

Utah Suffrage

Suffrage is the right to vote in elections and in the approval or rejection of proposed legislation. Utah played a significant role in the history of women's suffrage. Women in the Utah Territory gained the right to vote in 1870, making it one of the first places in the United States to grant this right. However, this right was revoked in 1887 by legislation aimed at ending polygamy, which also stripped women of their voting rights. This classroom catalog entry explores the historical roots of suffrage in Utah and examines key moments of debate between delegates during the Constitutional Convention of Utah.

Essential Question

What is suffrage and why is it important to democracy?

Vocabulary

Suffrage—The right to vote in political elections.

Enfranchised—The privilege or right to vote.

Petition—A formal written request, typically one signed by many people, appealing to authority with respect to a particular cause.

Constitutional Convention—A gathering of delegates who share the purpose of creating a constitution.

Polygamy—The practice or custom of having more than one wife or husband at the same time.