

Moderate

Samuel Jones

Queens County

Born: July 26, 1734, Oyster Bay, Long Island

You are Samuel Jones, born July 26, 1734, in Oyster Bay, Long Island. You read law under noted attorney William Smith and were admitted to the bar in 1760. Little else is known of your early life except that you twice married in the 1760s, producing five children by your second wife, Cornelia Haring. In the mid-1780s you and Alexander Hamilton represented New York in its border dispute with Massachusetts. And in 1786, you and Richard Varick produced a compendium of all New York state laws then in existence. Also in that year, you were first elected to the state assembly representing Queens County.

This past spring, the voters of Queens favored you as well with election to the New York State Ratifying Convention meeting in Poughkeepsie to accept or reject the Constitution. You received 517 votes, the second-most of the four-person delegation.

Queens is Antifederalist territory, and you ran on the Antifederalist ticket. But you are nevertheless a Moderate, open to the idea of ratification and frightened at the prospect of New York's remaining outside the union.

Game Play Instructions

Consult the Moderate role sheet for your primary instructions.

Moderates as a group are intended to be fair-minded judges of the speeches and proposals offered by others, honest brokers without interests or objectives of their own. In fact, the power lies with you to determine if the Constitution is ratified or rejected. The formal factions, Federalists and Antifederalists, are equal in number and will largely cancel each other out.

But you may divide into opposing parties, because among you are two delegates resolved to move the Moderates into the Federalist or Antifederalist camp — Jonathan N. Havens for the Federalists and Jacobus Swartwout for the Antifederalists. Listen to the liaisons and listen to the arguments. Then cast your votes, issue by issue, favoring what you believe to be the better arguments. You may go back and forth; strength on one issue might not carry over to another. Your best judgment is what the game is asking of you.

Also your participation in debate: you double your vote on any issue to which you make a substantive contribution. Needless to say, participation will improve your grade.

Because you don't write and deliver speeches (not enough time), you instead take a short exam before the start of the game, based on the Gordon Wood reading found in the game book. The exam winner(s) casts an extra vote throughout the game, including the final vote to ratify or reject the Constitution.