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## **Nov. 12 Smithsonian Saturday Program at Cultural Heritage Center to focus on women of the West**

PIERRE, S.D. – The next Smithsonian Saturday program at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre will be held Saturday, Nov. 12 at 2 p.m. CDT; it will focus on what it means to be a woman in the American West and what's next for women in America.

The featured program is entitled "The Women of the American West Don't Take No for an Answer," and it was originally broadcast by the National Museum of American History on Jan. 14, 2015. There is no fee to attend this program, but regular admission fees apply to visit the museum exhibits.

The term "Wild West" often evokes images of men—the cowboys and outlaws immortalized in film, TV, radio and print. But the West was a place where women could bend, break and stretch the rules, too. By 1914, nearly every state west of the Mississippi had granted women suffrage; it took three more years for any eastern state to enfranchise them. The West took the lead when it came to divorce statutes (and instituting no-fault divorce), as well as in the election of women to higher offices. In 1999, Arizona swore in an unprecedented five women to top executive positions.

Are gender roles more flexible in the West? Have women had different opportunities here than in other regions? Former Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor and Girl Scouts USA CEO Anna Maria Chávez—both native Arizonans—discuss what it means to be a Western woman in this program.

"We are really excited to offer this program," said Jay Smith, museum director for the South Dakota State Historical Society. "This is but one of many discussions taking place around the nation about women in history and in contemporary society."

The last "Smithsonian Saturday" program in 2016 will be held Saturday, Dec. 3. The program will feature work being conducted on historical topics in conjunction with the Smithsonian Institution.

The South Dakota State Historical Society became a Smithsonian Affiliate in January 2013 and is the only affiliate in South Dakota.

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### ***About the South Dakota State Historical Society***

*The South Dakota State Historical Society is a division of the Department of Education. The State Historical Society, an Affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, is headquartered*

*at the South Dakota Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre. The center houses the society's world-class museum, the archives, and the historic preservation, publishing and administrative/development offices. Call (605) 773-3458 or visit [www.history.sd.gov](http://www.history.sd.gov) for more information. The society also has an archaeology office in Rapid City; call (605) 394-1936 for more information.*

**About Smithsonian Affiliations**

*Established in 1996, Smithsonian Affiliations is a national outreach program that develops long-term collaborative partnerships with museums, educational and cultural organizations to enrich communities with Smithsonian resources. The long-term goal of Smithsonian Affiliations is to facilitate a two-way relationship among Affiliate organizations and the Smithsonian Institution to increase discovery and inspire lifelong learning in communities across America. More information about the Smithsonian Affiliations program and Affiliate activity is available at <https://affiliations.si.edu>.*