

Wyandotte Constitutional Convention, 1859

Selected Bibliography

Instructions: Please feel free to take this page with you at the conclusion of the event.

To learn more about the people, events and issues featured in the program **Wyandotte Constitutional Convention, 1859**, see these historical sources:

Berwanger, Eugene H. *The Frontier against Slavery: Western Anti-Negro Prejudice and the Slavery Extension Controversy*. Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2002.

Blackwell, Marilyn S., and Kristen T. Oertel. *Frontier Feminist: Clarina Howard Nichols and the Politics of Motherhood*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2010.

Cecil-Fronsman, Bill. "Advocate the Freedom of White Men, As Well As That of the Negroes': The Kansas Free State and Antislavery Westerns in Territorial Kansas." *Kansas History* 20 (Summer 1997): 102-115.

Cecil-Fronsman, Bill. "Death to all Yankees and Traitors in Kansas': The Squatter Sovereign and the Defense of Slavery in Kansas." *Kansas History* 16 (Spring 1993): 22-33.

Cheatham, Gary L. "'Slavery All the Time or Not At All': The Wyandotte Constitution Debate, 1859-1861." *Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains* 21 (Autumn 1998): 168-187. The electoral success of the Wyandotte Constitution in October 1859 changed the nature of the political debate in Kansas Territory but did not mean an end to the "opposition."

Dean, Virgil W., editor. *Territorial Kansas Reader*. Topeka: Kansas State Historical Society and the Territorial Sesquicentennial Commission, 2005. The anthology includes articles from *Kansas History*'s special 2004 issue and more.

Elbert, E. Duane. "The English Bill: An Attempt to Compromise the Lecompton Dilemma." *Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains* 1 (Winter 1978): 219-234. Introduced by Illinois congressman William H. English, this bill provided for the August 1858 referendum on the constitution and managed to "soft pedal Kansas as a national issue, and thus it helped delay the national holocaust for a few more years."

Elliott, R. G. "The Big Springs Convention." *Kansas Historical Collection, 1903-1904* 8 (1904): 362-377. First significant free-state assembly, September 1855, called to counter actions of "bogus" legislature and led to the founding of the Topeka Movement.

Etcheson, Nicole. *Bleeding Kansas: Contested Liberty in the Civil War Era*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004.

Gaeddert, G. Raymond. *The Birth of Kansas*. Lawrence: University of Kansas Publications, 1940. This detailed and reliable account of political events leading to Kansas statehood emphasizes the Wyandotte convention and constitution of 1859.

Gower, Calvin W. "Kansas Territory and Its Boundary Question: 'Big Kansas' or 'Little Kansas.'" *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 33 (Spring 1967): 1-12. Gower examines the pros and cons of this issue; the former would have retained the Continental Divide as the state's western border and extend its northern boundary line to the Platte River.

Johannsen, Robert W. "The Lecompton Constitutional Convention: An Analysis of its Membership." *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 23 (Autumn 1957): 225-243. This 1857 pro-slave gathering sparked a major national debate and split the national Democratic Party.

Kansas Constitutional Convention: A Reprint of the Proceedings and Debates of the Convention which Framed the Constitution of Kansas at Wyandotte in July, 1859. Topeka: Kansas State Printing Plant, 1920. This valuable source is available on line Google Books.

Martin, George W. "The Boundary Lines of Kansas." *Kansas Historical Collection, 1909-1910* 11 (1910): 53-74. Martin examines the background and delegate discussions that led to the establishment of the state's present borders at the Wyandotte Constitutional Convention of 1859.

Morrison, Michael. *Slavery and the American West: The Eclipse of Manifest Destiny and the Coming of the Civil War*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.

Oertel, Kristen Tegtmeier. *Bleeding Borders: Race, Gender, and Violence in Pre-Civil War Kansas*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2009.

Oertel, Kristen Tegtmeier. "Clarina Irene Howard Nicholas: 'A Large-Hearted, Brave, Faithful Woman.'" in *John Brown to Bob Dole: Movers and Shakers in Kansas History*, ed. Virgil W. Dean (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2006), 56-67.

"Papers Relating to the Constitutions of Kansas, 1855-1861." *Kansas Historical Collections, 1897-1900* 6 (1900): 384-393. An elaborate, useful name index of sources for all four conventions and their constitution: Topeka, Lecompton, Leavenworth, and Wyandotte.

Perdue, Rose M. "The Sources of the Constitutions of Kansas." *Kansas Historical Collection, 1901-1902* 7 (1902): 130-151. Perdue's remains an important work, evaluating as it does the role of various delegates at the Wyandotte Convention and

their ties to earlier states of residence and comparing earlier constitutions with the one adopted for Kansas, July 1859.

Price, David H. "Sectionalism in Nebraska: When Kansas Considered Annexing Southern Nebraska, 1856-1860." *Nebraska History* 53 (Winter 1972): 446-462. The movement to make Nebraska south of the Platte River a part of Kansas Territory began as early as 1856 under the leadership of Sterling Morton, and was championed by the twelve-member honorary delegation from the region that attended the Wyandotte Convention in July 1859.

Robinson, Charles. "Topeka and her Constitution." *Kansas Historical Collections, 1897-1900* 6 (1900): 291-305. Personal remembrance of a principal reflecting on Kansas's first free-state constitution, drafted by a Topeka convention in October 1855.

Simpson, Benjamin F. "The Wyandotte Constitution." *Kansas Historical Collections 1875-1878* 1-2 (1881): 236-247. At age 23 years, Simpson was the youngest delegate to the 1859 convention; these are his reflections on some of his fellow constitution makers. An address by Simpson, "The Wyandotte Convention," can be found in the *Kansas Historical Collections* 3 (1883-1885): 385-389.

Stampf, Kenneth M. *America in 1857: A Nation on the Brink*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990. Giving considerable attention given to the LeCompton movement and its nationwide influence, Stampf illuminated President Buchanan's belief if the Kansas question could be resolved "harmony between the sections" would be restored.

Thacher, T. Dwight. "The Leavenworth Constitutional Convention." *Kansas Historical Collections, 1883-1885* 3 (1886): 5-15. Thacher, a convention delegate from Lawrence, explains the rationale for this 1858 convention, Kansas' third; see also his "The Rejected Constitutions," 436-448.

Waters, Joseph G. "Fifty Years of the Wyandotte Constitution." *Kansas Historical Collection, 1909-1910* 11 (1910): 47-52. Waters holds that "conservatism of other states" was reflected in this document despite Kansas's extraordinary beginnings and, although generally a good instrument, "It was a mistake not to include woman suffrage."



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