

Election Day

By Dunston-Weiler Lithographic Company

This 1909 anti-suffrage postcard depicts a woman going to vote on election day while her “suffering” husband takes care of their children. A note on the back is hand-written: “Dear Mrs. Payne, don’t get insulted about this card it is all I have to send. I will want ten doz. eggs anyway if no more. Mrs. R.”

Many of Oregon’s male voters opposed giving women the right to vote. Harvey W. Scott, the editor of the *Oregonian*, argued before the 1900 election that women were less deliberative than men and would vote recklessly. He also contended that it would be inappropriate for women to step outside of their traditional roles as mothers and wives. Scott stated that “woman’s duties lie in the home; man’s duties lie in the outer world.”

The leader of the Oregon’s women’s suffrage movement was Scott’s older sister, Abigail Scott Duniway. Duniway worked for forty years for an amendment to Oregon’s constitution that would allow women to vote. She and other activists succeeded in getting a proposed amendment onto state-wide ballots five times, in 1884, 1900, 1906, 1908, and 1912, when it finally passed. At the age of 79, Duniway became the first Oregon woman to register to vote. Congress passed the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1919, giving women the right to vote nationally.

Further Reading: Nash, Lee. "Abigail versus Harvey: Sibling Rivalry in the Oregon Campaign for Woman Suffrage," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 98, 1997: 134-63.

Ward, Jean M. and Elaine A. Maveety, eds. *Yours for Liberty: Selections from Abigail Scott Duniway's Suffrage Newspaper*. Corvallis, Oreg., 2000.

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