

OPPOSING VIEWPOINTS ON UTAH SUFFRAGE

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Debates in the Utah Constitutional Convention on Women's Suffrage

March 28, 1895, Utah State Constitutional Convention

***Note:** This is an excerpt from a debate given on the topic of Women's Suffrage by B.H Roberts during the Utah State Constitutional Convention. The full debate text can be found at this jump code: e698765*

[Mr. ROBERTS:]...if the women of this Territory can see that the enfranchisement of them now, the persistence of doing it, will endanger the attainment of our hopes, it will be a movement worthy of the women of this State, if they were willing to petition this honorable body of men not to attempt the enfranchisement of women, if in their judgment it would endanger statehood itself. It is a sacrifice that I believe the women of this Territory are capable of making. Of course, I shall not urge it. I would not so much as ask it. It would be vain to do so. But, nevertheless, I believe it would be wise and patriotic to do it.

Is this argument for or against including Women's Suffrage in the Utah Constitution? Cite pieces of the debate as evidence towards one or the other.

April 01, 1895, Utah State Constitutional Convention

***Note:** This is an excerpt from a debate given on the topic of Women's Suffrage by Heber M. Wells during the Utah State Constitutional Convention. The full debate text can be found at this jump code: e698843*

[Mr. WELLS:] Let me ask the gentleman who made this argument if he, would be willing to let his neighbor vote for him on a question that affected his pocket? Now, if the woman who owns property ought to have the right to vote upon that financial question, what reason is there for denying her the right to vote for the men who are to assess the taxes upon her property? The right of representation to all persons who are taxed is in my opinion an inherent right and a right which in this country was declared over a hundred years ago to be formidable to tyrants only.

Is this argument for or against including Women's Suffrage in the Utah Constitution? Cite pieces of the debate as evidence towards one or the other.

March 28, 1895, Utah State Constitutional Convention

***Note:** This is an excerpt from a debate given on the topic of Women's Suffrage by Andrew S. Anderson during the Utah State Constitutional Convention. The full debate text can be found at this jump code: e698770*

[Mr. ANDERSON:] Mankind have advanced in civilization in the same ratio that women have been accorded liberty and equal rights. [. . .] Is not a sister or a wife as greatly interested in good government as a brother or a husband, and do they not suffer fully as much from the effects of bad laws and the acts of corrupt officials? If so, why should they not have a voice equally with the men in making the laws and electing the officials. I say, gentlemen, there can be no just reason for denying them that right or privilege.

Is this argument for or against including Women's Suffrage in the Utah Constitution? Cite pieces of the debate as evidence towards one or the other.

March 29, 1895, Utah State Constitutional Convention

***Note:** This is an excerpt from a debate given on the topic of Women's Suffrage by Anthony Canute Lund during the Utah State Constitutional Convention. The full debate text can be found at this [jump code](#): e698794*

[Mr. LUND:] Woman suffrage needed no further denunciation before the good women of our city. [. . .] not that it is expedient, not that our women of Utah are less capable of a change of heart than the men, but because suffrage with eligibility to office as are recommended in this clause will thrust the wife and mother from the home to officiate in public places. This means only a breaking of the home. Who will not admit this? Who will say that a mother's place can be filled by another? The great and good civilization always comes through great and good mothers. [Applause.]

Is this argument for or against including Women's Suffrage in the Utah Constitution? Cite pieces of the debate as evidence towards one or the other.

EVALUATE

Based on the arguments above, would you have voted to include women's suffrage (women's right to vote) in the Utah Constitution? Why or why not?

RIGHT OF SUFFRAGE AS WRITTEN IN THE UTAH CONSTITUTION

***Note:** This is an excerpt from the final draft of the Utah State Constitution created during the Convention of 1895. The full Constitution text can be found at this jump code: [e696986](#)*

ELECTIONS AND RIGHT OF SUFFRAGE

Section 1. The rights of citizens of the State of Utah to vote and hold office shall not be denied or abridged on account of sex. Both male and female citizens of this State shall enjoy equally all civil, political and religious rights and privileges.

PREPARE FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

What is suffrage and why is it important to democracy?

Although these debates occurred over 100 years ago, what role have they played in US History and the history of the State of Utah?

Can you think of examples of challenges to voting rights in the United States today?