bob Bennett (Utah), have been unable to survive their TARP votes when facing GOP primary voters.

Here’s the thing, though: The tea parties were kicked off by CNBC reporter Rick Santelli’s rant about, of all things, Obama’s Homeowner Affordability and Stability Plan, an effort to lessen

the damage to people who’d taken out mortgages they couldn’t afford. And it picked up steam when conservative groups fired up activists about energy and health-care legislation — the Obama agenda, not a last-ditch conservative plan to rescue the banking industry. If you think the tea party would have risen up to oppose a Republican president who spent like mad and violated conservative principles, then where was it in the Bush years?

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18

## An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

**The tea party is racist.**

**2** It's a phenomenon that some activists call "nutpicking" — send a cameraman into a protest and he'll focus on the craziest sign. Yes, there are racists in the tea party, and they make themselves known. But tea party activists usually root them out. Texas activist Dale Robertson, who held a sign likening taxpayers to a racial epithet at a 2009 rally, was drummed out of that event and pilloried by his peers. Mark Williams, formerly the bomb-throwing spokesman for the Tea Party Express (he once told me he wanted to send the liberal watchdog group Media Matters "a case of champagne" for calling him racist), was booted after penning a parody that had the NAACP pining for slavery.

Liberal critics of the tea party argue that conservative opposition to social spending is often racially motivated. That's not new, though, and it's not the basis for the tea party.

**Sarah Palin is the leader of the tea party.**

**3** After she and John McCain lost the 2008 election, and after eight unhappy months back at work governing Alaska, Sarah Palin took her time to reenter national politics. She spent the last half of 2009 writing Facebook posts that, for all the attention they got, mostly praised the work of people such as Rep. Michele Bachmann (R-Minn.). It wasn't until this past February, at the National Tea Party Convention in Nashville, that Palin picked up the movement's banner. Her credentials aren't ideal: Tea partiers unanimously agree that the TARP was what turned America's decline into a freefall; as a vice presidential candidate, Palin backed the TARP. But she showed

plenty of political savvy and hitched herself to the movement, and reporters, eager to find a party politics angle to the tea party story — and knowing that Palin's name brings traffic to news Web sites — anointed her.

Palin has more devoted fans than any other Republican politician, but according to an April New York Times/CBS News poll, only 40 percent of self-identified tea party activists think she would be an "effective chief executive." They'd like to be leaderless for now, thank you very much. But the Tea Party Nation, which planned the Nashville event, and the Tea Party Express, which invited the former governor to rallies in Nevada and Massachusetts, knew they could get media to show up if Palin came along, and they won't forget that lesson.

**The tea party hurts the GOP.**

**4** Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) predicted recently that the tea party movement will "die out." Rep. Bob Inglis (R-S.C.), who lost his primary race to a tea party-backed candidate, has made the media rounds to accuse the movement and some of its heroes, such as Glenn Beck, of poisoning politics. There is no shortage of Republican grumbling about the primary wins of tea partiers Sharron Angle in Nevada and Rand Paul in Kentucky, two Senate candidates who are being hammered by Democrats for their anti-big-government rhetoric. Democrats are doing their best to make Republicans answer for it when tea party activists pledge to dismantle Social Security or the Environmental Protection Agency.

But in every political cycle there are "bad" candidates who say the wrong things — and with the right electorate, they still win. The tea party movement is giving Republicans a dream of an electorate, one in which surveys find more GOP-inclined voters enthusiastic

about casting ballots than voters who lean Democratic. Democrats have done some damage to the tea party brand — its favorability has fallen in polls — but in general, the presence of a new political force that is not called Republican and is not tied to George W. Bush has given the GOP a glorious opportunity to remake its image, at a time when trust in the party is very low. Some liberals deride the tea party as a new bottle for old Republican wine. But rebranding works. (Even Coca-Cola eventually benefited from the publicity of New Coke.)

**The tea party will transform American politics.**

**5** Here, Sen. Graham has history on his side. A popular, and correct, aphorism about grass-roots movements is that they act like bees — they sting, then die. Third parties fold into major parties, like the 19th century Populists did with the Democrats.

The tea party is unlikely to even reach third-party status, because the vast majority of its members — up to 79 percent, in some polls — identify as Republicans and are savvy enough not to take actions that would help Democrats. (Liberals only wish that Ralph Nader thought like this.) The movement's big innovations, such as fast organizing, are mostly technological, inspired by and improving on Obama's 2008 campaign. Their demands are really the same ones that conservative Republicans were making after Obama won, and that Rush Limbaugh and most GOP lawmakers were already making, too.

So the tea party will succeed, if it hasn't already, in making one of America's political parties more devoted to supply-side, pro-war-on-terror, anti-spending principles. But it is pushing on an open door. ■

**David Weigel** is a *Slate* political reporter

An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

E. J. DIONNE JR.

# Is the GOP shedding a birthright?

Rather than shout, I'll just ask the question in a civil way: Dear Republicans, do you really want to endanger your party's greatest political legacy by turning the 14th Amendment to our Constitution into an excuse for election-year ugliness?

Honestly, I thought that our politics could not get worse, and suddenly there appears this attack on birthright citizenship and the introduction into popular use of the hideous term "anchor babies": children whom illegal immigrants have for the alleged purpose of "anchoring" themselves to American rights and the welfare state.

Particularly depressing is that the idea of repealing the 14th Amendment's guarantee of citizenship to "all persons born or naturalized in the United States" was given momentum by one of the nation's most reasonable conservatives.

"People come here to have babies," said Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.). "They come here to drop a child. It's called, 'drop and leave.' To have a child in America, they cross the border, they go to the emergency room, have a child, and that child's automatically an American citizen. That shouldn't be the case. That attracts people here for all the wrong reasons."

Drop a child? How can a strong believer in the right to life use such a phrase?

I can't do better on this than the Cleveland *Plain Dealer*'s estimable columnist Connie Schultz: "I have lived for more than half a century, and I have yet to meet a mother anywhere in the world who would describe the excruciating miracle of birth as 'dropping' a baby."

Graham has long favored comprehensive immigration reform, so it's hard to

escape the thought that his talk of child-dropping is designed to appease a right wing out to get him because he's "too liberal."

Just as dispiriting: Sen. John McCain, another once-brave champion of immigration reform, has tried to duck the issue. McCain, facing an Arizona Republican primary challenge on Aug. 24, has said he supports "the concept of holding hearings" on the meaning of the 14th Amendment's birthright citizenship clause.

This is better than endorsing outright repeal, but what a difference from the McCain whose conscience once compelled him to say of illegal immigrants: "These are God's children as well, and they need some protections under the law, and they need some of our love and compassion."

Nothing should make Republicans prouder than their party's role in passing what are known as the Civil War or Reconstruction amendments: the 13th, ending slavery; the 14th, guaranteeing equal protection under the law and establishing national standards for citizenship; and the 15th, protecting the right to vote. In those days, Democrats were the racial demagogues.

Opponents of the 14th Amendment used racist arguments against immigrants to try to kill it, even though there were virtually no immigration restrictions back then. President Andrew Johnson played the card aggressively, as University of Baltimore law professor Garrett Epps reported in his 2006 book on the 14th Amendment, *Democracy Reborn*.

"This provision comprehends the Chinese of the Pacific States, Indians subject to taxation, the people called Gipsies, as well as the entire race

designated as blacks, people of color, negroes, mulattoes, and persons of African blood," Johnson declared. "Is it sound policy to make our entire colored population and all other excepted classes citizens of the United States?"

Republicans were taken aback that Gypsies were suddenly transformed into a great national peril as part of the campaign against the amendment. In his definitive book *Reconstruction*, historian Eric Foner cites a bemused Republican senator who observed in 1866: "I have lived in the United States now for many a year and really I have heard more about Gypsies within the past two or three months than I have heard before in my life."

The methods of politics don't change much, even if the targets of demagoguery do.

Epps cites an 1859 oration by Carl Schurz, the German immigrant and Republican leader who helped deliver his community's vote to Abraham Lincoln in 1864. Schurz later became a leading backer of the 14th Amendment.

"All the social and national elements of the civilized world are represented in the new land," Schurz declared. In our nation, "their peculiar characteristics are to be blended together by the all-assimilating power of freedom. This is the origin of the American nationality, which did not spring from one family, one tribe, one country, but incorporates the vigorous elements of all civilized nations on earth."

That is the American tradition and the Republican tradition. Senator Graham, please don't throw it away. ■

— August 5, 2010

## An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

MICHAEL GERSON

# Republicans are ramping up the birthright battle

The final state to ratify the 14th Amendment was Ohio — in September 2003. The Ohio Legislature had passed the amendment in 1867 but rescinded its approval a year later, claiming it was “contrary to the best interests of the white race.” When Ohio finally rectified this embarrassing bit of history, just one legislator — Republican state Rep. Tom Brinkman from Cincinnati — voted against it. His opposition was viewed as an isolated curiosity.

Now another Ohio politician, Rep. John Boehner, the House minority leader, questions the centerpiece commitment of the 14th Amendment: birthright citizenship. He is joined by Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), along with Sens. Jon Kyl (R-Ariz.) and Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.).

The amendment reads: “All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside.” This is not the only place in the Constitution where birth is decisive. Any “natural born citizen” who meets age and residency requirements can be elected president.

Critics of birthright citizenship are in revolt against the plain meaning of words. They sometimes assert that “subject to the jurisdiction thereof” must exclude illegal immigrants. It doesn’t. Undocumented immigrants and their children are fully subject to American laws. The idea of “jurisdiction” had a specific meaning in the congressional debate surrounding approval of the 14th Amendment. “The language was designed,” says historian Garrett Epps, “to exclude two and only two groups: (1)

children of diplomats accredited to the United States and (2) members of Indian tribes who maintained quasi-sovereign status under federal Indian law.”

Advocates for bloodline citizenship respond: How could the authors of the 14th Amendment have intended to extend citizenship to the children of illegal immigrants when, in 1868, America had no laws restricting immigration and thus no illegal immigrants? This betrays a thin knowledge of history. In 1868, there were a variety of federal laws that restricted naturalization to whites and established waiting periods for citizenship.

Civil War America did not lack for unpopular immigrants. The 1860 Census found that 13.2 percent of the U.S. population was foreign-born. The figure today is 12.3 percent. During the debate over the 14th Amendment, Sen. Edgar Cowan of Pennsylvania complained that birthright citizenship would include Gypsies, “who pay no taxes; who never perform military service; who do nothing, in fact, which becomes the citizen.” Others objected that the children of Chinese laborers would be covered. Supporters of the 14th Amendment conceded both cases — and defended them. Said Sen. John Conness of California: “We are entirely ready to accept the provision proposed in this constitutional amendment, that the children born here of Mongolian parents shall be declared by the Constitution of the United States to be entitled to civil rights and to equal protection before the law with others.”

The Radical Republicans who wrote the 14th Amendment were, in fact, quite radical. They were critical not just of

the Confederacy’s view of citizenship but also of the Constitution’s original silence on the issue, which, in their view, betrayed the promise of the Declaration of Independence. Their main goal was expressed in birthright citizenship: to prevent a future majority from stealing the rights of children of any background, as long as they were born in America.

Today’s dispute over birthright citizenship reveals the immigration debate in its sturkst form. Usually, opponents of illegal immigration speak of giving lawbreakers what they deserve. But this does not apply in the case of an infant. Consider two newborn babies at, say, Parkland Hospital in Dallas. One is the child of citizens, the other of illegal immigrants. Critics of birthright citizenship look at the child of immigrants and feel . . . disturbed? Outraged? But why? Do they see a child somehow tainted by illegality? That hardly seems fair. A burden on resources? No more than any other poor child. An alien lacking allegiance? How could they possibly know? Why not a soldier, or an entrepreneur, or, as the Constitution specifically permits, a president?

For nearly a century and a half, Americans have taken the view that these two children at Parkland start their lives as equals. They acquire their rights not because of their parentage or their bloodline or the permission of politicians but because they are born in the United States.

The radical, humane vision of the 14th Amendment can be put another way: No child born in America can be judged unworthy by John Boehner, because each is his equal. ■

— August 13, 2010

## An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

MICHEL MARTIN

# Independent – and disenfranchised

I have lived in the District my entire adult life, and every four years it's the same: The yard signs sprout on my neighbors' lawns, the conversations intensify on my neighborhood e-mail list, at the playground and at the store, and I have to sit on the sidelines with my mouth shut. Why? I can't vote — in the primary, that is — not because I'm a convicted felon, noncitizen or because I don't care. I can't vote because I won't join a political party.

In the District, our nation's capital, that means I and others like me get no respect. Our voter registration cards don't even give us the dignity of calling us what we are, which is independent. They say what we are not: N.P., for no party. That means no candidates or canvassers knock at my door or call my house, unless they are looking for my husband. More to the point, they make no effort to court my vote.

This is wrong. Independents make up as much as 40 percent of the electorate nationally, and, yes, the District is not alone in excluding them from party primaries; according to Openprimaries.org, 33 states allow independents to vote in presidential primaries, and only 21 let them participate in congressional primaries. But Washington is a place full of independent-minded people who care deeply about politics and policy, and it seems particularly indefensible to disenfranchise voters like me in a city whose residents are effectively disenfranchised from a role in national affairs because we lack voting representation on the floor of Congress.

I don't register for a political party and have not for most of my adult

life, mainly as a matter of professional ethics. As a journalist who has covered national politics for most of my career, it would be inappropriate to publicly align myself with one team or another. While some of my colleagues take this to what I consider a ridiculous extreme — abstaining from voting altogether — I don't go that far because too many people around the world have died for the right to vote, and I will never give up that right or take it lightly. But loyalty to country is not the same as loyalty to a political organization, so I observe what I consider to be appropriate restrictions on my political participation: In addition to registering as an independent, I don't give money to candidates, endorse them or display campaign materials on my car or my lawn.

I do pay close attention to the issues, however, because I live in this city and I care about it. I suspect many independents in this city are like me. They are journalists, judges, religious leaders, academics — or just those who, like D.C. Council member David Catania, love their city and follow public affairs but cannot stomach some positions of one national party or another. And while the logic of closed primaries may seem to make sense — party members argue things out among themselves and then put forward their candidates to the general electorate for a final vote — we all know that in this city the general election is a formality. Registered Democrats are the overwhelming majority.

As a result, every four years I have to choose between my professional responsibilities and my responsibility to participate in the life of my city. At

times like these, when the stakes seem very high, that feels like an unacceptable and unfair trade-off. Clearly, that is one reason that, as The Post reported, some 2,600 registered independents and several hundred members of the Statehood and Green parties switched their registrations to vote in Tuesday's primary. Reluctantly, I was one of them. I will be switching back the day the election is over.

Some people resist the idea of open primaries because they think they open the door to partisan mischief-making, but I really don't think that would happen in this city. It's much more likely that the change would elevate the discourse. The leading candidates would have to appeal to people beyond their closed circles of friends, business relationships, frat brothers and sorority sisters, and, frankly, I think they would have to move beyond partisan and racial clichés. Because those who are ideologically driven are more likely members of a party, many of the new voters would be more motivated by local concerns. The candidates would be forced to spend more time talking about the things that matter to them.

At a time when the District wants the rest of the country to acknowledge its right to congressional representation, doesn't it makes sense for the city to give greater voice to thousands of residents who don't love the political parties but do love their city? It is time for the District to let its independents vote. ■

— September 11, 2010

*The writer is host of the NPR news and talk program "Tell Me More."*

An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

# Tea party works to build on momentum

BY AMY GARDNER

• Originally Published September 21, 2010

Fresh off big primary wins in Delaware and Alaska, national “tea party” groups are redirecting the energy of the movement toward the November midterm elections, raising millions of dollars, expanding their advocacy into dozens of congressional races and building voter turnout operations nationwide.

Leaders of the Atlanta-based Tea Party Patriots said they will announce a seven-figure donation Tuesday, from a yet-unnamed person, that the organization will pour into local tea party groups and get-out-the-vote efforts in some of the most competitive congressional races.

FreedomWorks which is headquartered in Washington and endorsed 25 House and Senate candidates during the primary season, said it will expand that list to more than 80. The Tea Party Express, based in Sacramento, is planning its largest national bus tour at the end of October to get conservatives to the polls.

The goal is to keep alive the momentum the movement has generated and to use it to target vulnerable Democratic candidates.

“People are starting to realize that the tea party represents a powerful get-out-the-vote machine,” said Matt Kibbe, president of FreedomWorks. “We’ve got

the most energized voting constituency in the country. This movement has been organizing since before April 2009, and all of that community is energizing and driving public opinion. The establishment is taking us more seriously. There’s nothing like turning out votes in an election that matters.”

The new push illustrates the movement’s transformation since the primaries from a disorganized coalition of fiscally conservative activists to a

Equally uncertain is whether the movement’s success with activist primary voters will play as well with the broader general electorate in November. Most polls show that at least as many registered voters view the tea party unfavorably as favorably.

Perhaps no group is more aware of the divisions within the movement than FreedomWorks, a tea party organizer headed by Richard K. Armey, a former corporate lobbyist and congressman

from Texas who was once House majority leader. FreedomWorks has taken a politically pragmatic approach in deciding which candidates to endorse. In last week’s Senate primary in Delaware, Tea Party Express spent more than \$200,000 on behalf of Christine O’Donnell, who was challenging Rep. Michael N. Castle, the establishment

GOP choice. But FreedomWorks’ leaders declined to back O’Donnell because they didn’t think she could win the general election in November.

Yet FreedomWorks, which focuses primarily on training volunteers and helping them organize phone banks, door-knocking campaigns and other voting-related efforts, is eager to take advantage of the momentum from O’Donnell’s victory—and also from that of Joe Miller, who beat incumbent Lisa Murkowski in Alaska’s Republican Senate primary last month. FreedomWorks endorsed O’Donnell the day after her win, and,



MELINA MARA / THE WASHINGTON POST

**Christine O'Donnell**

AP/ISSAC BREKKEN

**Sharron Angle**

AP/CHRIS MILLER

**Joe Miller**

measurable political force. But the tea party’s rapid growth — along with the influx of cash and political professionals — has led some followers to worry that it risks losing its rebel spirit.

“Many of the grass-roots activists who started this movement 18 months ago, myself included, may look and ask the question ‘Dude, where’s my movement?’” said Judson Phillips, founder of Tea Party Nation, which held the movement’s first large-scale convention this spring and will have another in Nevada next month. “There is no question the movement has changed. The evolution of ‘Big Tea’ is the logical result of where this movement must go.”

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

## An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21

this week, the group plans to announce that it will back the Senate campaigns of Linda McMahon in Connecticut, Carly Fiorina in California and John Raese in West Virginia.

FreedomWorks and other tea party groups are expanding their lists of approved candidates to include more establishment-backed Republicans. The intention is to rally tea party activists behind all Republicans this fall and not just those who identify with the movement.

"We've gone through the primary process," Kibbe said. "I think the tea party has had a tremendous impact on the quality of the candidates coming out of the primaries. But here we are in the race to November 2, and November 2 is all about holding Democrats accountable."

Amy Kremer, chairman of the Tea Party Express, distanced her organization from that general-election strategy, noting that the group identified its "heroes" and "targets" on April 15 — and that it is not wavering from the list.

"There may be some groups that need to reevaluate where they are, but we're

not doing that," she said. "We've helped Joe Miller in Alaska and Sharron Angle in Nevada and Christine O'Donnell in Delaware come across the victory lines,

of the states holding those elections, notably Kentucky, Nevada and Delaware, those candidates have helped Democrats remain competitive in races in which they were expected to struggle.

"We are more competitive in these races because they nominated candidates who are extremists," Schultz said.

Still, Democrats must contend with perhaps the biggest strength of the tea party movement, which is its ability to get conservatives to vote. GOP leaders have bristled at the tea party's willingness to overthrow establishment candidates, but no one doubts the boost that the movement will give Republicans in November.

"That's not a bad trade-off, considering that we have this tremendous energy and enthusiasm moving into the fall," said Brian Walsh, spokesman for the National Republican Senatorial Committee. "I would take any one of our candidates over a candidate on the Democratic side who voted for the stimulus bill, who voted for the health-care bill, and whose message is 'If you vote for me, I'm going to vote for the status quo in Washington.'" ■



Sen. Harry Reid, D-Nev.

Richard K. Armey

and we're behind them 100 percent going into November."

Both national political parties are struggling to adjust to the tea party's continued prominence. Eric Schultz, a spokesman for the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, said the party welcomes the nomination of tea-party-backed candidates in Senate races nationwide. He noted that in most

An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

# Interest-group spending for midterm up fivefold from 2006; many sources secret

BY T. W. FARNAM AND DAN EGGEN

• Originally Published October 4, 2010

Interest groups are spending five times as much on the 2010 congressional elections as they did on the last midterms, and they are more secretive than ever about where that money is coming from.

The \$80 million spent so far by groups outside the Democratic and Republican parties dwarfs the \$16 million spent at this point for the 2006 midterms. In that election, the vast majority of money — more than 90 percent — was disclosed along with donors' identities. This year, that figure has fallen to less than half of the total, according to data analyzed by *The Washington Post*.

The trends amount to a spending frenzy conducted largely in the shadows.

The bulk of the money is being spent by conservatives, who have swamped their Democratic-aligned competition by 7 to 1 in recent weeks. The wave of spending is made possible in part by a series of Supreme Court rulings unleashing the ability of corporations and interest groups to spend money on politics. Conservative operatives also say they are riding the support of donors upset with Democratic policies they perceive as anti-business.

"The outside group spending is primarily being driven by the political climate," said Anthony Corrado, a professor of government at Colby College who studies campaign finance. "Organized groups are looking at great opportunity, and therefore there's great interest to spend money to influence the

election. You've got the possibility of a change in the control of Congress."

The increase in conservative spending has come both from established groups and from groups only a few months old. On the left, major labor groups such as the Service Employees International Union have also ratcheted up their expenditures compared with 2006 but are unable to keep up with groups on the right.

One of the biggest spenders nationwide is a little-known Iowa group called the American Future Fund, which has spent \$7 million on behalf of Republicans in more than two dozen House and Senate races. Donors for the group's ad campaign have not been disclosed in records the group has filed with the Federal Election Commission.

The group recently entered a previously sleepy race in its home state of Iowa, announcing that it would devote up to \$800,000 to campaign against Democratic Rep. Bruce Braley of Waterloo. The campaign kicked off with a commercial alleging that Braley "supports building a mosque at Ground Zero." Braley denies supporting construction of the proposed Islamic cultural center near the World Trade Center site, saying it's a zoning issue for New Yorkers to decide.

The ad, part of a nationwide campaign of similar mosque-themed spots, is the brainchild of Larry McCarthy, a media strategist who gained renown for creating the racially tinged "Willie Horton" commercials against Democratic presidential candidate Michael S. Dukakis in 1988.

"Folks across America should be worried about these anonymous groups that go into an election and try to

buy a favorable result," said Braley spokeswoman Caitlin Legacki. "People have no idea where the money came from. It's difficult to take recourse."

Interest groups spending large amounts on the election are prohibited by law from talking to candidates about their strategy.

Ben Lange, Braley's GOP challenger, denies any connection to the American Future Fund's attacks. "We have no interaction with this group," said Cody Brown, spokesman for Lange. "We're not so much concerned with what these outside groups are doing. We want to have an honest, focused debate on the issues."

Fund officials could not be reached to comment.

## Flexibility for the GOP

Heightened spending by outside groups has given the Republican Party flexibility in choosing which races to focus on. In West Virginia, the GOP recently spent \$1.2 million backing businessman John Raese for the Senate seat long held by Robert C. Byrd, who died in June. The contest had been considered safe for the Democrats, whose candidate, Joe Manchin III, is the state's governor. But Manchin's poll numbers have recently slipped.

While the interest-group money has primarily helped Republicans, Democrats have proved better at raising money for the party itself and for individual candidates. Those donations must, by law, come from individuals and are limited in size. Much of the interest-group

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24

## An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

spending, by contrast, has been based on large contributions from well-heeled donors and corporations.

The Supreme Court cleared the way for unlimited spending by corporations, unions and other interest groups on election ads in its 5 to 4 decision this year in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*. Many interest groups are organized as nonprofits, which are not required to disclose their financial backing, helping fuel the increase in secret donors.

*The Post* analyzed spending numbers that groups are required to report to the FEC, including spending on broadcast ads mentioning a candidate's name within 30 days of a primary and 60 days of the general election. Some expenditures — and donors — are not revealed. Many groups, for example, avoid reporting what they spend on attacks by making a subtle distinction, saying their message is focused on candidates' positions on issues instead of the election itself.

One reason Democrats have benefited less from interest-group spending may be the party's — and President Obama's — message against the role of moneyed interests in Washington. And in his 2008 campaign, Obama discouraged such independent interest groups on the left from forming.

Some Democratic groups have lowered their spending on election ads. The Internet-based advocacy group MoveOn.org will spend roughly the same amount it did in the 2006 midterms, said Executive Director Justin Ruben, but will concentrate on organizing supporters instead of trying to compete on the airwaves.

"We can't possibly match this spending dollar for dollar," Ruben said. "Turnout is big in a midterm, and the best way to affect turnout is person-to-person contact. These groups have a few millionaires, but they can't talk to that many people."

### Organized as nonprofits

Conservative groups such as Americans for Job Security and Crossroads GPS, an arm of the American Crossroads group, co-founded by former George W. Bush administration adviser Karl Rove, are organized as nonprofits and don't have to disclose who is giving them money. Some liberal groups, such as the League of Conservation Voters, an environmental group, are also nonprofits but raise money on a much smaller scale.

One major player this year is the 60 Plus Association, an Alexandria-based group that bills itself as the conservative alternative to the AARP seniors group. In 2008, the group reported less than \$2 million in revenue, most of it from direct-mail contributions. This year the group has spent \$7 million on election-related ads, according to its FEC reports. It also funded a \$9 million campaign against Obama's health-care overhaul in 2009.

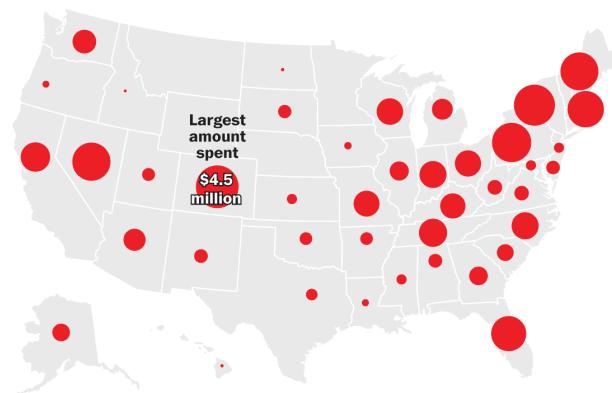
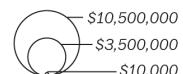
### Stealth spending

The 2010 election is drawing more money from interest groups and becoming the most secretive ever. Over half of the money interest groups have spent for House and Senate races has come from donors undisclosed to the public.

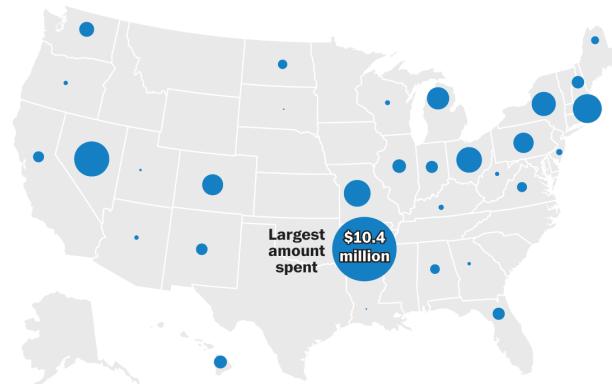
Undisclosed donor amount as a percentage of total

### Money spent on behalf of congressional candidates in the 2010 election

**Republican-aligned interest groups** have spent more money and become involved in more races than their Democratic rivals, especially in the Northeast. The largest amount has been spent in Colorado's Senate race.



**Democratic groups** have matched conservative spending in a handful of races, especially in Nevada, where Senate Majority Leader Harry M. Reid is threatened. The most money was put into a primary fight between two Democratic Senate candidates in Arkansas.



NOTE: Includes spending on direct election activity and broadcast ads mentioning candidates within 30 days of a primary and 60 days of the general election.

SOURCE: Washington Post analysis of Federal Election Commission filings.

TIM FARNAM AND CRISTINA RIVERO/THE WASHINGTON POST

CONTINUED ON PAGE 25

---

---

---

## An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

---

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 24

The group is somewhat renowned for its take-no-prisoners approach to advertising, alleging in recent spots that multiple Democrats have "betrayed seniors." The journalistic research Web site *PolitiFact.com* called the ads "highly misleading" in describing the funding outlook for Medicare.

But 60 Plus spokesman Tom Kise defended the ads and said the group's rapidly expanded budget was due to widespread opposition to Democratic policies on issues affecting senior citizens.

"We've never had this kind of threat to seniors before," Kise said. "We are in unprecedented times, which calls for unprecedented measures."

In earlier years, 60 Plus received significant grants from foundations connected to Pfizer and other major drugmakers, according to AARP. Kise declined to provide details about the group's donors but said it is not taking money from the pharmaceutical industry. ■

## An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

**Academic Content Standards**

*This lesson addresses academic content standards of Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia.*

**Maryland****Social Studies, Political Science:**

Analyze the methods used by individuals and groups to shape governmental policy and actions

- c. Describe how political parties and special interest groups influence and change government policy, such as third parties, and non-governmental organizations
- d. Analyze the role of media and public opinion in shaping government policy and action  
(Standard 1, Topic B, Grade 7)

**Social Studies, Political Science:**

Analyze the influence of individuals and groups on shaping public policy

- a. Analyze the influence of the media on political life,
- b. Evaluate ways the citizens should use, monitor and influence the formation and implementation of public policy,
- c. Examine the roles and functions of political parties in the American system of government (Standard 1, Topic B, Grade 8)

**Virginia**

**GOVT.1:** The student will demonstrate mastery of the social studies skills responsible citizenship requires, including the ability to

- a) analyze primary and secondary source documents;
- b) create and interpret maps, diagrams, tables, charts, graphs, and spreadsheets;
- c) analyze political cartoons, political advertisements, pictures, and other graphic media;
- d) distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information;
- e) evaluate information for accuracy, separating fact from opinion;

**GOVT.6:** The student will demonstrate knowledge of local, state, and national elections by

- a) describing the organization, role, and constituencies of political parties;
- b) examining campaign funding and spending;
- c) analyzing the influence of media coverage, campaign advertising, public opinion polls, and Internet-based communications on elections;
- d) evaluating the degree to which interest groups influence political life;

**GOVT.7:** The student will demonstrate knowledge of the organization and powers of the national government by

- c) examining the ways individuals and groups exert influence on the national government.

Standards of Learning currently in effect for Virginia Public Schools can be found online at [www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards\\_docs/index.shtml](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/sol/standards_docs/index.shtml)

**Washington, D.C.**

**Social Studies, Government:** Students evaluate issues regarding campaigns for national, state and local elective offices.

1. Analyze the origin, development and role of political parties, noting those occasional periods in which there was only one major party or were more than two major parties. (Elections and the Political Process, Grade 12, 12.6)

**Social Studies, Government:** Students evaluate and take and defend positions on the influence of the media on American political life.

2. Describe the roles of broadcast, print and electronic media, including the Internet, as means of communication in American politics.
3. Explain how public officials use the media to communicate with the citizenry and to shape public opinion. (Elections and the Political Process, Grade 12, 12.7)