

“PARTY ON”

Listen to the ROOM 2B podcast **PARTY ON** at mrreview.org and complete the following exercise. Be prepared to discuss with your classmates.

1. Explain the primary goal of a political party.
Explain the primary goal of an interest group.
2. Explain the functions of a political party. Prioritize your list.
3. This podcast has prioritized the classic research of a political scientist by the name of E.E. Schattschneider. Explain Schattschneider's primary interest in political parties. Investigate criticism of contemporary political parties. Find three (3) authoritative quotes that counter Schattschneider's admiration for political parties.
4. Complete the **PRACTICE SCOTUS COMPARISON QUESTION** below:

A Connecticut law enacted in 1956 stipulated that only the registered members of a political party could participate in that party's primary election; unaffiliated voters could not participate in a party's primary. In 1984, the Republican Party of Connecticut adopted a party rule opening its primary election to unaffiliated voters, contravening the 1956 statute. The party brought suit in federal district court against Julia Tashjian in her capacity as Connecticut's secretary of state, alleging that the 1956 statute infringed upon the party's associational rights as guaranteed by the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution. A federal district court found in favor of the Republican Party, and the United States Court of Appeals for the 2nd Circuit affirmed that decision. The case was appealed to the Supreme Court of the United States, which heard oral argument in the case on October 8, 1986.

On December 10, 1986, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled 5-4 to affirm the appellate court decision, finding that the Connecticut statute in question "impermissibly burdens the rights of the [Republican] Party and its members protected by the First and Fourteenth Amendments." Associate Justice Thurgood Marshall penned the court's majority opinion, which was joined by Associate Justices William J. Brennan, Jr., Byron White, Harry Blackmun, and Lewis Powell. Marshall wrote the following in the court's opinion:

"The State argues that its statute is well designed to save the Republican Party from undertaking a course of conduct destructive of its own interests. But on this point 'even if the State were correct, a State, or a court, may not constitutionally substitute its own judgment for that of the Party.' The Party's determination of the boundaries of its own association, and of the structure which best allows it to pursue its political goals, is protected by the Constitution. We conclude that the State's enforcement, under these circumstances, of its closed primary system burdens the First Amendment rights of the Party. The interests which the appellant adduces in support of the statute are insubstantial, and accordingly the statute, as applied to the Party in this case, is unconstitutional."

Source: Ballotpedia. *Tashjian v. Republican Party of Connecticut* (1986)

- A. Identify a clause of the U.S. Constitution interpreted by the Supreme Court in both *Tashjian v. Rep. Party* (1986) and *Gitlow v. NY* (1925) used to determine the reach of political assembly.
- B. Based on the constitutional clause identified in part A, explain how the facts of *Tashjian v. Rep. Party* (1986) and *Gitlow v. NY* (1925) required the court to also rely on the Fourteenth Amendment.
- C. Explain how the Founders advanced their view of political parties within the original constitution.