

MODERATE

David Hedges

Suffolk County

Born: June 15, 1744, East Hampton, Long Island

You are Deacon David Hedges, born June 15, 1744, to Daniel Hedges and Sarah Sandford Hedges in East Hampton, Long Island, New York. You married Charity Howell and set about producing a family of ten.

During the Revolution, and though but a deacon, you conducted services and delivered sermons at Bridgehampton Church because no minister was available. At the church door following services on July 2, 1775, twenty-one men of the congregation enlisted in one of the first companies organized for the defense of the colony.

A relative described you as "physically powerful and capable of great endurance." You once herded cattle to the New York market and sold them for 1,000 pounds. Fearing bandits on the way back, you set out at daybreak and rode the 100 miles home, stopping only once for refreshment and arriving at 9:00 in the evening. None the worse for wear were you, but the horse, said this relative, "was long disabled."

Being a Suffolk farmer of substance, you have had a public career comparably substantial. For twenty years you were supervisor of Southampton town. In 1775 you were elected to the fourth Provincial Congress, the one that converted into a convention for the purpose of writing the state constitution. Under that constitution you have twice served in the state assembly (1786–87). And this past spring, the voters of Suffolk County reelected you to the office, as well as elected you a delegate to the New York State Ratifying Convention meeting in Poughkeepsie to accept or reject the Constitution.

Suffolk is Antifederalist territory, and you ran on the Antifederalist ticket. But you are more nationally minded than the standard Antifederalist. Indeed, you are 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 two 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.