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## Nursing and Health Care Among Mormon Women: An Analysis of the Relief Society Magazine, 1914-1930

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Nursing and Health Care Among Mormon Women: An Analysis  
of the Relief Society Magazine, 1914-1930

A Thesis

Presented to the

College of Nursing

Brigham Young University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirement for the Degree

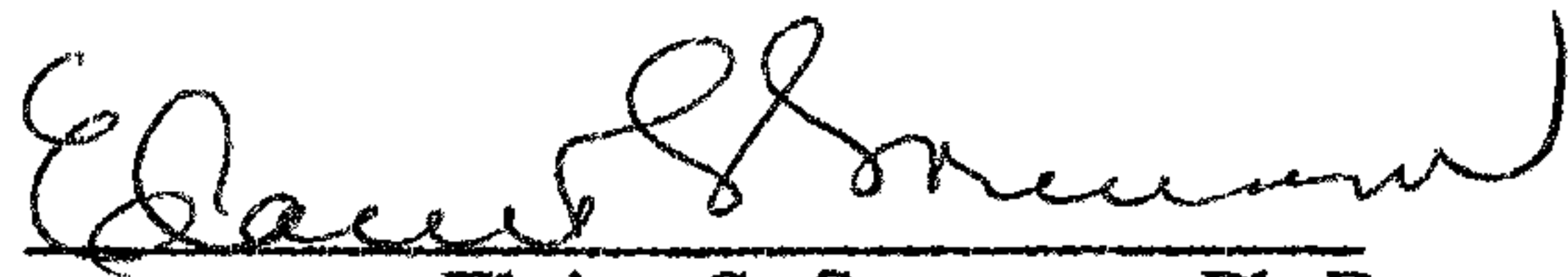
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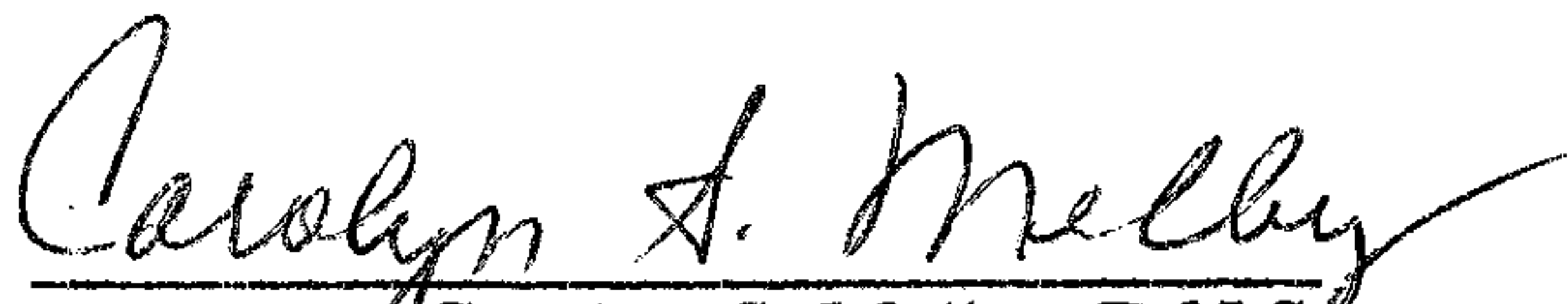
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August 1993

This thesis by Sarah Walker Barney is accepted in its present form by the College of Nursing of Brigham Young University as satisfying the thesis requirement for the degree Master of Science.



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## CHAPTER I

### Introduction and Literature Review

#### Introduction

##### The problem

Women have long taken responsibility for care of the sick; indeed, "women have nursed the sick since time immemorial" (Duffy, 1979, p. 279). While some researchers have studied nursing and its evolution as a profession (for examples see: Kalisch & Kalisch, 1978; Melosh, 1982, 1984; Reverby, 1984, 1987), the role that certain groups of women have played in providing nursing and health care within their communities has not been fully illuminated. This study's aim was to explore the nursing and health care roles and activities of a unique group of women, members of the Relief Society of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Thus far, Mormon histories that have dealt with the health care activities of Mormon women have focused on physicians and midwives (see examples: Arrington, 1976; Casterline, 1978; Noall, 1974; Rugh, 1978; Stone, 1978; Waters, 1978; White, 1978), and while the existence of nursing has been acknowledged by some Mormon historians (see: Alexander, 1986; Blumell, 1979; Derr, 1987b; Hefner, 1982), direct examination of this role has been limited.

##### Purpose of study

The purpose of this study was to explore the nursing and health care activities of Mormon women, through analysis of the periodical produced by and for these women, the Relief Society Magazine. The period of study encompassed the years of 1914 through 1930. The Relief Society was selected to represent the culture of Mormon women because it was highly organized in its activities and because the existence the Relief Society Magazine offered a medium through which to explore the organization's interests and activities. Furthermore, the Relief Society shouldered primary



responsibility for social welfare within the Church in this pre-Depression period, and therefore, had a significant interest in health and nursing (Blumell, 1979; Derr, 1987a).

#### Overview of the Church and the Relief Society .

By 1914, the beginning of the study period, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints had weathered many challenges. The main body of the Church, which had migrated to the Great Basin in 1847 to escape religious persecution, had many ideological battles with the United States government. Many of these battles were a result of the hostility that existed between the Church and the federal government over the doctrine of plural marriage (polygamy). In addition, in the years following its migration to the Great Basin, the Church had attempted to remain economically and politically isolated from the nation and had aroused the suspicion and mistrust of government leaders (Arrington & Bitton, 1992).

The Congress of the United States attacked the Church through its staunch belief and practice of polygamy and it enacted the Edmunds Act of 1882 and the Edmunds-Tucker Act of 1887. This legislation disrupted the Mormon religious, economic and political system. Church property with a value over \$50,000 was seized and redistributed to district schools in the territory, polygamists were arrested and prosecuted, and all Mormons, nonpolygamists as well as polygamists, were disenfranchised (Arrington & Bitton, 1992).

When Church President Wilford Woodruff declared an end to polygamy in the Manifesto of 1890, Utah and the Church began to have more peaceful relations with the federal government:

Between 1894 and 1896 the church's property was returned by joint resolution of Congress. . . . In return, Mormon leaders never attempted to reassert pervasive control over the territorial economy. The People's party, the Mormon political instrument in territorial elections, was dissolved. Mormon voters were advised to

join either the Republican or the Democratic party. The process of "Americanization" was formalized in 1894, when Congress passed the enabling act permitting Utah to form a state government (Arrington & Bitton, 1992, p. 184).

By 1896, Utah was admitted to the Union. Though the Church had once tried to isolate itself, religiously, politically and economically from the nation, by the late 1800s, "the ecclesiastical organization. . . was no longer a political rival to the country" (Campbell, 1987, p. 321).

In spite of the changes and challenges it faced, the Church has remained a unique religious organization. One of its unusual features has been the existence of its women's organization, the Relief Society .

The Relief Society was founded in 1842 when several women in the Mormon community of Nauvoo, Illinois, made plans to form a women's service organization that would meet the needs of the poor of the community and provide assistance in the building of the Nauvoo Temple. They asked Eliza R. Snow to draft a constitution for the proposed society. When a draft of the bylaws was shown to the Prophet Joseph Smith, he commended the constitution and the women of the Church for their charitable desires and explained to them that in the Church, they should be organized "under the priesthood after a pattern of the priesthood" (Kimball, 1884, p. 51). Therefore, he "organize[d] women as only a prophet of God could, according to priesthood patterns God had revealed to him" (Derr, Cannon & Beecher, 1992, p. 41) on March 17, 1842, and proclaimed that the Church was "never perfectly organized until the women were thus organized" (Kimball, 1884, p. 51).

The Relief Society was later disbanded with the Mormon migration to Utah and, some suggest, because of dissension over the doctrine of plural marriage. It was not formally reorganized as a church-wide entity until 1867 (Arrington & Bitton, 1992; Derr, 1987b).

From the time of its reorganization in 1867 through the 1930s, the Relief Society was the primary instrument for Church welfare and charity work. The Relief Society cooperated with local, state and national organizations to advance its charitable goals. The organization "linked up with prominent social agencies that [were] striving earnestly, sympathetically and intelligently for the alleviation of sorrow and suffering in the world" ("Did The Charter", 1927, p. 119). After 1930, the impact of the Depression changed the nature of Church welfare and altered the focus of Relief Society work, as the Church developed and adopted new programs to meet the economic difficulties faced by members of the Church (see: Blumell, 1979; Derr, 1987a).

#### The Relief Society Magazine

Mormons have been prolific in their production of periodicals (Alexander, 1986; Arrington & Bitton, 1992), however, only Conder's (1985) master's thesis utilized these publications as a tool for revealing Mormon culture. The Relief Society Magazine provided the official vehicle for the membership and the leadership of the Relief Society to communicate plans, report activities, and evaluate progress in health and nursing activities.

The Relief Society Magazine began publication in 1914, but was called the Relief Society Bulletin in that first year. In 1915 its format was expanded, its name was changed, and the twelve 1914 issues of the Bulletin were considered Volume I of the Magazine (Lyman, 1931). The Relief Society continued to publish an issue every month until the magazine was discontinued in 1970 and replaced by "a new magazine that would bring interests of men and women of the Church together" (Clark, Cazier & Hafen, 1982, p. xi).

The Relief Society Magazine was wholly Church owned and was acknowledged as the official organ of the Relief Society, replacing the semi-autonomous, quasi-official,

privately owned Woman's Exponent (Alexander, 1986; Arrington & Bitton, 1992). The nature of the magazine as an official publication may present a limitation to this study because the magazine may reflect only those programs that were ultimately approved by the hierarchy of the Church. However, Conder (1985) suggested that the Relief Society Magazine, though Church owned, was exclusively operated and directed by the female leadership of the Relief Society.

The magazine's purpose was not only to disseminate instructions from the Relief Society General Board, although it did function as a "conduit for official directives and messages" (Derr, Cannon & Beecher, 1992, p. 190), but also to receive "reports of Relief Society activities from the stakes and missions" of the Church (Lyman, 1931, p. 74). Therefore, the Relief Society Magazine provided a medium for two-way communication between the leadership and the membership of the Society. By 1917, the magazine was received by 12,190 subscribers or one-fourth of the Society's membership (Derr, Cannon & Beecher, 1992). By 1931, the Relief Society Magazine's monthly circulation had increased to 23,000 (Lyman, 1931).

Several women served as editors of the Relief Society Magazine from 1914 through 1930: Susa Young Gates from 1914 to 1922; Amy Brown Lyman for eight months between 1922 and 1923; Clarissa S. Williams (then president of the Relief Society) and Alice L. Reynolds from 1923 to 1930 (Lyman, 1931). The communication lines opened by the magazine stretched around the world. In 1931, Amy Brown Lyman reported that the Relief Society had branches in "forty-three of the forty-eight states of the Union, in Canada, Mexico, in most of the European countries, in Asia Minor, in South Africa, and in the following Pacific Islands: Hawaii, New Zealand, Australia, Samoa, Tahiti, and Tonga" (Lyman, 1931, p. 15). The membership of the Relief Society in 1930 was 64,225 (Lyman, 1931, p. 15).

### Review of Literature

Historians have noted that nursing has been seen as an extension of a woman's "natural" nurturing tendencies, an aspect of her womanly obligations. Reverby (1987) stated that nursing has been grounded in the belief that care of the sick is part of a woman's duty to her family and to her community. The founder of modern nursing, Florence Nightingale, said that "every woman is a nurse" (Nightingale, 1860, p. 3);, and more recently, nursing historian Barbara Melosh stated that "nursing has always been a woman's job" (Melosh, 1984, p.482). This job has belonged to Mormon women as well. The work of Godfrey, Godfrey and Derr (1982), contains numerous accounts of the efforts of pioneer women to care for sick children, injured men, and traveling women.

Members of the early Church relied primarily on faith healing when illness occurred. At that time, doctors were scarce and poorly trained. When they were available, they were rarely called because some Church leaders had expressed a profound distrust of physicians (Bush, 1986). Members of the Church were advised to rely on God to heal their maladies rather than depend on the prescriptions of men (Bush 1986; Noall, 1974).

In those early years, women, as well as men, anointed and blessed the sick (Bushman, 1976; Godfrey, Godfrey & Derr, 1982; Newell, 1981; Newell, 1987). In fact, Newell (1987) stated that "women were as likely to heal or be healed as were men" (p. 112). Nevertheless, until health was restored, nursing care remained a necessity, and female family members usually were the providers of this service. When additional assistance or expertise was required, midwives were called on to assist and supplement family-based care. The remarkable experiences of Mormon midwives and the vital health care functions they served in the pioneer period have been chronicled by Arrington (1976), Noall (1974) and Rugh (1978).

The Mormon pioneers arrived in the Salt Lake Valley in 1847, and by 1849, the first health organization, known as the Council of Health, was established and taught by Dr. Willard Richards. Its primary purpose was to "learn [sic] females how to take care of themselves" (Arrington, 1976, p. 56). A number of prominent Mormon women were involved in this organization, including Dr. Richards' wife, Susannah Liptrot Richards, a nurse trained in Britain, who often conducted the classes in the doctor's absence.

In spite of an initial effort to expand their knowledge, members of the Church remained largely unschooled in the principles of health and illness, and midwives were the primary instrument of care until a few Mormon women, encouraged by Church leaders, began to pursue medical training (Arrington, 1976; Noall, 1974). Noall (1974) noted that by the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the number of Utah women studying medicine had surpassed that of any other region in the nation. A number of these women, upon returning to Utah from eastern medical schools, not only entered private practice, but also taught classes in nursing, hygiene, and obstetrics. Their efforts were vital to the advancement of nursing and health care (see: Arrington, 1976; Casterline, 1978; Noall, 1974; Stone, 1978; Waters, 1978; White, 1978).

Women physicians were not the only women interested in health care education. Although the women physicians were very important to the Mormon community, the need for nurses was also acutely felt. The Relief Society played a prominent role in providing nursing education.

Although the Relief Society organization had been disbanded since the time of the westward migration, in 1867, Brigham Young appointed Eliza R. Snow to re-establish the organization under centralized Church leadership (Arrington & Bitton; 1992; Derr, 1987b; May, 1976; Relief Society, 1942). A year after Eliza Snow's appointment, when Brigham Young expressed his wish that the ladies be "trained in anatomy, surgery, chemistry, physiology, the preservation of health, the properties of medicinal

plants and midwifery" (Arrington, 1976, p. 57), the Relief Society was the organization through which that goal was accomplished. Between 1872 and 1873, a physiology class organized by Sarah M. Kimball and taught by Mary E. Cook was held in the Fifteenth Ward Social Hall. This was the first recorded formal effort of Mormon women to teach each other about health (Arrington, 1976; Relief Society, 1942).

In 1873, the Relief Society demonstrated its commitment to nursing and health care: Brigham Young had suggested to Bathsheba W. Smith that three women from each ward be chosen to study hygiene and nursing. According to Arrington (1976), the Relief Society turned this suggestion into a requirement and three women were appointed from and supported by each ward for this study (Arrington, 1976; Relief Society, 1942). By 1877, Utah women physicians had started their own private classes in nursing and obstetrics (Relief Society, 1942).

Later, in addition to the nursing programs operated by Mormon women physicians, the Relief Society itself sponsored a school of nursing. The Relief Society school opened in 1898 with a three fold purpose: To provide practical nursing service in the branches of the Church, to provide nursing service to families who could not afford the more skilled services of a graduate nurse, and to provide charity care to those who could not afford to pay at all. In 1920, the Relief Society Nurse School was superseded by a one year course for nurse's aids. Students in each program "paid" for their education by providing a certain amount of charity nursing care upon return to their home communities. Women from Utah, Idaho, Arizona, Colorado, Wyoming, Mexico and Canada attended these training programs. However, the Relief Society's formal role in nursing education ended in 1924 when the nurses' aids classes were discontinued due to objections by the National Hospital Training School Ratings Bureau (Relief Society, 1942).

Besides the operation of nursing schools, the Relief Society supported nursing and health care in other ways. One endeavor involved the enormous task of opening and operating a hospital. The women of the Church wanted to establish a place where Mormons could be cared for with unrestricted access to the healing ordinances of the Church (Arrington, 1976; Noall, 1974). Although other religious organizations had established hospitals in the Salt Lake area, hospitals the women described as "excellent institutions", they felt a desire to have a hospital "where our own Elders [could] walk freely in and perform the ceremonies of the Church without having the eyes of the curious upon them" (Noall, 1974, p. 155).

The Deseret Hospital opened in 1882, providing a place where members of the Church could receive care and where nurses could receive training. The hospital had "thirty to forty beds, though there were seldom more than sixteen patients at a time, either in the Fifth East location or later when the women took over the old Deseret University building in the Seventeenth Ward" (Derr et al., 1992, p. 107). The Relief Society was unable to maintain the hospital because of a lack of financial support and it was closed in 1895 (Arrington, 1976; Noall, 1974; Relief Society, 1942).

In spite of this setback, the Relief Society remained committed nursing and to the principles of health. The early 1900s heralded a pronounced nationwide public health movement (Melosh, 1984) and the activities of Mormon women demonstrated a fervent conversion to the cause (Arrington, 1976; May, 1976; Noall, 1974; Relief Society, 1942). As early as 1902, the nurses' department of the Society had established an "emergency closet" that contained supplies to care for ill mothers and children. The Society also experimented with various programs to meet the needs of malnourished children. But the most successful of public health activities revolved around the maternity and child health work of the Relief Society which grew out of events of World War I.



In 1918, a year after the United States became involved in the war, the government requested that the Church sell the wheat which had been gathered and stored by the Relief Society, under the direction of Emmeline B. Wells, since 1876. By some apparently controversial oversight, the Presiding Bishop of the Church authorized the sale of Relief Society wheat without consulting Relief Society leaders. The proceeds from this sale were then placed in trust, until the time that the wheat stores could be replenished (Embry, 1982).

The wheat trust remained undisturbed until April of 1922, when Relief Society president, Clarissa Williams recommended that the yearly interest from the wheat fund be used for health work (Relief Society, 1942). This wheat fund, in conjunction with federal-state cooperative funding brought into existence by the Sheppard-Towner Act of 1922, financially supported the activities of communities to provide health care to mothers and children (Hefner, 1982; Relief Society, 1942). The establishment of maternity hospitals and health clinics for mothers and children grew out of these funds. In 1929, the Sheppard-Towner Act was repealed, but the health projects continued, funded by the wheat interest until the early 1940s (Hefner, 1982).

The review of existing literature makes apparent the fact that Mormon women were active in nursing and health issues. They provide enough information to arouse our curiosity; we have been given a tantalizing glimpse of health and nursing among Mormon women, but the picture remains incomplete. This analysis of the Relief Society Magazine expands on some of the sketchy images that presently exist to provide a more complete picture of the involvement of Mormon women in nursing.

#### Significance of Study

This study is important because it expands our understanding of an important, but often unseen role of women. Women have provided nursing health care through the ages; the existence of a magazine devoted to the concerns of women of a particular

culture provides a medium for understanding the involvement of a unique group of women in this traditionally female role.

The Relief Society, a woman's organization, is a unique feature of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This organization provided information and support to women as they cared for their families; and encouraged and supported them as they fulfilled similar caregiving functions in the community. As Blumell (1979) and Derr (1987a) noted, Mormon women in the Relief Society were the primary instrument of social welfare among the Mormon people. Nursing was a part of this multifaceted social responsibility. Therefore, Mormon women were not only the nurses in their families, they were also the nurses of the larger Mormon community.

The existence of the Relief Society Magazine provides an exceptional opportunity to study the official views of the nursing and health roles and issues of this unique group of women. Using the Relief Society Magazine as a data base, this study enlarges our understanding of the involvement of Mormon women in health and nursing.

#### Research Question

What nursing and health themes emerge from the pages of the Relief Society Magazine from 1914 through 1930?

## CHAPTER II

### Methodology and Results

#### Methodology

##### Study Design

This study used a descriptive design to explore nursing and health among Mormon women through content analysis of the Relief Society Magazine. This descriptive study was inductive, that is, the researcher did not impose any preexisting expectations upon the outcome of the study. The holistic-inductive nature of descriptive qualitative design allowed for depth and detail would not have been possible with a quantitative approach (Patton, 1980). Thus, analysis of the nursing and health care activities of Mormon women was not constructed from a predetermined hypothesis, but developed entirely from interpretation of the perspective of the writers of the Relief Society Magazine.

##### Data Collection

Data were collected from the Relief Society Magazine from the first issue of Volume I, published in 1914, through the last issue of Volume 17, published in 1930. Each volume of the Relief Society Magazine consisted of 12 monthly issues.

Every page of every issue was examined; nonfiction and non-poetry articles containing any mention of nursing or health were photocopied for later categorization and analysis. Nursing and health references included, but were not limited to, those regarding nurses, nursing schools, nurse's aids, public health, nutrition, child care, maternal care, health education, health maintenance, and mental illness.

##### Data Analysis

Data from the Relief Society Magazine were submitted to content analysis and all coding was done by the investigator. Unitizing reliability (Garvin, Kennedy, & Cissna,

1987) was accomplished by the coding of 20 randomly selected pieces of data by two independent investigators, with recoding agreement of .90.

### Results

The Relief Society Magazine, called the Relief Society Bulletin in its first year of publication, contained numerous articles regarding health and nursing. From 1914 to 1930, the magazine published 11,176 pages of lessons, articles, speeches, announcements, short stories and poetry. The magazine provided an opportunity for Relief Society members to publish original works of fiction or poetry and served as the vehicle for publishing lessons on theology, literature and social service.

In the seventeen volumes studied, 1,779 pages, or 15.9 percent of the magazine, were devoted to health or nursing concerns. Items of fiction and poetry were not included in this analysis, but the entries extracted consisted of articles, lessons, announcements (ads), speeches, and reports related to nursing or health.

Articles were defined as those items that consisted of a treatise on a particular subject. Speeches, on the other hand, were those entries represented as written reproductions of addresses. These were usually derived from Relief Society conference proceedings, but the magazine also reprinted speeches given before other organizations such as the Utah Public Health Association.

Reports were defined as those items that gave an account of the nursing and health work engaged in by Relief Society members. Most of these entries were stake reports that were sent to the Relief Society Magazine from local Relief Society units for the purpose of informing Relief Society leaders, and other members, about their progress and success in health and nursing activities. Announcements consisted of items that advertised Relief Society health and nursing programs and encouraged participation in them.

Data extracted from the Relief Society Magazine were coded according to the health or nursing topic they addressed. Many items addressed more than one topic and were, therefore, included in more than one category. Through content analysis, the following nursing and health themes emerged from the Relief Society Magazine: Nursing, faith healing, women's health, children's health, and public health (see Table 1).

### Nursing

Nursing was an occupation wholeheartedly encouraged and supported by the Relief Society. This fact is evident in the number of items about nursing found in the Relief Society Magazine (see Table 2). Magazine entries coded into this theme contained biographies of nurses, information and history about nursing schools, description about nursing loan funds, or opinion about the roles and responsibilities of nurses. These amounted to 150 items. The quantity of entries with a nursing theme provided evidence that Mormon women were interested and active in nursing.

#### Biographies of nurses.

The Relief Society Magazine contained 19 biographies that mentioned the names of 37 women who provided nursing care to their families and communities (see Appendix A). Although occasional articles focused on the nursing activities of these women, usually the magazine merely acknowledged that particular women had a talent for nursing, and focused on other aspects of the women's lives. In the biographical sketch of Clarissa S. Williams and of Margaret Mitchell Caine, the magazine noted that these women supported and developed formal nursing programs in the Church.

The first biography of a nurse appeared in 1915, the last in 1930. The first biography showcased Alice Fredricka Smith, a granddaughter of the prophet Joseph Smith who had joined the Church many years after the death of her own parents. Alice followed her mother, a Civil war nurse, into nursing, and later cared for her foster father until his death ("Notes From", 1915). The Relief Society Magazine acknowledged the

Table 1

Classification of Nursing and Health Themes by Entry Type

THEME	Entry Type					TOTAL
	Articles	Lessons	Ads	Speeches	Reports	
Nursing	45	3	27	36	39	150
Faith Healing	6	0	0	0	0	6
Women's Health	24	5	7	46	60	142
Children's Health	36	70	7	28	81	222
Public Health	113	48	20	67	107	355
TOTAL	224	126	61	177	287	875

Table 2

Nursing Theme: By Category and Entry Type

CATEGORY	Entry Type					TOTAL
	Articles	Lessons	Ads	Speeches	Reports	
Biography	17	1	0	0	1	19
Nursing	18	1	25	14	7	65
Schools						
Loan Funds	3	0	0	5	0	8
Public Health	3	0	0	10	1	14
Nursing						
Nursing Roles	0	0	0	6	0	6
Stake	0	0	0	0	30	30
Involvement						
Other	4	1	2	1	0	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>150</b>

nursing roles of other prominent Mormon women. For example, Zina D. H. Young was called "Zion's beloved nurse and midwife" ("Ye Ancient", 1915, p. 345) and she was described as a woman who "went about, night and day, never sparing herself, delivering women, nursing the sick, robing the dead". Another woman, Prescendia L. Kimball, was known as a "tower of strength in the sickroom" (p. 347).

Other "famous" nurses and midwives mentioned in the Relief Society Magazine included Patty Sessions, Susannah Liptrot Richards, Julina L. Smith and Edna L. Smith. However, the magazine described very little about their work. Instead, it merely acknowledged that they provided an important service to families throughout the Church.

Many of the early nurses were self-trained. They became nurses to those outside their family circle because they had a talent for the work and desire to serve. Recognition of a special gift for nursing was found in comments such as, "Sister Neslen had a natural gift for nursing, which was put to frequent use" (Cannon, 1926, p. 349), or, "A natural-born nurse, her services were often called for in cases of desperate illness" (Jensen, 1929, p. 349).

Some of these "natural-born" nurses had received priesthood blessings that directed them to use their talent in the care of the sick. Such was the case with Elizabeth Grace McCune. The Relief Society Magazine printed an excerpt from her journal in which she reported that, "When a child, I was given a patriarchal blessing, and one of the promises was that I should be an instrument in the hand of God in doing much good among the sick. This was literally fulfilled. . . I loved the work, and I know that on numberless occasions I was an instrument in God's hand" (Ure, 1927, p. 326).

Though the early Mormon nurses were initially self-trained, it was not long after their arrival in the Salt Lake Valley that women with a desire to care for the ill or infirm were presented with opportunities to increase their knowledge and skill. The Relief Society Magazine contained accounts of the involvement of Mormon women in formal nurses' training programs.

#### Nursing schools.

The Relief Society Magazine chronicled the history of nursing schools among Mormon women in sixty-five entries about nursing education (see Table 2). These entries provided a history of nursing education that began at the time of the pioneer migration to the Salt Lake Valley. Much of this information came from a 1920 Relief Society Magazine article written by Susa Young Gates. She noted that, "the history of the Nurse School work, as associated with the women of this Church, has an ancient and honorable origin" (Gates, 1920, p. 376). In fact, the magazine made it clear that nursing



was one of the responsibilities placed upon the women of the Church by the Prophet Joseph Smith when he organized the Relief Society in 1842: "The Prophet Joseph Smith laid his hands on these women's heads and set them apart to go about among the sick and minister to their wants" ("Nursing In", 1915, p. 316).

The opportunity to expand their knowledge and fulfill the Prophet's charge came after the Saints arrived in Utah. According to Gates (1920), the first health class, the Council of Health, had been proposed by Brigham Young before the Saints ever reached the Salt Lake Valley:

We find in the "Manuscript History of the Church" the following notation from a council meeting held in Winter Quarters, August, 1846: Brigham Young said: "I intend to propose to the Council of this Church to have some way devised [*sic*] to instruct this people concerning the organization of the human system, and how to care for it." President Young, on his entrance into the Valley, lost no time in putting his plan into active operation. The fort was built in 1847, and President Young called upon Dr. Willard Richards . . . to establish a Council of Health. Dr. Richards had married an English nurse, Susannah Liptrot, as one of his wives. This lady had received as good a training as was offered in England at that day, and she assisted her husband in giving lectures to the women of the Council, on obstetrics, nursing and child care. That this Council of Health was a power for good in the community is evidenced by the strict hygienic regulations inculcated in the establishment of Salt Lake City itself and surrounding towns and villages. (p. 376)

The Council of Health was described as the "original Nurse School in this Church" ("Nursing In, 1915, p. 316). Its lessons focused on wellness and disease prevention as well as on care of the sick. Women were taught not only according the scientific knowledge of the time, but Church leaders also addressed health topics from the perspective of "the holy commandments of God" (Gates, 1920, p. 377).

Gates (1920) reported that occasional nursing classes were held even after the death of Dr. Willard Richards in 1854. But before 1872, when the Woman's Exponent reported that a physiology class had been organized by Sarah M. Kimball, there were evidently no reports on the health and nursing activities of Mormon women (Gates, 1920). Nurse training expanded in 1873 when, on July 15, Brigham Young requested that the presidents of Relief Societies throughout the Church appoint three women from each ward to study hygiene and nursing. He advised the bishops that each ward should provide financial support to these students during their course of study.

By September, an obstetrics school, taught by Dr. Mary H. Barker was opened. Zina D. H. Young, a pioneer midwife, graduated from this school and became its instructor after Dr. Barker returned to the east three years after the school's opening (Gates, 1920). The lectures taught by Zina D. H. Young were held in the office of the Woman's Exponent where the class skeleton was also kept. The Relief Society Magazine stated that the Exponent's editor, Emmeline B. Wells, "laughingly recall[ed] how people stared and wondered how she could stay nights with the gruesome thing in the office" ("Nursing In", 1915, p. 316).

More nursing schools sprang up when Mormon women returned to Utah after graduating from eastern medical schools. In 1920, the Relief Society Magazine gave Romania B. Penrose, the first Mormon woman physician, credit for being the first doctor to open a class in obstetrics and nursing. Her class opened on November 1, 1877, and she taught two classes a year for twenty-eight years (Gates, 1920; "Nursing In ", 1915). Ellis R. Shipp, and Margaret C. Roberts also opened private nursing schools after returning to Utah from medical school ("Nursing In", 1915). Other women who conducted private classes included Dr. Mattie Paul Hughes Cannon, who opened her school for nurses in 1889, and Hannah Sorensen, a "Scandinavian nurse, of fine training and good abilities" (Gates, 1920, p. 382) who taught classes in physiology and hygiene .

to women in central Utah beginning in 1893. Sorensen's class was the only early class mentioned by the Relief Society Magazine that was not held in Salt Lake City (Gates, 1920).

The magazine made it clear that all of the early nursing programs were private ventures, encouraged by the Church and the Relief Society, but not directly controlled by either organization. However in 1879, when Dr. Romania B. Penrose petitioned for the establishment of a women's hospital, the idea was supported by Relief Society president Eliza R. Snow. When the Deseret Hospital opened in 1882, the hospital officers, who were all women, planned for the establishment of "a school for the purpose of educating mid-wives and training nurses for the sick, in order that the people in all the stakes of Zion may be better supplied with efficient help in the hour of extreme need" (Gates, 1920, p. 379). The Relief Society Magazine did not contain specific information about the ways nursing education was delivered in this hospital setting. Gates (1920) article offered the only clue when she noted that "Dr. Shipp's class of nurses and mid-wives were taken to visit the hospital once a week for practical hospital work" (p. 382).

From the history found in the Relief Society Magazine, it was apparent that a number of Mormon women endeavored to educate nurses for service in communities throughout the Church. Excepting its involvement with the Deseret Hospital, however, the Relief Society had not been directly involved in these efforts. Nursing schools had been privately operated. This began to change when a lack of financial support necessitated the closure of Deseret Hospital in August of 1896 (Gates, 1920). (Other sources set 1895 as the year of the hospital's closing; see Noall, 1974, and Relief Society, 1942).

After the closure of the Deseret Hospital, the Relief Society began an active campaign to establish nursing education programs. The first program, the inspiration of Dr. Margaret C. Roberts, opened in 1898 and was operated by the Salt Lake Stake Relief

Society. It was endorsed by Church President, Wilford Woodruff. In 1904, the Relief Society General Board assumed control of the Nurse School, but left the financial and management responsibilities in the hands of Dr. Roberts. However, by 1913, the General Board had taken over all phases of the program (Gates, 1920).

Women entered this training program from communities throughout the intermountain west, and usually "paid" for their education by providing a predetermined amount of charity nursing care after completion of their training. This arrangement provided many families in the Church the opportunity to utilize the expertise of a trained nurse in their homes. However, women who did not want to provide charity care were permitted to pay for their education in real dollars (Gates, 1920).

The Relief Society Bulletin of 1914 and the Relief Society Magazine provided a medium for recruiting students and a forum for reporting on the school's progress. The first advertisements for the Relief Society Nurse School were found in the 1914 Relief Society Bulletin in which stake and ward Relief Society presidents were urged to select "intelligent and energetic women of suitable age and of good moral character to take this course in nursing" ("Relief Society Nurse", 1914, p. 15).

In 1915, a Relief Society Magazine message from the General Board announced a modification in the nursing curriculum: the Relief Society Nurse School was to be combined with a "thorough course in obstetrics" ("R. S. Nurse", 1915, p. 343). This new curriculum was taught by the founder of the Relief Society Nurse School, Margaret C. Roberts. It was an eight month program as the previous one had been ("Announcement", 1915).

According to 1917 and 1918 reports of commencement exercises, students in the modified program were permitted to choose their course of study: nursing or obstetrics or both. Most women graduated with certificates in nursing. The combined certificate in obstetrics and nursing was received by the fewest number of students ("Relief Society

Nurse", 1917; Lyman, 1918). Unlike earlier Relief Society nursing classes, tuition for this program was not entirely covered by a term of charity nursing service. In 1914, tuition had been \$20.00, and it was expected that "the Relief Society organization in each ward [would] pay the tuition free for their representatives" ("Notice", 1914, p. 14). In return, the student had signed a contract which stated:

In consideration of obtaining instruction free in the Relief Society Nurse School, I promise to answer all calls made upon me by the Superintendent of Relief Society Nurses where I live, to give thirty days charity nursing, and also nurse for whatever remuneration may be designated by said Superintendent for the term of one year following graduation. (p. 14)

Students who did not wish to sign the contract were permitted to attend the program by paying \$50.00 tuition. But by 1917, tuition for the nursing course was not only a thirty-day term of charity nursing, but an additional \$25.00 fee. Tuition for the obstetrics course was \$50.00 in addition to "service at five charity obstetrical cases or 30 days service in charity nursing". If wards and stakes were still meeting the monetary portion of the tuition, it was not mentioned by the magazine ("Relief Society School", p. 1917, p. 479).

In return for the payment of tuition in time and money, students in the Relief Society Course were instructed on a variety of subjects. They received "general instructions in nursing" for seven and a half hours a week ("Relief Society School", p. 1917, p. 479) and additional lectures on other subjects, which included invalid cooking, first aid, drugs and solutions, public health, contagious diseases, hydrotherapy, elementary hygiene, and prevention and treatment of diseases were given five hours a week ("Relief Society School", 1917; "Relief Society School, 1918). Students in obstetrics received seven and a half hours of lecture a week that consisted of "technical instruction in Obstetrics" and "all the regular and special features" of the nursing course ("Relief Society School", p.

1917, p. 479). If the students of obstetrics, like nursing, received the additional five hours of instruction weekly, it was not specified by the magazine.

In 1920, the Relief Society nursing program was changed again. The Relief Society School of Obstetrics and Nursing became the LDS Relief Society School for Training Nurses' Aids. The school was transferred to LDS Hospital and the program was lengthened from eight months to one year (Gates, 1920; "LDS Relief", 1920).

The magazine noted that students from the previous course had often found it necessary to work for their room and board in addition to attending to their studies, but the student nurses' aids were housed at the LDS Hospital campus. Students of the 1920 program were not assessed tuition, but were under the continued requirement to provide thirty days of charity nursing upon completion of their training.

According to the magazine, the 1920 program was well received by the women of the Church. At the fall Relief Society conference, Clarissa S. Williams reported that applications for admission to the program had exceeded the General Board's expectations:

. . . for several years it had been the dream of the Relief Society to have our school incorporated in the L. D. S. hospital, which was done last August, when the hospital, for the first time, admitted the Relief Society nurses for a one-year course in real, practical, nursing. As there had been some difficulty in the past in getting students interested in the nurse course as it has been given, the general board was a little in doubt as to how the new course would be received and supported. For several years the class had numbered twenty or less than twenty. After the Church authorities had decided that the students could be entered at the hospital, the general board wondered if it would be possible to get the required number of students . . . . The response, however, was more than anybody had dreamed of. Instead of receiving in the neighborhood of twenty applicants, one hundred and ten requests

for admission were registered at the office . . . . This response proved to the general board that Relief Society women were quick to recognize and make the most of real opportunity when presented to them. (Lyman, 1920b, pp. 707-708)

In spite of the popularity of this course, its life was short. At a 1924 Relief Society conference, it was announced that LDS Hospital was unable to continue the course because of objections from the Hospital Commission. In addition to the Relief Society class, the magazine reported that the hospital had also supported a three year program for registered nurses. The hospital discovered, after a visit from a hospital inspector, that "unless a hospital [had] two hundred beds daily occupied, the American standards [would] not permit of such hospitals having two schools for nurses" (Lyman, 1924c, p. 297).

Relief Society leaders expressed their disappointment over the cancellation of the course for nurses aids. From the beginning issues of the Relief Society Bulletin the Relief Society leaders had expressed their belief in the need for practical nurses, later called nurses' aids, to provide nursing care to the ill in their communities. A 1914 notice stated:

We sincerely trust that members of the Relief Society realize the value and necessity of this Course of Nursing, as it is a fact that 95 per cent of inhabitants of our country cannot afford to pay the price of a graduate, hospital nurse, and yet our sick of the masses should receive trained and skilful [sic] nursing. ("Notice", 1914, p. 14)

The Relief Society's philosophy of nursing education was found in the account of an address given to the first graduates of the nurses' aids school:

. . .there is a real need for graded nurses. The supply of hospital graduate nurses is inadequate and even if it were not, there are many people who are unable to pay for the services of a registered nurse. There seems therefore to be a place for nurses' aids to go into the homes of the middle classes and take care of ordinary ills.

Superintendent Grant expressed the hope that the members of this class would never give the impression that they are graduate nurses. This, he considered, would be a discourtesy not only to the L. D. S. Hospital but to the Relief Society. There is a place in the community for the nurses' aids, and they should fill this place to the best of their ability. (Lyman, 1921, pp. 559-560)

Further evidence of the Relief Society's belief in a graded system of nurses was found in the Relief Society Magazine, which provided information and carried advertisements for a number of nursing programs. At the spring 1922 Relief Society Conference:

Mrs. Amy Brown Lyman urged the Relief Society to continue its interest in the nurse movement, and to enlist girls to take the various nurse courses offered. She gave . . . detailed information as to requirements, allowances, etc., of the Relief Society Nurses' Aids Course, the L. D. S., the Dee and the Salt Lake County Hospital courses. (Lyman, 1922a, p. 303)

At the following conference, Emma A. Empey, chairman of the Relief Society Nurse Committee, advocated the enrollment of Mormon women in three-year hospital programs. She said that "graduate nurses [were] needed, not only for regular nursing service, but for teachers, and for health positions in the communities, while the Relief Society nurse aids [were] prepared to do practical nursing in the homes" (Lyman, 1922b, p. 623).

The entries for other nursing programs were not as numerous as those for the Relief Society school, nevertheless, the Relief Society Magazine did provide information about other schools in Utah. In fact, the first nursing school advertisements found in the magazine promoted the LDS Hospital program ("L. D. S. Hospital", 1914a; "L. D. S. Hospital", 1914b). It is not possible to know with certainty how many advertisements for the LDS Hospital training program appeared in the Relief Society Magazine from



1914 to 1930 since many of these ads were found in the front or end pages of the magazine and it is unlikely that they have all been preserved. Nevertheless, from the ads that remained, some information about the LDS Hospital Training School was available.

The 1914 advertisements for the LDS Hospital nursing program praised the features of the hospital and the nursing school. They reported that the hospital had a 250 bed capacity, an average enrollment of 100 women, and offered a "thorough course in surgical, medical, obstetrical, infant and accident nursing" ("L. D. S. Hospital", 1914a, p. 15). Unlike the Relief Society school, this program was designed to produce "graduate hospital nurses". The duration of this program was three years in contrast to the 8 to 12 month Relief Society programs ("L. D. S. Hospital", 1914b). One advertisement stated: "Some schools may give a diploma in six months or a year, but if you are ambitious nothing less than a course at the L. D. S. Hospital will ever satisfy you" ("L. D. S. Hospital", 1914a, p. 15).

The LDS Hospital school was not the only program that the Relief Society Magazine endorsed. In 1920, it introduced the University of Utah's course for practical nurses. This course was installed "in response to an urgent demand on the part of the physicians, the hospitals, and the general public" ("The University", 1920, p. 588). It consisted of three months of classroom instruction and nine months of supervised hospital work. Students were allowed to choose the hospital in which they would receive clinical experience. In addition, the credits obtained in this practical nursing program were transferable toward a degree in professional nursing from the University of Utah ("The University", 1920).

The Relief Society Magazine's advertisements and articles about various nursing programs in the state of Utah appeared somewhat sporadically and haphazardly. But in 1922, the requirements and features of four Utah nursing programs were outlined in a single article. This was the only instance in which the details of the various programs

were presented together for comparison. The University of Utah's program was not included in this entry, but information was given about the Relief Society Nurses' Aids Course, the LDS Hospital Course, the Dee Hospital Course, and the Salt Lake County Hospital Course. Except for the Relief Society Course, which was designed to produce nurses' aids, the other programs were three year courses (Lyman, 1922a).

All of the hospital programs required some high school education for admission--one year for the Salt Lake County Hospital Course and two years for both the LDS and the Dee Hospital programs. LDS and Dee Hospital accepted applicants between 19 and 30 years of age; the Salt Lake County Hospital had a similar age range: 19 to 31 years. In contrast, the age range for Relief Society nurses' aids was 18 to 35 years (Lyman, 1922a). Each of the four programs provided a monthly allowance for its students but the amount varied from school to school. The lowest allowance was \$5 a month at the Relief Society program and the highest was the \$15 a month allowed at Salt Lake County Hospital (Lyman, 1922a).

#### Loan funds.

Other Relief Society Magazine entries besides those that dealt directly with nursing schools demonstrated the interest of Mormon women in nursing. After the Relief Society's school was abolished in 1924, the organization continued to support nursing through the use of loan funds. Loan funds, which had various purposes, were first established in 1923 as memorials for past Relief Society presidents (Lyman, 1928b). One of them, the Zina D. H. Young Relief Society Nurse Loan Fund was set up explicitly for the provision financial assistance to women who were pursuing a nursing education. The only information about the use of this fund found in the Relief Society Magazine was a 1927 entry in which President Clarissa S. Williams reported that five nurses had received \$75 from the fund ("General Conference", 1927).

In December of 1925, the Relief Society Magazine reported that an additional nursing fund had been established: the Public Health Nurses Loan Fund. "It [was] the intention of the General Board to lend this money to hospital graduate nurses who desire[d] to take up training for public health . . . . The plan [was] to allow \$750 to each applicant" (Lyman, 1925b, p. 632).

The final nursing-oriented loan fund reported in the 17 year study period was established in 1926 in honor of Clarissa S. Williams, a longtime advocate of nursing. In 1928, President Williams explained how the fund came into being:

Probably you all have noticed in the Magazine what I finally was authorized to do with the Honor Fund, which you so kindly presented to me in April of 1926; but I would like to report the matter to you verbally and to pass over to you the joy I feel in being able to have that money put into the very thing in which I have always been so deeply interested. We already had two loan funds for nurses--the Zina D. H. Young Loan fund for undergraduate nurses and the Public Health Nurse Loan Fund. It, therefore, seemed to me that it would not be possible to use this fund in the interest of nursing, which has always been the very ideal of my heart. But one day in our executive meeting, Sister Lyman said, 'Sisters, I have been wondering if Sister Williams would like this honor fund of hers placed in the public health nurse-loan fund, and to have the joint fund named the Clarissa S. Williams Honor Loan Fund for Public Health Nurses[']. Immediately Sisters Knight and Robinson seconded that thought, and I think I began to cry, I was so overcome with joy. I had been hoping and praying that there would be some nurse activity, which I might especially sponsor. The Board approved the recommendation, and I am pleased to report to you personally the use of your gift to me, which I have loved and appreciated more than you can know. A number of nurses have already been

benefited by loans from this fund and have returned home to labor among us.

(Lyman, 1928b, p. 657)

Nursing roles / public health nursing.

In addition to its support of nursing education, the Relief Society Magazine discussed some of the roles and responsibilities of nurses. Sixteen speeches discussed the importance of nurses; ten of those were about public health nursing. In two instances, demonstrations of nursing skills were showcased at Relief Society conferences. The skills demonstrated by student nurses included "bedmaking, including the obstetric bed, changing bed, and so forth . . . lifting the patient from bed to chair and back again . . . skeltetus abdominal binder . . . breast binder . . . abdominal binder . . . hand and arm bandage . . . [and] heating compress" (Lyman, 1920a, p. 326). A nursing demonstration was also part of the October conference of 1924 where the activities displayed included bedmaking, washing and dressing a baby and a display of "proper layettes" (Lyman, 1924d, p. 628).

But more than discussing nursing tasks, the Relief Society Magazine expressed a recognition of the role of nurses in overall community health. Ten speeches stressed the importance of public health nursing and outlined the responsibilities of the public health nurse.

According to the magazine's entries, Relief Society leaders held strong convictions about the importance of the public health nurse to the community. Amy Brown Lyman (1924d) addressed the subject at the October 1924 conference:

I am a great believer in the public health nurse, and I hope the time will soon come when there will be one in every county. I hope Relief Society women encourage the movement . . . . It would be a great credit to our organization if there could be public health nurses in all the communities of the Latter-day Saints, through the efforts of

the Relief Society organization, in co-operation with the counties and other agencies.  
(p. 632)

The magazine reported that some stake Relief Societies had success in obtaining public health nurses for their communities through the kind of cooperation that Amy Lyman had encouraged. For example, in 1930, the president of the Rigby, Idaho Stake reported that after many small steps, they were looking forward to the benefits of having a year-round public health nurse (Lund, 1930). Furthermore, in January of 1924, several months before Amy Lyman's conference plea, two stakes in the Bingham County, Idaho area reported that they had been successful in obtaining a public health nurse for the county, which included the Blackfoot and Shelley stakes. Their success was the result of Relief Society efforts mingled with those of other organizations in the county; each donated a portion of the money necessary to secure a public health nurse:

The Blackfoot board of education subscribed \$250; the Shelley board of education \$200; the Bingham county Red Cross chapter, \$400; the County commissioners, \$400; the Shelley stake Relief Society, \$200; and the Blackfoot stake Relief Society, \$400; making of total of \$1,850, which it was planned would finance the nursing program at least for nine months. (Lyman, 1924a, p. 45)

Mormon women were anxious to obtain public health nurses for their communities because they recognized the important role they played in health preservation. In the October 1924 conference, Victoria B. Christensen, a nurse from the Utah Agricultural College, reminded Mormon women that "health building is now considered a matter of education and not one of accident . . . . (Lyman, 1924d, p. 636). And the burden of education was on the shoulders of the nurse. In 1926, Dorothy Ledyard, director of nursing service of the Pacific Division of the Red Cross, succinctly summarized this pervasive nursing role: "A nurse who doesn't teach as she goes does not fulfil her duty" ("Relief Society Conference", 1927, p. 32).

The Relief Society Magazine showed that the leaders and members of this organization supported and encouraged nursing. The magazine acknowledged the role of women as nurses in the biographies it published and gave an account of the involvement of the Relief Society with nursing education. In addition, it provided evidence that the Relief Society leadership felt that nurses were important to community health.

### Faith Healing

Though Mormon women participated in and encouraged education in temporal measures to ease suffering, their religion gave them the knowledge that God could heal afflictions that were beyond the abilities of humans to alleviate. The second health topic addressed by the Relief Society Magazine was faith healing. Items were coded into this category when they spoke of blessings or prayers in behalf of the sick, or when they indicated that an exercise of faith was connected with the alleviation of illness or disease. Only 5 articles in the Relief Society Magazine dealt with the subject of women performing healing ordinances or exercising their faith in behalf of others.

The Relief Society Bulletin, and early issues of the Relief Society Magazine pointedly admonished the women of the Church to exercise faith and rely upon God to heal their afflictions. For example, an editorial in the Relief Society Bulletin chided the sisters for depending on physicians rather than God to heal disease, and expressed concern that the women of the Church had relied more on science than on the power of Heaven:

The custom of appealing to physicians for medical assistance in all cases of sickness has become so prevalent even among the Latter-day Saints, that faith in the healing of the sick has been measurably relegated to the rear. It is true, we still send for the elders, but the physician is, or will be, in the house as well, and we are apt to rely more upon his skill than upon the administration of the Priesthood. While if there is a return of health, we are pretty sure to give the credit to the physician . . . .In the

rise of this Church, faith was the one and the only recourse in all cases of sickness and disease. Simple remedies were administered and were perhaps a part of the household equipment. But the bottle of consecrated oil occupied the most prominent place in the sick rooms of the Latter-day Saints . . . . Who is there that has not seen the wonderful healings made manifest among this people from time to time? Is there any lack of power in the Priesthood? On the contrary, there has probably never been a time in the history of the Church when there has been more power and efficacy in the united ranks of the Priesthood than at the present time. What, then, may be the difference? It is an entirely individual trouble: You and I, dear sister, may be at fault. The moment we are sick, do we take a remedy, or hunt up a physician? . . . .If we are to retain the established principle of faith for the healing of the sick, we must work at it as we would at any other principle or doctrine which we wish to make a part of our lives. ("Faith", 1914, pp. 5-6)

The editor, Susa Young Gates, also expressed the opinion that, "Too much of our time in social affairs is spent in discussing medical problems and medical treatment" (Faith, 1914, p. 5) In spite of this view, the Relief Society Magazine did discuss, if not medical problems, then health concerns, in the 1914 to 1930 period. In most cases, the Relief Society sisters expressed a desire to utilize the best scientific information of their time to address health issues. Nevertheless, the few Relief Society Magazine articles about faith healing acknowledged the prerogative of women to exercise faith in behalf of the sick and to participate in healing ordinances.

One entry regarding the role of women in healing was a March, 1915 article entitled "Instructions of the Prophet Joseph Smith". According to this reprint of the minutes of a meeting held on April 28, 1842 in Nauvoo, Illinois, the Prophet affirmed that faithful women, as well as men, were entitled to gifts of the spirit which included that of healing the sick:

Respecting the females laying on hands, [the Prophet Joseph Smith] further remarked, there could be no evil in it. If God gave his sanction by healing, there could be no more sin in any female laying hands on the sick than in wetting the face with water--that it is not sin for anybody to do it who has faith--or if the sick have the faith to be healed by the administration. ("Instructions Of", 1915, p. 92)

An April 1916 article about former Relief Society President Eliza R. Snow noted that she had, herself, performed the ordinance of washing and anointing for thousands of prospective mothers. ("The Mother", 1916, p. 189). In 1915, Relief Society President, Emmeline B. Wells, reminisced about her childhood experience of receiving a blessing under the hands of Eliza R. Snow (Wells, 1915).

The last Relief Society Magazine account of a woman exercising a faith ritual in behalf of the sick was found in March of 1919. A mother who despaired for the life of her dysentery-afflicted infant, received inspiration to anoint the child's abdomen with consecrated oil and to pray. Although the remedies suggested by neighbors had only worsened the infant's condition, the mother's faith and obedience led to the infant's recovery (Lauritzen, 1919). Faith healing, in particular, was not mentioned by the Relief Society Magazine after 1919. The magazine's focus turned more toward scientific methods of preserving health.

### Women's Health

The Relief Society Magazine's entries about health care demonstrated a concern for two segments of the Mormon population--the women and the children of the Church. Because the Relief Society has been an organization of and for women, it was not surprising that women's health issues were addressed frequently in the magazine. One hundred forty-two entries addressed this theme.



All items that contained a health topic that directly concerned women were coded into this category. The topics that were discussed included mental health, health concerns of the middle aged, birth control, and maternal health (see Table 3).

#### Mental health.

While the Relief Society Magazine printed a total of 13 articles about mental health from 1914 to 1930, only 3 of them were specific to women. Two articles appeared at the beginning of the study period, one in 1915 and one in 1916; the last appeared in 1930, at the end of the study period.

Each of the early articles suggested ways for women to avoid "nervous breakdown". The 1915 entry cited "overwork, worry, shock, grief, financial or domestic difficulties, a loss of sleep, [and] a monotonous existence" as the causes of "nerve strain" and stated that "no mortal is exempt from nervous breakdown" (Baggarley, 1915c, p. 274). By contrast, the 1916 article declared that "nervous collapse is [only] for people who spend a great deal of time thinking about themselves" and asserted that "the most dangerous enemies to our peace of mind are self-pity, self-righteousness, and self-indulgence" ("Mental Hygiene", 1916, p. 30). Since each of these articles expressed a different belief about the cause of "nervous strain", it was not surprising they each prescribed different treatments. The 1915 entry suggested a "change of scene, food, and associates. . . . simple, nourishing food, plenty of water, fresh air, sleep, [and] baths" (Baggarley, 1915c, p. 275) and the 1916 article ordered the sufferer of nervous strain to abandon concern for herself "and go out and find others who are not so well situated as you are. Minister to them, and give to them of your tenderest sympathy, and see if your own troubles do not fly away so quickly, you will forget you ever had them" ("Mental Hygiene", 1916, p. 30).

The subject of mental health for women was not presented in the Relief Society Magazine again until 1930. In that instance, Dr. Thomas Martin, an agronomist at

Table 3

Women's Health Theme: By Category and Entry Type

CATEGORY	Entry Type					TOTAL
	Articles	Lessons	Ads	Speeches	Reports	
Mental Health	3	0	0	0	0	3
Health for Middle Age	3	1	0	0	0	4
Birth Control	3	0	0	0	0	3
Maternal Health	13	3	7	46	60	129
Nutrition	2	1	0	0	0	3
TOTAL	24	5	7	46	60	142

Brigham Young University, made a plea for attention to the mental health of farm mothers. He believed that technology had eased the burden of the farmer himself, but that "in the rural home the mother ha[d] been overlooked" (Martin, 1930, p. 81). Dr. Martin said that, "a vast number of the insane [were] recruited from rural home", and this because "the mother [was] often made a beast of burden in the home where conveniences [had] not been considered" (Martin, 1930, p. 82). He urged fathers to "co-operate with mothers and make the home a better place in which to live. Some of the supposed luxuries of life must be placed in the home and the standards of living improved. An attempt at city conveniences must be made" (Martin, 1930, p. 84).

Although only three articles discussed the mental well-being of women, the existence of these articles in the Relief Society Magazine suggested that the importance of mental health was not entirely overlooked. But the majority of entries about women's health dealt more with physical health concerns.

#### Middle age.

Like the articles about mental health, Relief Society Magazine entries about the health of middle-aged women were also rare; only 4 entries addressed this subject and they offered a variety of recommendations. They included suggestions to avoid restrictive clothing and too frequent bathing, which was said to weaken the woman who had reached fifty: "Strong women, who have taken daily cold baths all their lives, find that after reaching the age of fifty or sixty this delightful habit must be set aside" ("Hygiene For", 1915, p. 378). In addition, older women were encouraged to maintain their mental well-being by avoiding idleness and selfishness and engaging, instead, in Relief Society and temple work ("Mental Hygiene", 1916).

In addition, moderate exercise and fresh air were encouraged because it was believed that "a good circulation of air should be observed in the rooms of women who are past fifty. Their breathing organs require more and better circulation of air, than when they were young and exercised more freely" ("Hygiene For", 1915, p. 379). Middle-aged women were also advised to modify their diets because their digestion was less efficient and their energy requirements had decreased. In fact, it was suggested that "most people past the age of fifty would better drop one meal and get along on two meals a day" ("Hygiene For", 1915, p. 377). Nevertheless, in spite of all the advice given, one article ended by acknowledging that "trying to regulate [a] grandmother is neither safe, wise, nor productive of much happiness" ("Hygiene For", 1915, p. 379).

### Birth control.

Though the health care concerns of older women received infrequent treatment in the Relief Society Magazine, issues of concern to younger women, particularly in relationship to motherhood, were prominent. Three of these articles dealt with the subject of birth control in which Mormon women were strongly advised to avoid limiting their families.

Two of these anti-birth control articles were published in 1916 and the third was published in 1917. According to the editor, Susa Young Gates, they were written in response to a nationwide birth control movement. The book, Family Limitation, by Margaret Sanger, had been published in 1915 and the first family planning clinic in the United States had been opened in 1916 (Derr et al., 1992). Gates introduced the articles with this statement:

Knowing quite well the attitude of the leading women of this people, past and present, on the subject of child-bearing, the Editor still felt anxious to present the views of some of our leading brethren on the subject. Accordingly, a letter was sent out setting forth the fact that many of our eastern magazines, especially the women's magazines, have been discussing the propriety of what is known as "birth control." The eugenists and fashionable women, and the fashionable doctors and ministers who advocate this movement, claim that families of from two to four children are quite sufficient for any woman to bear. The lower classes should be discouraged from bearing profusely, according to these pseudo-philosophers, because of their ignorance and poverty; while the middle class women, who are the working women, through these doctrines[,] are gradually getting to feel that life holds much more for them than motherhood" ("Birth Control", 1916a, p. 363).

Each of the three articles about birth control contained the teachings of priesthood leaders regarding the subjects of motherhood and family size. For example, Elder

Rudger Clawson said that "woman is so constituted that, ordinarily, she is capable of bearing, during the years of her greatest strength and physical vigor, from eight to ten children. . . .God's command, while it did not specify the exact number of children allotted to woman, simply implied that she should exercise the sacred power of procreation to its utmost limit. ("Birth Control", 1916a, p. 364)

Other apostles who responded to the editor's invitation to address the subject of birth control were George F. Richards, David O. McKay, O. F. Whitney, Joseph F. Smith, Jr., ("Birth Control", 1916a), Hyrum M. Smith, and David A. Smith ("Birth Control", 1916b). Their counsel warned women, as well as men, against limiting their families because of concerns about fashion, finances or education ("Birth Control", 1916a; "Birth Control", 1916b; "Birth Control", 1917). Elder George Albert Smith, then of the Council of the Twelve Apostles, summarized the Latter-day Saint belief about families:

Children are an heritage from the Lord, and those who refuse the responsibility of bringing them into the world and caring for them are usually prompted by selfish motives, and the result is that they suffer the penalty of selfishness throughout eternity. There is no excuse for members of our Church adopting the custom of the world to either limit the size of the family or have none at all. We have been better taught than they. The desire to gain an exaltation in the Celestial Kingdom should prompt us to take advantage of every opportunity, and one opportunity for happiness, there, is the association with the children the Lord offers us to be our eternal companions. . . . The gospel teaches that our happiness depends largely upon our posterity which, being true, should inspire us to desire a large and honorable family of children. . . . When we go from this sphere of existence we will not take any of the wealth of this world that we have been stewards over. It is only loaned to us for our development. But the children born to us under the new and everlasting covenant are ours for eternity, and no one can take them from us. They

are a gift of a loving heavenly Father to us, and our happiness here and hereafter will be greatly enhanced by their companionship and love. ("Birth Control", 1917, pp. 72-73)

In spite of the Church's emphasis on families, and although the three articles strongly discouraged birth control, David O. McKay offered the tempering warning that "in all [things]. . .the mother's health should be guarded" ("Birth Control", 1916a, p. 367).

#### Maternal health.

The Relief Society Magazine emphasized the importance of motherhood, making the issue of maternal health the most frequently appearing subject with a women's health theme (see Table 3). Entries that contained any mention of maternal health were included in this category (see Table 4).

The Relief Society's ability to effectively promote maternal health was not well developed until after 1918. In that year, wheat that had been painstakingly stored by members of the Relief Society since 1876, was sold to the government for the needs brought on by World War I. In the October 1919 issue of the Relief Society Magazine, Church leader, James E. Talmage, presented his perception of the Relief Society's wheat gathering efforts and of the wheat sale. The article said that Mormon women, having gathered 205,528 bushels of wheat:

. . . felt that the time had come for them to use their precious savings of more than 60 years. Through the presidency of the 'Mormon' Church every pound of this wheat was tendered to and accepted by the United States Food Administration for the use of the starving women and children among our allies, and for the use of our soldiers and sailors in the Army and Navy of the United States. (Talmage, 1919, p.566).

The wheat sale eventually led to fruitful efforts by Mormon women in behalf of their childbearing sisters. In 1922, three years after the wheat sale, the Relief Society

Table 4

Women's Health Theme: Breakdown of Maternal Health Entries

CATEGORY	Entry Type					TOTAL
	Articles	Lessons	Ads	Speeches	Reports	
Wheat Fund	2	0	2	11	1	16
Sheppard-Towner	1	1	1	14	10	27
Maternal Health (general)	10	2	4	21	49	86
TOTAL	13	3	7	46	60	129

Magazine reported that the Society was authorized to use the funds from the wheat trust to support maternal health programs:

President [Clarissa Smith] Williams called attention to the fact that this is the first time consent has ever been given by the General Authorities to use the interest on the wheat for any purpose. In her opinion the turning over of this wheat interest to be used in fostering motherhood is as great a mission as the original mission for grain storing. (Lyman, 1922a, p. 341)

Further, the magazine reported that the passage of the federal Sheppard-Towner Act in 1922 had provided additional funds for maternity care ("Maternity Bill", 1922). With monies obtained from these two sources, the Relief Society set up clinics and hospitals for maternity care in several Mormon communities. In addition, at the recommendation of the General Board, each local Relief Society began to establish maternity chests and bundles, and infant layettes, which contained items that a mother and a baby might need.

In 1924, based on a plan that had been proposed at the previous Relief Society conference (Lyman, 1923b), the General Board outlined appropriate items for these chests and bundles, but suggested that each locality tailor the list to their own needs ("Recommendations Of", 1924). These recommendations were so detailed that the organization of the chest itself, which was designed by the Bureau of Child Hygiene, was diagrammed in the magazine.

By 1925, according to the Relief Society Magazine, 13 health centers had been established throughout the Church, 13 stakes had maternity chests, 20 stakes had maternity bundles, and 599 wards had some provision for health and maternity work in the form of clinics, chests, bundles, or layettes. In addition, three stakes assisted their counties in paying for county or school nurses, and some stakes and wards paid for hospital care and provided clothing and equipment to hospitals ("Lyman", 1925a).

The dedication of the Relief Society to maternity care was so great, that in some cases, local Relief Society organizations started their own maternity hospitals. Reports of two of these ventures, originally given at Relief Society conference, appeared in the December 1925 issue of the Relief Society Magazine. One of these facilities was founded by the Cottonwood (Utah) Stake Relief Society, the other was set up by the Oneida (Idaho) Stake Relief Society.

In one address, Amanda N. Bagley, president of the Cottonwood Stake, described the operation of the Cottonwood Stake Maternity Hospital. Mothers who delivered at the hospital were charged \$40 for a two week stay. "That [fee] cover[ed] everything in the hospital, including the operating table, all medicine (unless there is a prescription by the doctor), the use of a baby's layette and the baby's laundry" (Lyman, 1925b, p. 636). Mrs. Bagley expressed her belief that care at the hospital was more cost effective than having a trained nurse in attendance in one's home. In addition, 24-hour nursing care, which was not available in the home, was provided for mother and infant at the hospital.



While the Cottonwood Stake had opened a maternity hospital, Nellie P. Head, president of the Oneida Stake, reported that her stake had established a maternity bed, which was not a conventional hospital, but a room equipped by the stake "for maternity purposes in the home of a practical nurse" (Lyman, 1925b, p. 637). This facility charged \$30 per week per patient which included "the board, the laundry, the medicine, use of the delivery table, and everything but the doctor's fee" (Lyman, 1925b, p. 638).

Each of these stake Relief Society presidents reported that physicians offered a discount to women who delivered their babies in these Relief Society facilities rather than in their homes. Nevertheless, each stake president recognized that some of their sisters preferred to remain in their homes.

The Relief Society Magazine did not offer further information about the success of these maternity homes. These ventures seemed to have evolved outside the direct oversight of the General Board:

. . . the General Board does not feel that it can give any specific advice in regard to maternity homes and their management from the fact that we might give instructions which we would think perfectly suitable, but which could not be carried out at all in your particular districts. But no matter where a maternity home might be established, a hospital-registered nurse should be in charge of the work, under the direction of the stake or ward president, who would be the direct head. (Lyman, 1924c, p. 319)

The Oneida maternity bed was operated by a practical nurse, apparently a departure from the advice of the General Board. The Relief Society Magazine did not describe the qualifications of the Cottonwood Hospital nurses; Amanda Bagley described them only as "two of the best nurses in the state" (Lyman, 1925b, p. 635).

In addition to reporting stake and ward innovations in providing maternity health care, the Relief Society Magazine published additional information relevant to expectant

mothers. For example, the magazine reviewed a book on maternal health written by a Utah physician, W. E. Hunter ("Book Review", 1928). It also published an article that promoted the Latter-day Saints Hospital's maternity ward as the facility where "nearly an entire floor [was] devoted to mothers and babies" (Snow, 1930). In still another instance, an article written by a registered nurse gave advice on prenatal care which included admonitions to avoid "eat[ing] for two" and to abandon high heels. It also asserted that there was "no reason. . .except on some occasions, for the old bugbear 'morning sickness'. . . . It may be caused by several conditions, and can generally be alleviated by your doctor, if not entirely eliminated" (Richan, 1930, p. 492).

In addition to these items, three articles specifically addressed the nutritional needs of expectant mothers. Only one of these articles appeared before the maternity program began in 1922 ("Mother's Condition", 1916). The two remaining articles were part of the 1925 series on nutrition written by Jean Cox. Mothers were taught the importance of eating foods that could provide calcium, phosphorus and iron (Cox, 1925c). They were also taught that emotional upset could disrupt normal digestive processes. Finally, the caloric requirements of mothers and infants were outlined (Cox, 1925b).

The Relief Society Magazine provided a glimpse of a heartily embraced program of the Relief Society. Mormon mothers benefitted from the programs that grew out of the Sheppard-Towner Act and the sale of Relief Society wheat. In 1930, Annie Wells Cannon summarized the value of the wheat trust:

When the World War came, and the wheat was needed and called for, you were ready to hand it over to the government to feed the army and the hungry. The golden kernels were not lost to us, but value received from the government, the interest of which you now may use in promoting health programs for the encouragement of motherhood and the relief of the afflicted. (Cannon, 1930, p. 334).

### Children's Health

While the health of women was a subject regularly discussed in the Relief Society Magazine, the health of children was another frequent topic. Any item that addressed a health topic in relationship to children was included in the category of children's health (see Table 5). These entries were found at least yearly in the Relief Society Magazine from 1914 through 1930; the heaviest concentration of entries appeared from the end of 1925 through the end of 1930 when the Relief Society's monthly social service lessons focused on "child hygiene". A November 1926 announcement described the Relief Society's interest in children's health:

Child Hygiene is one of the newest and most fascinating studies that is occupying thought at the present time, it is of paramount importance in the proper rearing of children, and for this reason it should be a topic of surpassing interest to all the mothers of our organization. ("Lessons For January", 1926, p. 581)

The entries about children's health covered a wide range of topics, including physical health, psychosocial health, nutrition, adolescence, and children's health programs.

#### Physical health.

The Relief Society Magazine's entries about physical health were based on the belief that the "most important phase of child development is the physical" ("Physical Problems", 1925, p. 671). The Relief Society Magazine noted that children with physical problems faced many challenges in childhood and in adulthood; therefore, it published many lessons that taught Mormon mothers how to avoid preventable physical health problems.

The Relief Society Magazine utilized data derived from medical research to illustrate the magnitude of physical afflictions among American children. In 1925, it reported that a study of 20,000,000 school children in the United States had revealed that 75 percent were afflicted with a physical defect of some kind. These defects included tuberculosis, defective hearing, defective sight, diseased tonsils or adenoids, mental defects, deformed

Table 5

Children's Health Theme: By Category and Entry Type

CATEGORY	Entry Type					TOTAL
	Articles	Lessons	Ads	Speeches	Reports	
Physical Health	4	18	1	4	1	28
Psychosocial Health						
Intellectual	2	10	0	1	0	13
Emotional	1	13	0	2	0	16
Social	1	7	0	0	0	8
Nutrition	19	15	0	6	3	43
Adolescence	3	4	0	0	0	7
Health Programs/ Stake Reports	6	3	6	15	77	107
TOTAL	36	70	7	28	81	222

feet, spine or joints, defective teeth, and malnutrition ("Physical Problems", 1925).

Other ailments recognized by the Relief Society Magazine included hypo- and hyperthyroidism, bedwetting, rickets and tuberculosis ("Child Welfare", 1926; "Physical Problems", 1926).

In spite of the variety of physical problems presented by the Relief Society Magazine, communicable childhood diseases were infrequently discussed. A rare item was a 1914 lesson that delineated the deleterious effects of measles, smallpox, scarlet fever, and meningitis on a child's ears, nose and throat ("August--Health", 1914). Aside from this example, the only childhood disease mentioned with any regularity was tuberculosis, and its mention was usually confined to the December issues of the magazine when donations for treatment and prevention programs were solicited through the Christmas Seals program. In 1929, childhood tuberculosis was discussed in some detail (Kleinschmidt, 1929) but information about other communicable childhood diseases was rare.

#### Psychosocial health.

Although the physical health of children was a concern expressed in the Relief Society Magazine, emotional, mental and social health topics were also found in the magazine. Lessons about psychosocial health began to appear 1924 and consisted of instruction about intellectual development, social integration, and emotional health.

The lessons taught mothers the norms of psychosocial development and provided guidelines for appropriate parenting. For example, the women were taught that children are not merely "small adults", and that while a child's energies and impulses often cannot be suppressed, they can be guided to expression on a higher plane. In addition, punishment was described as a "dubious" method of dealing with conduct problems ("The Child Study", 1928, pp. 574-575).

Other Relief Society Magazine lessons about psychosocial health dealt with the subject of intellectual development. A lengthy 1924 article about intellectual development and intelligence testing provided guidelines and information. In it, Loftor Bjarnason, an assistant professor of elementary education at the University of Utah, chronicled the development of standardized intelligence tests, extolled their benefits, and gave a

synopsis of the 1911 adaptation of Alfred Binet's IQ test (Bjarnason, 1924). The professor argued that "mentality tests" enabled a teacher to tailor a child's education to his individual capabilities. Bjarnason said, "The traditional A. B. C. D.-marking system is gradually being supplanted by a more definite and accurate system of evaluating the results of instruction. The tendency is to make teaching not only an art but a science" (p. 567).

Other lessons on psychosocial health included a 1926 series about emotional health and social development. The magazine explained the Relief Society's interest in psychosocial health:

The past discussions have indicated that the development of an individual is affected by his physical condition, by the degree of his mentality, and by his emotional experiences....A child may be perfectly well physically, may have normal intelligence, and have no serious emotional problems, and yet be doomed to failure and unhappiness. The barriers that keep him from growth and expression are not to be found within his personality, but in the environment in which he finds himself placed. ("Social problems", 1927, p.156)

#### Nutrition.

Nutrition was another aspect of children's health discussed regularly in the Relief Society Magazine. The magazine addressed the nutritional needs of two distinct groups: the infant, and the school-age child. Entries about infant nutrition included instruction about breastfeeding, bottle feeding, the introduction of solid foods, and weaning. The Relief Society Magazine authors strongly advocated breastfeeding, although by 1925, progress in the development of infant formula was reported (Cox, 1925d).

When the subject of weaning appeared, the Relief Society Magazine offered consistent guidelines. A 1917 lesson recommended that, because breast milk is deficient in iron, infants be weaned between nine and twelve months of age, the time at which a

baby's tissue stores of iron become depleted ("Correct Nursing Habits", 1917). In 1925, the nine to twelve month age range for weaning was reiterated (Cox, 1925a). In addition, it was recommended that weaning take place slowly, over a period of time. Cox (1925a) believed that the change from mother's milk to whole cow's milk should stretch over two or three months to prevent the child from becoming ill or losing weight. She said, "Each variation in the child's diet should be looked upon as an intelligent experiment and the results should not be confused by attempting more than one slight variation at one time" (Cox, 1925a, p. 189).

Guidelines about advancing a baby's diet stressed the importance of choosing a wide variety of nutritious and easily digestible foods (Cox, 1925a; "Health: Malnutrition", 1920; "Home Economics". 1917; "Introduction Of Solid", 1917). This concept was illustrated by a 1917 statement: "Mothers must not feel that because their babies get fat and look well [on high carbohydrate foods] that they are well. Invariably defects in development can be found. . . . We get a one-sided development from a one-sided food ("Home Economics", 1917, p. 119).

The Relief Society Magazine's concern with balanced nutrition was not limited to infants. The magazine also provided information for the feeding of older children and urged Mormon mothers to diligently attend to the diet of their school-aged children:

Care of the diet should not cease with the first few years of a child's life. . . . it is a grave mistake to relax the vigilant care of the child's food, leaving him more or less to his own devices in regard to the food he selects. ("Food For School", 1917, p. 238)

Many of the lessons and articles in the Relief Society Magazine recommended appropriate foods for the active school age child and provided calorie guidelines and height and weight tables by which each mother could determine the adequacy of her child's diet.

Although the Relief Society Magazine advocated a well balanced diet, there was one particular food that received pointed mention. At the June 1922 General Relief Society Conference, Mormon women were reminded that the Commissioner of Agriculture, A.A. Hinckley, had urged Mormon families to increase their consumption of milk and dairy products:

Utah [was] one of the four states out of 48, where only 50 per cent of the children use[d] milk. Women [were] urged to support Commissioner Hinckley in his campaign for increased production and consumption of these dairy products. Utah's standard is now one quart per day for every child, and every grown-up should help to establish and maintain this standard. (Lyman, 1922a, p. 340)

The State Health Commissioner also addressed a 1926 Relief Society Conference about the link between milk and good health when he reminded Relief Society members that skimmed milk deprived children of essential "nutriments and vitamins [sic]" (Lyman, 1926, p. 634).

The necessity of dairy products did not receive exclusive attention; the importance of breast milk was also discussed by Relief Society Magazine. In 1925, the magazine reported that a program at Long Island College Hospital had paid mothers to provide breast milk to sick infants. The infant of each milk donor was weighed regularly to ensure that it was not being deprived of nourishment, and the donated milk was distributed to sick and destitute babies. According to the article, "Most mothers [could] supply about one other baby as well as their own. Occasionally a woman [was] found who [could] supply her own and two other babies" ("Mother's Milk", 1925, p. 21).

The Relief Society's milk-promoting mission was explicitly stated by the Relief Society Magazine in 1925:

. . . if babies are to be saved, they must have proper milk in proper quantities for their sustenance. The Relief Society has exerted itself in a strenuous manner to have



all mothers acquainted with this fact, and, wherever babies are being deprived of good milk in right quantities, it is urged that steps be taken to supply these babies with milk. ("Mother's Milk", 1925, p. 20)

The Relief Society Magazine was able to provide information on nutrition because the Society had experts in their midst who authored articles on nutrition. Jean Cox, who wrote 14 articles, was the most prolific contributor to the magazine on the topic of nutrition. She had studied under the nation's nutritional experts, Mary Swartz Rose and Dr. Henry Sheinar of Columbia University, Dr. Lafayette B. Mendell of Yale, and Dr. E. V. McCollum of Johns Hopkins (Cox, 1925c). The Relief Society Magazine gave Mormon women the opportunity to take advantage of the expertise of other Relief Society members and served as a vehicle for disseminating up to date knowledge on the subject of nutrition to Mormon women throughout the Church.

#### Adolescence.

While the majority of the Relief Society Magazine's entries on the theme of children's health focused on the needs of infants and young children, there were occasional entries about the health needs of the adolescent. The magazine identified physical and emotional separation from parents as the main task of adolescence and advised Mormon mothers to provide guidance to their children without stifling their freedom. Mothers were reminded that a child's values and perceptions could be expected to differ from those of his parents and that those differences would emerge as the child asserted his identity. This concept was illustrated with the following example:

The majority of adolescent girls today use cosmetics in some form or other. If, however, the adolescent girl thirty years ago had used cosmetics as freely as does her daughter today, she would have been regarded as 'fast' and more or less immoral. . . and parents today are unconsciously applying the attitude of thirty years ago to the situation as it exists today. ("The Child Study", 1929, p. 171)

Further, Relief Society women were reminded that "If the child is to develop his own personality he must have the apron strings loosened. . . ." (Miller, 1928, p. 429).

This separation from parents, according to the Relief Society Magazine, was a necessary component of healthy sexual development. "If the mother has left too many emotional wrappings about the child during this period, the adolescent boy or girl has much difficulty in making healthy associations with individuals of the opposite sex" (Miller, 1928, p. 429). Mothers were encouraged to openly teach their children about sexuality and to avoid the "extremes" of sex education: "the danger of silence and taboo, on the one hand and the too frequent and morbid discussion of the subject, on the other. The middle-of-the-road position and an attitude of frankness are the best policies to pursue" ("The Child Study", 1927, p. 629).

#### Children's health programs.

Finally, on the theme of children's health, the Relief Society Magazine published accounts of state, national and Relief Society child health efforts. The child health work of the Relief Society had a tremendous impact in the communities throughout the Church. At the spring Relief Society conference of 1924, Bishop John Wells, of the Presiding Bishopric, acknowledged that five hundred Mormon children had been saved from death in the preceding year as a result of the "labors of this great body of women who understand normal conditions of sanitation and health. . . ." (Lyman, 1924c, p. 317).

Relief Society members were successful in their efforts, in part, because the Relief Society Magazine provided them with up-to-date instruction in the form of lessons. For instance, the child health lessons that were taught from 1925 to 1929 were based on information obtained from child health texts. From 1925 to 1927, these lessons were based on a text by Dr. Ira S. Wile entitled The Challenge of Childhood. From 1928 to 1929 the lessons were derived from another text, The Child: His Nature and His Needs ("General Conference", 1927; "Social Service Text", 1927). The magazine indicated that

these child health texts were chosen by a panel of health experts commissioned by the Relief Society General Board. In a 1927 account of a Relief Society conference, Dr. Arthur L. Beesley, expressed appreciation to those assembled at the Relief Society conference that he had been chosen to assist a committee in choosing a book appropriate for the study of child health ("General Conference", 1927).

As important as education was, the efforts of Mormon women were not limited to these monthly Relief Society lessons. The Relief Society Magazine supported other child health programs, such as vacation camps for underprivileged children. The object of these camps was to provide children with opportunities for exercise, wholesome food, and outdoor activities ("The Children's Vacation", 1929, "Summer Outing", 1930; "Vacation Camps", 1929).

The Relief Society Magazine also endorsed state and national child health efforts. In 1918, Clarissa Smith Williams commended the Woman's Committee of the Council of Defense for implementing educational programs designed to decrease infant mortality (Williams, 1918a). With the goal of saving 100,000 babies, the Council had designated 1919 as "Children's Year". The Council's Child Welfare Department and the U.S. Children's Bureau accomplished this goal by working through community groups such as Relief Societies (Derr et al., 1992). The health effort began on April 6, 1919 with a nationwide weighing and measuring program (Williams, 1918a; "National Aspects", 1919).

Pleasure was expressed by Relief Society Magazine writers when private or government organizations were active in efforts directed toward the improved health of children. Its articles expressed the opinion that government bore an obligation to ensure the welfare of children (Anderson, 1929; Utah Society for Mental Hygiene, 1929). In particular, the Relief Society supported legislation against child labor and argued that children's health could not be preserved when they were being exploited by mills,

factories, farms and mines ("Child Labor", 1924; "Legitimate Child Labor", 1924). It was apparent that the Relief Society had a great interest in children's health because of the large number and wide variety of entries found in the Relief Society Magazine on this topic.

### Public Health

The final health theme that emerged from the Relief Society Magazine was that of public health (see Table 6). Unlike the other themes identified in this study, the theme of public health did not revolve around a discrete segment of the Mormon population. The entries in this category contained information on a variety of topics applicable to a wide range of people. These entries informed Relief Society Magazine readers about a variety of health issues and illustrated the involvement of Mormon women in government and community activities designed to enhance the health of their communities. The three hundred fifty-five items with a public health theme included entries about disease and disability, health preservation, sanitation, political activism, social work, and civic involvement (see Table 6).

#### Disabilities and disease.

The Relief Society Magazine contained a variety of entries about diseases or disabilities. Among these items was one lesson about the occurrence and prevention of physical and mental illness and one report about pneumonia. The remaining entries were of two types: those that discussed the principles of communicable disease, and those that discussed a specific disease entity or a particular handicap. The Relief Society Magazine addressed the communicable diseases of influenza, the common cold, tuberculosis, and venereal disease. The noncommunicable entities discussed by the magazine were goiter, mental illnesses, and disabilities.

Communicable disease. The general principles of communicable diseases were discussed in 10 articles. The work of scientists, particularly that of Louis Pasteur, was praised for its contribution to disease prevention:

He [Louis Pasteur] certainly pointed the way that has led up to the present advanced [sic] position of medical science; and while there are hundreds of names of eminent men who have done much to bring medicine out of the realm of uncertainty and empiricism [sic] to the pinnacle of true science where it sits today, a shining

Table 6

Public Health Theme: By Category and Entry Type

CATEGORY	Entry Type					TOTAL
	Articles	Lessons	Ads	Speeches	Reports	
Public Health (General)	2	1	0	2	5	10
Disease						
General	0	1	0	0	0	1
Infectious	6	4	0	0	0	10
Influenza	2	0	0	3	9	14
Common Cold	2	0	0	0	0	2
Pneumonia	0	0	0	0	1	1
Tuberculosis	0	0	8	1	0	9
Venereal Disease	0	1	0	1	0	2
Goiter	4	0	0	1	0	5
Mental Health	3	4	0	6	0	13
Disabilities	2	1	0	2	2	7

(Table continues)

Table 6 (continued)

Public Health Theme: By Category and Entry Type

CATEGORY	Entry Type					TOTAL
	Articles	Lessons	Ads	Speeches	Reports	
Health Preservation (general)	7	7	1	5	0	20
Rest	0	1	0	2	0	3
Exercise	1	2	0	0	0	3
Recreation	0	1	0	3	0	4
Fresh Air	1	2	0	0	0	3
Hygiene	4	2	0	0	0	6
Nutrition	30	4	0	5	0	39
Word of Wisdom	15	4	6	3	10	38
Sanitation	6	8	0	9	7	30
Flies	5	4	2	4	1	16
Social Work	2	3	1	10	16	32
Political Activism	15	0	0	3	1	19
Civic Involvement	5	0	0	0	5	10
Red Cross	5	0	2	6	45	58
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>355</b>

monument should be erected to the names of Harvey, Jenner, Lister, and among the long list of illustrious men that have followed down to the present, none shine brighter than that of Louis Pasteur. (Wilcox, 1916, p. 413).

In all articles about communicable disease, the emphasis of the Relief Society Magazine was on disease prevention. For example, a 1920 article reminded Magazine readers that "communicable disease is preventable disease, and that the means of prevention are, (1) Personal hygiene; (2) Sanitation; (3) Isolation [and] 4. Vaccination" ("Health", 1920, p. 679). The importance of isolation or quarantine was reviewed again in 1924 by Dr. Jane Skolfield when she urged women to cooperate with regulations imposed by health officials (Skolfield, 1924).

Aside from providing general guidelines about infectious disease, the Relief Society Magazine focused on four particular communicable diseases: influenza, the common cold, tuberculosis, and venereal disease. The topic of influenza was treated 14 times. These entries were concentrated in the years of 1919 and 1920, a period of profound epidemic. In January of 1919, the magazine reported that "deaths from influenza in the United States up to November 30, 1918, were practically double the number of American soldiers killed in the war in Europe" (Anderson, 1919a, p. 46). In an effort to combat the epidemic, physicians had advocated the use of masks for protection, but had discovered that they, and attempts at vaccination, were ineffective (Anderson, 1919a, 1919b).

Concern over the influenza epidemic was great enough to lead to its discussion in both 1919 Relief Society conferences. It had also postponed the annual general conference of the Church that year ("Gems From", 1919). At the spring Relief Society conference, nurse Lillian Richards had urged her sisters to avoid disease by abiding by "all prophylactic measures advocated by the State Board of Health", and by following the

advice of "scientists and doctors of today who [have] spent their lives in medical research" (Gates, 1919, pp. 456-457).

When the epidemic was addressed at the fall conference, Clarissa Smith Williams acknowledged its impact on Relief Society work and Dr. George A. Middleton suggested strategies for its prevention and treatment. Dr. Middleton exhorted his listeners to "make every effort to keep themselves physically fit, by having an abundance of fresh air, by eating proper food, and by avoiding fatigue" (Lyman, 1919, p. 694). For those who provided care to the afflicted "the doctor suggested putting the patient to bed, giving him plenty of rest and quiet, and an abundance of fresh air" (p. 694).

In contrast to the entries about influenza, a less serious illness, the common cold, was discussed only twice in the Relief Society Magazine; once in 1915 and once in 1923. The first article suggested a variety of home remedies. It recommended, for instance, that a cold sufferer "take the juice of half a lemon in a glass of water; soak the feet in hot water, and put a cloth wrung out of cold water about the neck, and cover with a dry cloth. If there is a cough, eat dry salt freely" (Baggarley, 1915a, p. 253). The second article, reprinted from the Literary Digest in 1923, offered far different advice: don't sneeze or cough without covering the mouth and nose, don't share eating or drinking utensils with anyone who has a cold, don't shake hands with anyone while afflicted with a cold, and don't eat without first washing the hands (Hastings, 1923).

Another disease discussed by the Relief Society Magazine, tuberculosis, was the subject of eight advertisements and one speech. The advertisements were Christmastime entries that typically exhorted Relief Society members to assist the fight against tuberculosis by purchasing Christmas seals, an important source of revenue for the prevention and treatment of the disease:

. . .back in those dark days before the Christmas Seal came, there was no place in the entire country where a person suffering with Tuberculosis could be taken to be



cared for. Hard to believe that there was no such thing as a Chest Clinic for the early discovery of the disease; that a Public Health Nurse was a being practically unknown. Hard to realize that people generally did not know that Tuberculosis can be cured, that Tuberculosis can be prevented . . . . The Christmas Seal has done much to educate the people against this dread disease. ("Your 1926 Opportunity", 1926, p. 608)

The only entry about tuberculosis that was not an advertisement was a reprint of a speech given by Adaline A. Buffington (1924) before the Utah Public Health Association. Buffington attributed the high incidence of tuberculosis to the conditions of poverty, which included "damp and ill-ventilated houses", "poor food, not enough food, wrong food, ill-cooked food", and "fatigue resulting from over-work, or work under poor conditions" (p. 577).

Buffington strongly advocated the establishment of tubercular sanatoria and pleaded for an increased contingent of public health nurses. She said, "The only remedy for the whole difficulty seems to me to lie in education. We need to educate our public to the fact that we have the disease in our midst, that it is a problem which we must solve, and that to solve it we need resources" (Buffington, 1924, p.580).

The last communicable disease addressed in the Relief Society Magazine, though briefly, was venereal disease. In 1919, Judge Hugo B. Anderson, of the Juvenile Court, discussed venereal disease at the fall Relief Society conference. He urged parents to properly discipline and guide their children. He said, "In the past month three cases of immorality have occurred. . .while the girls were left unchaperoned, and the parents were upstairs asleep (Lyman, 1919, p. 695). A 1922 lesson described the magnitude of this health problem:

We are informed that during one year, 1919, there were more human beings injured and killed from venereal diseases than the United States lost during the entire war in

France. When we realize that a large proportion of these who are thus made to suffer are innocent victims, it seems doubly important that we take every precaution to protect our homes. One of the best ways to do this is to inform our sons and daughters of the nature and consequences of these diseases. We do not want our innocent daughters to become sterile, our grand-children to be destroyed before or at birth, or to be born blind and helpless. To avoid these things, we must candidly inform our sons and daughters of the danger of intimate and free associations with men and women whose lives and character they know very little about. We do not exaggerate when we say that more suffering after marriage results from ignorance, carelessness, and sin before marriage [sic] than from any other cause. ("Health Education", 1922, pp. 116-117)

Noncommunicable diseases. Unlike the four diseases presented above, the other illnesses presented in the Relief Society Magazine were not infectious entities: mental illness, crippling injuries, blindness and deafness.

Various aspects of mental health were discussed in the magazine. In particular, it expressed concern for children and adults who were "feeble-minded" or who were mentally ill, and outlined the responsibility of the state in providing care for them. Amy Brown Lyman, a member of the Relief Society General Board, was involved legislative efforts in behalf of the mentally ill and the feeble-minded. In part, her influence changed the name of the State Mental Hospital to the Utah State Hospital (Lyman, 1923a) and established the Utah State Training School for the Feeble-minded (Lyman, 1930).

The Relief Society Magazine attributed mental illness to stress, overwork, and unstable families. Therefore, the magazine carried speeches and lessons that encouraged parents to provide a stable home life and to teach their children how to cope with life's challenges (Lyman, 1927; "Social Service" 1925). In addition, a 1930 series of social service lessons, based on the text, Influencing Human Behavior, taught Relief Society

members about the components of personality and introduced them to theories of behavior modification.

Unlike mental illness, the problem of feeble-mindedness was not attributed to stressful living conditions. Amy Brown Lyman described the nature of the problem in 1930:

Regarding feeble-mindedness, I should like to state that just a few of us are entirely able-bodied, so most of us go through life more or less mentally handicapped. Between the mental disability of which the possessor may never be conscious, and so-called feeble mindedness, there are all possible gradations, and all of us fit in somewhere along the line. Psychiatrists tell us that a so-called feeble-minded person differs from the normal person only in learning ability, and that the principles of mental hygiene apply to him just as they do to the rest of society; that we all have the same emotional problems. The aim of society is to assist the child of slow learning ability to good personality development and to success. (Lyman, 1930, p. 23)

A second noncommunicable health problem discussed by the Relief Society Magazine dealt with the issue of disabilities. Three types of handicaps were discussed: crippling illnesses and injuries, blindness, and deafness.

The Relief Society Magazine recognized that World War I had handicapped many American men. In a 1919 Relief Society conference, Beth Bradford explored the health challenges presented by war injuries and described the government program that had been designed to address the problems faced by returning soldiers:

The rehabilitation of the disabled and handicapped soldier is one of the greatest problems the country has ever faced. The whole world, today, is doing what it can to re-adjust the soldiers into the economic and social systems of peace times, and the rehabilitation of the disabled has become a world necessity. . . .In January, 1919, 200,000 of our men were disabled in hospitals here and overseas; 3,000 had lost

limbs, 110 were blinded, and 5,000 were suffering from tuberculosis, and several thousand were suffering from shell shock. It is not true that these men will have to beg for their living. The days for the hat holders, cup bearers, and the man who sells shoe-strings on the streets are days of the past. In June, 1917, congress unanimously passed a law called the Vocational Rehabilitation Law. Under this law was appointed a Federal Board whose duty it is to give to every disabled soldier who is entitled to compensation, all medical and surgical treatment necessary to restore him to health and strength, give him free training for the occupation best suited to him, then assist him in securing a position. The government has accomplished wonders, in restoring these maimed boys back to health and strength, if not to normal activity. (Gates, 1919, pp. 448-450)

Aside from the disabilities of soldiers, the Relief Society Magazine dealt briefly with two other disabilities: blindness and deafness. Amy Whipple Evans devoted an entire article to each problem: "What Utah is Doing for the Blind"; and "What Utah Does for the Deaf". These articles explained the programs available at the School for the Blind and at the School for the Deaf, each located in Ogden, Utah. The School for the Blind provided youngsters with a "general education. Arithmetic, geography, history, and other elementary subjects [were] taught by competent instructors" (Evans, 1923b, p. 117). Deaf students were also taught the basic subjects of "geography, arithmetic, and the history of Utah" (Evans, 1923a, p. 378) in addition to sign language and methods of oral communication.

All of the articles about disabilities indicated that the Relief Society supported and encouraged government and private ventures for the assistance of individuals with disabilities. The Relief Society assisted the blind by encouraging its members to donate rags and stockings to the workshop for the blind, and by urging them to patronize the establishment, which produced rugs, couch covers and table runners (Lyman, 1924b).

The last non-infectious disease discussed by the Relief Society Magazine, was goiter, a subject that was addressed only five times. Four of these entries were articles that were written by physicians. The Relief Society Magazine did not explain its sudden interest in thyroid disease, but in 1923, the year before the goiter series appeared, Amy Brown Lyman had reported that a \$2,000 appropriation bill for the study of goiter had been defeated in the Utah House of Representatives. She said that goiter was "very prevalent in some . . . communities" and she expressed the hope that a future provision would be made for prevention and treatment the disease (Lyman, 1923a, p. 275). By 1924, the Relief Society Magazine reported that Utah and several other states were "making a survey for goitre" (Wallace, 1924, p. 346).

The magazine articles educated Mormon women about normal thyroid function and about the health consequences of thyroid disease. Three articles talked about goiter that resulted from iodine deficiency, but one identified two types of goiter:

. . .the ordinary one, recognized by an enlargement just below and on either side of the Adam's apple, and the "pop-eyed" type. The former when well developed sometimes causes the victim to be depressed and constantly nervous; also to have pasty faces, dull eyes, and ashy complexions. . . . The second type of goiter, the "pop-eyed," is usually accompanied by hot and cold flushes, warm sweats, rapid pulse, and bulging eyes. Patients with this type have a high death rate and usually must undergo a surgical operation if they recover. Fortunately only about two per cent of the total goiter cases are of this more violent type. (Butt, 1928, p. 81)

The focus of the articles on thyroid disease was more on iodine deficiency than on the "pop-eyed" type of thyroid dysfunction. The importance of iodine to proper thyroid function was emphasized but each author insisted that iodine treatment be administered and regulated by a physician. Sears (1924) expressed this position: "Let no one . . . undertake self-treatment for goiter, by the use of iodine. Iodine in goiter is like a two-

edged sword and should be administered only by a competent physician after a careful study in each case . . . ." (p. 250). Wallace (1924) also discouraged dietary iodine supplements:

. . . if you give Mary Brown ten milligrams of iodine, you know that she has received ten milligrams. If you put it into the public water supply, you do not know how much Mary Brown is going to drink. If you put it into the salt supply, which is the method in use in Switzerland, you do not know how much salt she is going to use. (p. 347)

The factors that precipitated the articles on goiter were not delineated but the Relief Society Magazine brought this illness, and all the conditions discussed above, to the attention of the members of the Relief Society..

#### Health preservation.

A variety of items contained in the Relief Society Magazine emphasized preventative health care; 116 items discussed various aspects of health maintenance. A 1914 article expressed the importance properly caring for one's body: "Spiritual life could not long survive without the support of the physical being. The development of body and soul, heart and mind is accomplished simultaneously, if both are properly exercised" ("Home Ethics", 1914, p. 9). Moreover, a 1915 article stated that, "Poor health ordinarily makes of a man a grouch, a growl, or a pessimist; it fetters the individual and keeps his nose to the grindstone and his eyes on the ground, instead of on the stars" (Baggarley, 1915b, p. 110). The health maintenance entries in the Relief Society Magazine offered advice about rest, exercise, recreation, fresh air, hygiene, nutrition, and the Word of Wisdom.

The subjects of exercise and recreation were not mentioned frequently, but their benefits were recognized. A 1925 article outlined the necessity of both exercise and recreation, exercise to "keep every muscle in good working order" and play, for "mental relaxation". It asserted that, "anything that is of mental benefit is pretty sure to be of

physical help, too, for a happy, contented mind can often buoy up a tired out body" (Wallis, 1925, p. 598).

While the benefits of exercise and recreation were delineated, the need for rest was also acknowledged:

Everybody needs rest to keep his body engine running. Edison, who claims he can live on but a few hour's sleep at night, often rests on a couch at intervals during the day. When there has been a strain, either mental or physical, the body needs more rest. Try going to bed earlier when the day's toil has seemed particularly trying.

Mothers, go to bed earlier when the children or housework have given you a difficult day. The next day's efficiency will be doubled. (Wallis, 1925, p. 598)

Furthermore, the Magazine scolded parents who jeopardized their health by ignoring their need for rest:

Too often a father or a mother will make unwise and unnecessary sacrifices of their own health in order to carry on the ordinary home duties. This attitude of parents toward their own bodies is sure not to stimulate in the minds of their children the importance of health, and moreover it will sooner or later render the parent less efficient. ("Physical Efficiency", 1922, pp. 58)

In a similar vein, the health hazard of becoming overwhelmed by family and church responsibilities was the topic of a 1927 speech by Jennie B. Knight:

If we are carrying too heavy a load our health is bound to break . . . . I would advise the sisters that if they are carrying too heavy a load, to be relieved of a little of it--put it on to the shoulders of some other person who is not carrying quite such a heavy load, and do not break down your health, because you cannot find happiness if your health is gone. (Lyman, 1927, p. 309)

In addition to rest and recreation, the Relief Society Magazine advocated another component of good health, fresh air . Mormon women were encouraged to open their

windows at night, no matter what the weather (Allen, 1919"; "Helps For Health", 1919; July--Health", 1914b). Sleeping outdoors, where an unlimited supply of fresh air was available, was considered superior to sleeping indoors, even with good indoor ventilation (Allen, 1919; "Out Door Sleeping", 1924). In fact, one article proposed that, "Outdoor sleeping increases the power to resist disease, and greatly promotes physical vigor, endurance, and working power" ("Out Door Sleeping", 1924, p. 581).

Good hygiene was another health preservation topic found in the magazine. In particular, bathing was advocated as a method of preventing disease and promoting physical vigor. A 1914 lesson called the bath essential, something that "should be taken more with the idea of keeping clean than with the idea of getting clean" ("July--Health", 1914a, p. 6) The baths advocated by the magazine were of two kinds, warm and cold. "Warm baths are more for cleansing, while cold baths are for purposes of stimulation" (p. 6). "A warm bath is good for nervousness or sleeplessness; a cold one is a bracing tonic that beats tea, coffee, and drugs a mile" (Baggarley, 1915d, p. 328).

An excerpt from a Relief Society Magazine biography of Eliza R. Snow, provided anecdotal support to the belief that cold baths and fresh air had healing properties:

[Eliza Snow] lived first in what was known as the Old Log Row, and there lay upon a bed of suffering for a number of years. She had consumption and nearly coughed and spit her lungs and life away. . . . Sister Snow came across a book of Dr. Dio. Lewis's, recommending daily cold baths and plenty of fresh air. She immediately adopted this regime and those who sometimes peeped into her bed-room on a winter morning would find a wooden tub full of water with a thin coating of ice on it before her bed, all ready to used for a morning ablution. Sister Snow never wholly recovered from the irritating little cough which was the only result from her long siege with consumption. ("The Mother", 1916, p. 186)



The final aspect of health preservation encouraged by the Relief Society Magazine revolved around adherence to the principles of good nutrition and obedience to the Word of Wisdom. The magazine's publications about the nutrition of mothers and children have been discussed previously, but many other items about nutrition were applicable to the general population of the Church. One of Jean Cox's 1925 articles explained importance of good nutrition:

Perhaps some of you wonder why there is so much emphasis on the relation of nutrition to health. It is largely the result of the study of cause and effect. There are too many cases of illness of various kinds in which wrong diet has been a contributing factor. (Cox, 1925e, p. 356)

Relief Society members were taught about the components of a balanced diet, which included milk and dairy products, and in accordance with Word of Wisdom doctrine, fruits and vegetables, and small quantities of meat.

The nutrition entries that were published during World War I were distinctive when compared to other articles about nutrition. The dietary changes they advocated reflected the recommendations of the Food Service Administration's head, Herbert C. Hoover. He had requested "housewives to give daily service to the war effort by preparing wheatless and meatless meals and carefully using milk, fats, sugar, and perishable foods (Derr et al., 1992, p. 207). Therefore, the Relief Society Magazine encouraged Mormon women to increase their use of vegetables, to grow a garden, and to decrease their use of meat. A 1918 lesson which stated that "peas, beans, nuts, and wheat, are important for the protein which they contain and may be used in place of meat in the diet" taught Relief Society members how to substitute vegetables for meat ("Meat Substitutes", 1918, p. 654). A 1918 article proposed that two to three different vegetables be served at every dinner. The health benefits these mealtime alterations were acknowledged: "Our change

in diet on account of the war will improve the American race. We were eating too much in volume and too rich in quality" (Hyde, 1918, p. 515).

Frequently, the Relief Society Magazine recognized that the scientifically acquired knowledge of nutrition paralleled the revealed knowledge found in the Word of Wisdom: "The Word of Wisdom counsels us to eat grains, vegetables and a little meat. These requirements are very much in accord with the present scientific teaching in nutrition" (Cox, 1925e, p. 356). However, few of the Word of Wisdom entries addressed nutritional principles. Instead, the prohibitions against and health dangers of tobacco, alcohol and stimulants were recited. Nine of the 38 Word of Wisdom entries encouraged Relief Society members to participate in groups that worked to prohibit the sale and use of alcohol and tobacco.

The relationship of the Word of Wisdom to health was promoted by the editor of the Relief Society Magazine. The magazine reprinted an early Times and Seasons article written by Hyrum Smith in which the Patriarch asked, "Why is it that we are so dull and languid? It is because we break the Word of Wisdom [that] disease preys upon our systems. . . ." (Smith, 1915, p. 492).

All of the entries on the theme of health preservation were designed to teach Mormon women how to prevent disease. The Relief Society Magazine was a vehicle for educating Relief Society women about the health preservation benefits of the Word of Wisdom, exercise, rest, good hygiene, and balanced nutrition.

#### Sanitation.

Another public health topic found in the Relief Society Magazine revolved around the issue of sanitation. The first article appeared in the Relief Society Bulletin in 1914, the last appeared in 1928.

Many of the entries in this category were about a fly extermination effort that was conducted by the Relief Society. According to the magazine, an anti-fly campaign began

in Salt Lake City in the spring of 1914 when a bounty of 10 cents a hundred and 15 cents a pint was offered for the pests (Stark, 1914). In 1915, the Relief Society Magazine reported that "the 'fly' campaign [had] resulted in the destruction of literally bushels of flies" ("Circular of Instructions", 1915, p. 139). This "fly war" continued in some form for many years. By 1928, Mormon women were still receiving praise for their fly extermination activities and encouragement to persist in their efforts (Allen, 1928; "Now's The Time", 1928).

In addition to these efforts, the Relief Society Magazine provided a glimpse of other sanitation activities undertaken by Mormon women. The sanitation entries that occurred most frequently were Relief Societies social service lessons which encouraged home and community cleanliness, proper food handling and careful home canning. Later, in addition to the "fly war", Relief Society women participated in another formal sanitation program. Launched in 1927, this program, entitled "Civic Pride", was introduced in Relief Society conference by Counselor Louise Y. Robinson. She encouraged Relief Society members not only to join this community beautification movement, but to enlist others in the campaign:

We ask that the Relief Society take the place in the community that the mother takes in the home, and that you appeal to the Primary, the Boy Scouts and other agencies, that you may put this work over in a real campaign. A survey in delinquency was made in one of the large cities recently, and the captains of the police reported that they found the most trouble with restless boys, who lived in districts where there were no trees or parks, and where the streets were not kept up. I believe if we could get proper civic ideals before the boys and girls in an attractive way, that they would respond . . . .Children should not, however, be left to work alone. The cooperation of everybody should be secured in civic work. ("Relief Society Conference", 1927, pp. 20-21)

By the next Relief Society conference, the women of the church were beginning to realize the success of their sanitation campaign. Sister Robinson remarked that "from all over the Church we . . . had the most splendid reports of the civic pride work that the women have begun in their stakes" (Lyman, 1927, p. 295). In 1928, Sister Robinson exclaimed, "While the General Board always knows that the women in the stakes are faithful in doing anything that is asked of them, they were entirely unprepared for the excellent results that have been realized from our teachers' topics on Civic Pride . . . . The reports are wonderful; I wish we had room in the Magazine for them . . . ." (Allen, 1928, p. 25).

#### Social work.

The Relief Society Magazine showed that the Relief Society participated in other community health efforts. In its quest to promote public health, the Relief Society embraced social work. Amy Brown Lyman, a member of the magazine's editorial staff and a member of the General Relief Society Presidency, was instrumental in introducing the Relief Society to the principles of social service. Her involvement in social welfare began during World War I, in January of 1919, when the Relief Society organized a social service department and named Lyman as its director. Throughout the 1920s, this department "served as a center which cooperated with other private and public welfare agencies in the interest of needy LDS families" (Blumell, 1979, p. 96).

The Relief Society Magazine's entries about social work may be numerous enough to warrant a study of their own. For this study, however, only 32 items that made a direct connection between social work and health were extracted. The first of those was Amy Brown Lyman's 1919 report of the National Conference of Social Work (Lyman, 1919). Then, the stated health goal of social work was the improvement of public health through the prevention and treatment of physical, emotional and social illnesses.

Mormon women heartily embraced social work. The Relief Society Magazine contained accounts of the participation of Relief Society leaders in state and national social work conferences. The leaders not only attended conferences, but they also conducted social work seminars of their own, in which they disseminated their knowledge of social work to Relief Society members that resided in rural Church communities (Lyman, 1928a). Stake reports attested to the fact that seminar attendees carried their newly gained knowledge of social work home and implemented its principles in their communities.

#### Political activity.

Their concern for public health and their involvement in social work drew Mormon women into the political arena. The Relief Society Magazine provided evidence, that in politics, as in social work, Amy Brown Lyman was a conspicuous example. As chairman of the health committee in the Utah House of Representatives, she introduced and sponsored the Sheppard-Towner Act, which allowed Utah to benefit from the maternal and child health provisions of the federal Sheppard-Towner Act. At a 1923 Relief Society conference, Lyman (1923a) reported that "through [those] provisions the state of Utah [had] available for maternity welfare work, \$21,000 a year" (Lyman, 1923a, p. 273). She also reported that the legislature had passed a bill that changed the name of the "State Mental Hospital to the Utah State Hospital, the idea [was] to eliminate the term which specific[d] the type of patients admitted to the institution. It is very regrettable that there seems to be a stigma attached to mental diseases for which human beings are no more responsible, than they are for physical ailments" (p. 273).

Amy Brown Lyman was a model of political responsibility, an attribute that the Relief Society Magazine encouraged through plea and example. The magazine published sketches of eleven politically active Mormon women (see Appendix B). These women provided an example of the necessity, propriety and ability of women to become involved

in policy making and to exercise their newly restored rights of suffrage. The political responsibility of Mormon women was explicitly outlined in two speeches. One example, was Janette A. Hyde's address at the April, 1923 Relief Society Conference:

Through the recent activity of women much valuable legislation has been secured, but more legislation is needed in the interest of women and children, consequently it becomes not only the privilege but the duty of every woman to support and initiate measures which have for their object the amelioration of human conditions. (Lyman, 1923a, p. 309)

Dr. Hugh Woodward's 1924 article echoed Mrs. Hyde's belief that women were essential to the political process and that they possessed a perspective that was vital to health policy reform (Woodward, 1924). Janette Hyde described it succinctly: "You may ask, 'Would not the men in the legislature have done the same?' I shall only answer you by asking: 'Have they done it in the past?' " (Lyman, 1923a, p. 308-309).

#### Civic involvement.

As an extension of their political activity, Mormon women were involved in several civic organizations. These included the Utah Public Health Association, the National Council of Women, the International Council of Women and the Red Cross.

The Relief Society Magazine revealed that Mormon women were not only members, but very active participants in these civic organizations. In 1922, Amy Brown Lyman reported that the Relief Society was a charter member, second in seniority in the National Council of Women (Lyman, 1922c). Another example of active civic involvement was a 1930 report of Amy Lyman's participation in a meeting of the Western Branch of the American Public Health Association at which she was elected to the organization's regional board ("Another Word", 1930). Furthermore, the Relief Society Magazine showed that Mormon women did not confine their civic involvement to organizations located in the United States. A 1930 entry reported that Leah D. Widtsoe, the Relief

Society president of the European Mission, had received an appointment as a delegate to the British National Council of Women ("British National", 1930).

Although the Relief Society Magazine often noted the civic accomplishments of Mormon women, it also recognized the remarkable health care work of non-Mormon women. Articles were written about Kate Waller Barrett (Cannon, 1925), Valeria H. Parker ("Dr. Valeria", 1927), and Mary E. Richmond (Evans, 1929). Each of these women were involved in civic organizations that addressed health and social welfare concerns. Dr. Barrett and Dr. Parker were involved in the National Council of Women; Mary Richmond was recognized by the magazine as a pioneer in the field of social work. The Relief Society Magazine acknowledged that the efforts of these women paralleled and furthered the health and nursing goals of the Relief Society.

Of all its civic activities, the Relief Society's involvement with the Red Cross affected the greatest number of Mormon women and occupied the majority of entries in this category. Red Cross entries were heavily concentrated in the World War I period of 1917 to 1919.

The first article about the American Red Cross was a biography of Clara Barton, the nurse who founded the organization. The biography's author, Susa Young Gates, remarked that several prominent Utah women had become acquainted with Clara Barton at a 1902 meeting of the National Council of Women and had later visited in her home. This personal relationship with the nurse-founder of the Red Cross may have fueled the Relief Society's interest in its work (Gates, 1917).

In 1917, the Relief Society Magazine published guidelines for the involvement of Mormon women in the Red Cross that illustrated the society's efforts to cooperate with other organizations while maintaining the identity of Relief Society:

Some of our members are desirous of assisting with Red Cross work and inquiries have come to the office with regard to it. The General Board has delayed making

definite recommendations in this matter until a plan could be devised whereby Relief Society women who desire to take up Red Cross work may do so in Relief society groups and be known as Relief Society Red Cross workers, thus maintaining the identity of the Relief Society organization. (Lyman, 1917, p. 510)

According to published recommendations from the General Board, Relief Society groups worked directly with county Red Cross chapters and Red Cross work was done at Relief Society work and business meetings (Lyman, 1917). This work included making knitted goods, hospital garments and surgical dressings, and raising money for the Red Cross. Evidence of the zeal of local Relief Societies in Red Cross work was found in the photographs the Relief Society Magazine published which depicted Mormon Red Cross workers, marching in parades dressed in Red Cross uniforms (Williams & Lyman, 1919).

Through the Red Cross, Mormon Relief Society women were organized in their desire to contribute to the health challenges brought on by World War I. Though the Relief Society Magazine's Red Cross entries were most numerous during the war years, the Relief Society continued its affiliation with the Red Cross even after the war, evidenced by the occasional mention of Red Cross work after the war's end in 1919. For example, in 1930, the Magazine announced that Priscilla L. Evans, a Utah woman, had been elected to chair a session of the Ninth Annual Red Cross Convention, the first woman chosen to fill the position ("The Magazine", 1930). The Relief Society Magazine showed that the goals of national service organizations were compatible with the health and service goals of the Relief Society and that Relief Society members were active and vital participants in those organizations.



## CHAPTER III

### Discussion

Content analysis of the Relief Society Magazine from 1914 through 1930 revealed that health work was important function of the Relief Society, particularly in the early part of this century. According to Amy Brown Lyman, the Relief Society participated in "a wave of humanitarian sympathy and scientific inquiry which [had] gradually spread over the whole country, creating a new interest in human beings" (Lyman, 1945, p. 60).

The magazine showed that Mormon women assumed the role of nurse or caregiver; they bore the responsibility for meeting the health care needs of the members of their community. They were most active in addressing the health care needs of women and children. The specific health needs of the men of the community were not pointedly addressed; the topic was only peripherally treated in public health entries that were applicable to the population in general. Perhaps Mormon women had a greater sense of stewardship for other women and for children that led to the abundance of health entries that related to those groups.

Analysis of the Relief Society Magazine revealed five themes that demonstrated in interest of Mormon women in nursing and health care: Nursing, faith healing, women's health, children's health, and public health. Some of these themes pervaded the entire study period, but others were more concentrated at certain time periods. For example, nursing entries appeared frequently before 1924, but after the Relief Society School for Nurses' Aids was closed that year, entries about nursing became infrequent. In the area of women's health, the topic of maternal health programs did not appear regularly until after 1922, the year when funds from the wheat trust were released for health work and the year in which the provisions of the Sheppard-Towner Act made monies available in Utah. Finally, the theme of faith healing, which consisted of only five entries, was not found in the magazine after 1919.

In contrast, children's health and public health topics were found throughout the 17 year study period, although certain aspects of these themes were prominent at various times. For example, lessons about children's health were found most often after 1925, entries about the involvement of the Relief Society in Red Cross work were found primarily in the World War I period, and reports regarding social work were found after 1919.

Entries from the magazine indicated that the Relief Society operated all its welfare work, including its health efforts, with the belief that organized relief was more beneficial than indiscriminate giving and that education and prevention were far more effective than activities aimed only at cure and palliation. Much of the health advice found in the Relief Society Magazine is applicable today because the focus was primarily on care, not cure, and prevention, not treatment.

As the official voice of the Relief Society, there were topics and issues that the Relief Society Magazine was not designed to address, therefore, we cannot gain a full historical perspective of the nursing and health work of the 1914 to 1930 period. For example, it is from the studies of historians that one realizes that the sale of Relief Society wheat, that eventually led to the implementation of maternal health programs, was made without the knowledge or consent of the Relief Society leadership (Embry, 1982). Other documents might also lend further insight into the scarcity of articles about faith healing.

The Relief Society Magazine's brief treatment of the topic of faith healing was curious, since the exercise of faith on behalf of the sick has been an important feature of the Church. Historical works suggest that, although women were allowed to perform healing ordinances until 1946, there was some unrest in the Church about the propriety of this practice. According to Newell (1987), in 1913, Relief Society President Emmeline B. Wells acknowledged that some of the brethren of the Church were

uncomfortable with the practice of women giving blessings. She expressed the hope that the healing privilege would not be taken away from the faithful women of the Church.

Alexander (1986) noted that many spiritual gifts were discouraged from open expression, by men and women, in the early 1900s: "Except for personal religious experiences, the church leadership clearly wanted religious manifestations to come within recognized lines of priesthood authority and within doctrinally defensible limits" (p. 296).

It should not be surprising that points of disagreement over the wheat sale, faith healing, or any other issue, were not discussed in the Relief Society Magazine. Its purpose was to inform Relief Society members about official health and nursing programs and policies and to receive reports of the work done by local units. It was not designed to present a history and it only allows us to view nursing and health from one point of view. One cannot know, from this one source, the discussion or debate that preceded the implementation of particular health programs. Nor is one given insight into programs that may have been adopted by the Society only to fail in subsequent application.

In the 1914 to 1930 period, the Relief Society's health and nursing efforts were directed by three presidents: Emmeline B. Wells, who was at the helm during the operation of the Relief Society nursing schools and the initiation of Red Cross work; Clarissa S. Williams, a staunch advocate of nursing and maternal health programs; and Louise Y. Robinson, a diligent Red Cross worker and the author of "Civic Pride", the community and home beautification program. Louise Robinson would be called on to lead the Relief Society through the difficult years of the Depression.

Another influential leader in the area of health was Amy Brown Lyman, although she would not become General President until 1940. She was the energizing force behind many of the Relief Society's health interests and was prominent in politics, social

work, and civic organizations. She herself, expressed her interest in the fields of child health and mental hygiene (Lyman, 1945). Her work for maternity care through the Sheppard-Towner Act, and for the mentally ill and feeble-minded in the naming of the Utah State Hospital and the establishment of the Utah State Training School, have been noted in addition to her leadership responsibilities in the social welfare movement, in the National Council of Women, and in the Red Cross.

If, as Florence Nightingale (1860) said, "every woman is a nurse" (p.3), the Relief Society Magazine showed that Mormon women demonstrated flair for and commitment to the role. Although most Relief Society members did not participate in nursing in a formal sense, Mormon women were nurses in the sense that they assumed a caregiving, caretaking role in their community. The Relief Society furthered its health efforts by cooperating with government and civic agencies to accomplish common goals.

Alexander (1986) outlined the effectiveness of these cooperative efforts:

Cooperation between the Relief Society and public agencies produced in Utah the greatest reduction in the maternal death and infant mortality rates in the nation. By 1931, Utah ranked with five other states in the lowest group. . . . Relief Society women made up the majority of members of the various health center committees and. . . the cooperation of the society with the state was responsible for the success of the maternity and infant work (p. 131).

In addition to revealing the health care and nursing activities of the Relief Society, the Relief Society Magazine gives one a glimpse of the character of Mormon women between 1914 and 1930. The image is of women who were sure of their role in the Church and in society. These sisters realized that as women, they had unique talents, that they were in a position to recognize the needs of their community, and that they had the ability to effect needed change. Relief Society women were imaginative in developing plans to address problems and tireless in their implementation of solutions.

In addition to providing us with a glimpse of Mormon women and the nursing and health work in which they were involved, this study showed that the Relief Society Magazine was a valuable method of communication between the leadership and membership of the Relief Society. It leads one to wonder if the men of the Church had a similar vehicle for disseminating information and receiving feedback from priesthood quorums. One also wonders if other religious women's groups communicated through an official publication similar to the Relief Society Magazine.

Clark (1991) described the magazine as "perhaps the single best barometer of the temperaments and attitudes, joys and woes of generations of Mormon women in this century. It was the repository of the articulation of Relief Society's goals, modus operandi, and developing curriculum" (p. 82). It indeed, provides a valuable tool for understanding nursing and health care among Mormon women.

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## Appendix A

### Women Recognized as Nurses in Biographical Sketches

"Mother" Angel, mother of Mary Ann Angel Young

Marinda Allen Bateman

Diantha Morley Billings

Sister Ann Booth

Margaret Mitchell Caine

Sister Chandler

Sister Ducanson

Helen Gibson Ellsworth

Sister Fielding

Bathsheba Blackburn Grundy

Caroline Bacon Rogers Hardie

Janet Downing Hardie

Martha Hardy

Margaret Harrington

Sister Higbee

Caroline L. Holt

Sister Hyde, wife of Heman Hyde

Mary Connolly Kimball

Presendia L. Kimball

Sister Latham

Elizabeth Grace McCune

Mary Birch Miller

Rebecca Neibaur Nibley

Sister Dicey Perkins

Sister Rawson

Susannah Liptrot Richards

Sister Saunders

Patty Sessions

Hannah Neslen Sharp

Edna L. Smith

Julina L. Smith

M. Melissa Summerhays

Sister Janette Taylor

Clarissa S. Williams (mentioned twice)

Sister Katherine Wilson

Zina D. Young (mentioned three times)

## Appendix B

Politically Active Mormon Women

Emily McDonald Carlisle

Grace Avery Cooper

Luncinda P. Jensen

Millie Pinney Lowe

Amy Brown Lyman (3 entries)

Ascha E. Paxman

Anna Thomas Piercy

Martha Paid Purser

Julia Kendricks Smart

Mrs. Frank Page Stewart

Laura Woodland Tanner

Nursing and Health Care Among Mormon Women: An Analysis  
of the Relief Society Magazine, 1914-1930

Sarah Walker Barney

College of Nursing

M.S. Degree, August 1993

ABSTRACT

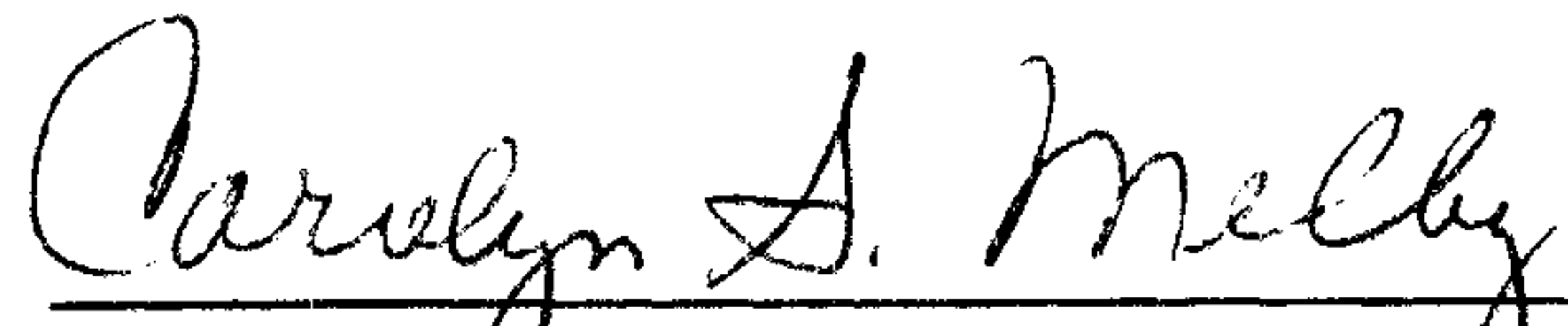
This descriptive study examined the nursing and health care activities of Mormon women in the pre-Depression period of 1914 through 1930 through analysis of the official voice of the Relief Society, the Relief Society Magazine. Entries from the Relief Society Magazine that dealt with any nursing or health care topic were coded according to the themes they addressed. Five themes emerged: Nursing, faith healing, women's health, children's health, and public health.

In each of the themes, the Relief Society Magazine showed that the members of the Relief Society recognized the health care problems of their communities and claimed responsibility for addressing those challenges. Mormon women developed programs and cooperated with existing government and private organizations to achieve their health care goals. The existence of the Relief Society Magazine gave Mormon women a vehicle for communicating their nursing and health care plans, goals, and successes with each other and provided an instrument for exploring the nursing and health work of Mormon women in the 1914 to 1930 period.

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