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Social Change, Gender and Education: Exceptional Swedish Immigrant Women at North Park College, 1900-1920

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Park College, 1900-1920.

Sofia A.T. Hiort Wright

Virginia Commonwealth University, 2006

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Social Change, Gender and Education: Exceptional Swedish Immigrant Women at North
Park College, 1900-1920

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy at Virginia Commonwealth University

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Abstract

Social Change, Gender and Education: Exceptional Swedish Immigrant Women at North Park College, 1900-1920

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy at Virginia Commonwealth University

Virginia Commonwealth University, 2006

Director: Dr. Samuel Craver
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The present study focused on the educational and career experiences of four selected Swedish immigrant women at North Park College in Chicago from 1900-1920. There is a gap in the extant literature with regard to the Swedish immigrant women experiences, and this study attempted to shed some light on this fascinating topic.

The study examined the lives of three selected Swedish immigrant women students at the College and their lives afterwards as missionaries in China. It also examined the life of Lena Sahlstrom, a faculty member at North Park College during the same period. The four women were exceptional individuals, each in her own way a pioneer. Hilma Johnson studied business for one year at North Park College before becoming the Covenant Church's first woman missionary to China in 1901, a commitment she maintained for 40 years. Hilda Rodberg was the first female graduate of the Swedish Covenant Hospital Nursing School in 1900, and she became a missionary in

China for over thirty years. Victoria Welter was the first woman to graduate from North Park College's Seminary Department in 1903, after which she, too, left for China to serve as a missionary, where she married John Sjoquist, a medical missionary. Welter was the only one of the four to marry, and after the death of her husband in 1917 she returned to Chicago to complete her children's formal education.

Caroline "Lena" Sahlstrom was the first female faculty member at North Park College. She was a teacher in the Primary Department and the Music Department, and she also served as the Dean of Women during part of her long tenure at North Park College. Her contributions to the school and the students were impressive, and she was a committed educator of her time

Each of the four women valued education and religion, and each was influenced in various ways by their experiences at North Park College. Hilma Johnson, Hilda Rodberg, and Victoria Welker chose professional careers as missionaries in China where they ministered to many people through teaching and health care. Influenced by her educational and religious background, Lena Sahlstrom chose to join the faculty at North Park College where her years of service and various roles impacted the lives of many students. While economic advancement was not a goal for any of the four, they all chose professional careers and lives of commitment that differed from the traditional roles filled by most women of their day. All four were role models who made a difference in many peoples lives.

CHAPTER I

Introduction

The North Park community located on the northwest side of Chicago has been a Swedish enclave since the 1880s. In that community an institution named North Park College opened its doors for instruction in the summer of 1894. It was Swedish immigrants who founded the College under the sponsorship of the Swedish Evangelical Mission Covenant Church. Indeed, the majority of the students enrolled at North Park College during its first years of operation were immigrants, many of whom had only recently landed on American soil. Among the students enrolled during the College's first year of operation were six women. The number of women students in the second year doubled to 12, or 12 percent of the 100 students enrolled at that time (Carlson, 1941; North Park Catalogue 1894-1895).

Traditionally, education and religion were two very important facets of Swedish society, and it should be no surprise that Swedish immigrant women would also want to continue the tradition in America. Despite the fact that Swedish immigrant women were among the first students enrolled at North Park College, little to no scholarly examination has been given to their lives as students in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

The present study investigated what educational life was like for Swedish immigrant women at North Park College in Chicago from 1900 to 1920. This was accomplished by researching the educational and subsequent career experiences of three selected female students and the first female faculty member at the College. The three students were Hilma Johnson, Hilda Rodberg and Victoria Welter, and the faculty member was Caroline “Lena” Sahlstrom.

Rationale for the Study

Sweden has a rich history of immigration, providing one of every seven individuals to immigrate to the United States between 1859 and 1930 (Jansen, 1931). In fact, one fifth of Sweden’s native-born population was living in the United States by 1910. Despite the large numbers of women immigrating to the United States from many countries, when faced with the topic of immigration most people probably think of male immigrants and their endeavors. From 1850 to 1920, between 30 to 50 percent of the immigrants from Europe were women, particularly between 1890 and 1920 when their numbers increased dramatically. Approximately 244, 000 single Swedish females immigrated between 1881 and 1920 (Herzig, 2001; Lintelman, 1991).

The literature contains a number of research studies on Swedish immigration, but most of the attention is on Swedish male immigrants. Scholars have noted how many of the Swedish women acquired a higher standard of living in America compared to their status back in Sweden, and attention has been given to such factors as how many Swedish women were employed as domestic servants and seamstresses and how this was

considered to be a step up in society (Beijbom, 1979; Kastrup 1975). Despite the numerous studies on Swedish immigration, however, there is still a clear gap in the literature with regard to women immigrants. Moreover, Sweden differed from many other countries in having a significant number of single women to immigrate to various urban areas in the United States from 1890 to 1930, but little has been done on their educational experiences after arriving in the United States.

Statement of Purpose

Because there is a clear gap in the literature regarding the educational experiences of Swedish immigrant women, it is important for the understanding of America's history to shed light on that experience. The purpose of the present study was to examine the lives of three selected Swedish women immigrants in Chicago from 1900 to 1920 when they were students at North Park College, and their lives afterwards as missionaries in China. The study also included the examination of a fourth person, Lena Sahlstrom, a Swedish immigrant woman who was the first female faculty member at North Park College.

Because this particular college was founded by Swedish immigrants and located where many Swedes settled, it was the school of choice for many Swedish immigrants who wanted to further their education; hence it is an appropriate source for this study. The purpose of the present study was to understand the process of how selected women adapted to the immigration process and what impact their educational experiences at North Park College had on their lives, by incorporating the women's own thoughts, words and feelings as much as possible with other historical evidence.

Background of the Study

Immigration has been a vital part of American society throughout its development, and issues raised by immigration continue to generate intense debate today. Although the rate of immigration has waxed and waned throughout the last century, the U.S Census Bureau reported at least 11.7 percent of the American population as late as 2003 could still be classified as immigrants (Foreign-Born Population, online, 2003).

Old and New Immigration. From 1840 to 1930, there was massive immigration from Europe to America. The literature has traditionally separated the “old” and “new” immigration: “Old immigration” occurred prior to 1883, when approximately 95 percent of the immigrants came from England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Germany, Belgium, France, Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. During the “new immigration” after 1883, however, new patterns emerged such that by 1907, 81 percent immigrated from Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Poland, Rumania, Russia, Serbia, Spain and Turkey (Stephenson, 1964). Many of the “new” immigrants were culturally different from the “old” immigrants, and this may explain the growing cultural tensions in the United States at that time, but whatever the causes for the change in attitudes toward immigrants, it led to the enactment by the U.S Congress of the immigration law of 1924, which set a limit of 150,000 immigrants per year. In addition to this maximum limit, a limit was also set on the numbers of immigrants from each country in Europe.

The immigrant experience varied depending on one’s ethnic background. The timing of immigration has also been identified as a major variable in determining the

assimilation success and quality of life for immigrants in America (H.B.Cavalcanti, personal communication, June 17, 2003). The Scandinavian countries, as well as some of the other Northern European countries, were greatly favored in this process, because they were viewed by American society as culturally non-threatening, hardworking people (Ljungmark, 1979; Tozer, 2004). Nevertheless, the 1924 law brought an historic end to an important part of American and European history, because immigration was seriously curtailed thereafter.

Most of the immigrants arriving from Europe as part of the new immigration came with an imperfect understanding of America and its way of life. Many came to pursue their dreams of greater economic freedom. They thought that America was wealthy and grand, with plenty of cheap and readily available farmland and many factories paying high wages. However distorted this view may have been, at least some of it came from the letters that friends and families who had already migrated sent back to their native countries. Although many immigrants were successful in their new society, life was often very hard and challenging, a fact not often mentioned in those letters home because the writers tended to exaggerate their “prosperous” life in America (Stephenson, 1964).

During the later years of massive immigration, the majority of European immigrants settled in large cities. Chicago was one city whose population increased dramatically due to immigration, beginning in the middle decades of the nineteenth century. The possibility of obtaining employment in the expanding transcontinental railroad network, of which Chicago became a major hub in the second half of the

nineteenth century, was one of the main draws that city had for immigrants. Furthermore, the various neighborhoods that grew up in and around Chicago, although separated along a variety of ethnic identities, served as main sources for housing, education, and religious and social activities for each distinct ethnic group (Duis, 1998). Some of these groups included the Swedes, Italians, Germans, Poles, Irish and Norwegians. Most of the immigrant neighborhoods were located on the north side of Chicago, and by the turn of the century, first- and second-generation inhabitants made up 77 percent of the total population in Chicago (Harzig, 1997). Swedes were among the largest groups of immigrants settling in the city.

Trends in Swedish Immigration. Sweden is a relatively small country with a population in 2004 of only 8.9 million (Statistiska Centralbyran, 2004). Extant records do not accurately reflect the number of Swedish emigrants, but it is estimated that approximately 1.3 million people left Sweden for America from 1850 to 1930. Immigration has long been highlighted from countries such as Germany, Italy and Ireland, but when looking at the number of immigrants in relationship to their country-of-origin's population, Sweden and England are tied for third place. Only Norway and Ireland had a greater proportion of their populations to emigrate to the United States (Blanck, 1997; Ljungmark, 1979).

Swedish immigration occurred in several different phases with a variety of factors playing important roles in the process. It is important to note that most of the immigration from Sweden was voluntary, but there were “push and pull” factors that must be considered. The main “push” for most Swedish immigrants was the poor economic

conditions during the latter part of nineteenth century, aggravated by repeated crop failures that occurred several years in a row. The most significant pull factor was the famous so-called “American dream” of becoming economically secure in the United States (Blanck 1997; Kastrup, 1975).

Although people emigrated from Sweden to the United States prior to 1868, the first phase of large-scale immigration occurred from 1868 to 1873. The majority of the “old” immigrants were farmers from rural areas in Sweden and they settled in rural areas throughout the Midwest of the United States. They were drawn by the hope of tilling and owning their own land and thereby becoming more economically secure. During the 1870s and 1880s, however, Swedish immigration to America decreased, due mostly to the improved economy in Sweden, boosted by such developments as increased lumber production and railroad construction (Ljungmark, 1979).

The second phase of new immigration, from 1891 to 1920, was when the demographics of the Swedish immigrants changed. There were fewer families and more single young men and women, and the American labor market was a major factor in this phase of Swedish immigration (Nelson, 1979; Kastrup, 1975). This time the majority of immigrants settled in larger cities in the Midwest, such as Chicago and Minneapolis. Most Swedish men worked as carpenters, blacksmiths or hired laborers, while most Swedish women found jobs in the fields of domestic work and the textile industry (Olson, 1990). Relatively large numbers of women were able to obtain employment fairly easily, and Beijbom (1971) suggests that this was due to most women having received some kind of training in domestic service or in textiles in Sweden before they immigrated.

As mentioned, an important reason for Swedes immigrating to America came from letters written by immigrants to relatives and friends back in Sweden. For prospective immigrants, this was a major source of information about America, and for the most part the letters portrayed a very bright and promising future life for those who would immigrate to America. The majority of immigrants did not write about the difficulties new arrivals might encounter, rather, they wrote about the bright future lying ahead, which increased the eagerness for many individuals to embark on the long journey to America (Kastrup, 1975; Ljungmark, 1979; Stephenson, 1964).

Two characteristics of Swedish immigrants appeared consistently in the literature: the importance of religion and education. Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century, religion was an extremely important part of most Swedish people's lives. The Church of Sweden was Lutheran in nature, and it was part of the Swedish state. During the American urbanization era, Swedish immigrants built many churches. For example, between the years of 1880-1920, there were seventy-two churches built by Swedes in Chicago alone. According to Blanck and Runblom (1991), the churches "provided a means of relational, ethnic identification and solidarity and used a language which Swedes could understand" (p.77).

Pursuit of education was long a key part of Swedish society, and the Swedish population in the nineteenth century demonstrated a high degree of literacy compared to many other European countries. One reason was the impact of the Reformation on Sweden in the sixteenth century, which highlighted the need and importance for people to be able to read and understand the word of God (Blanck, 1997, p.128). Sweden's Church

Law of 1686 prescribed that all persons should learn to read and write. Furthermore, in 1842, Sweden established a compulsory school law. Due to the high value placed on literacy and education by the Swedish society, most of the Swedish immigrants that came to the United States at the end of nineteenth century possessed some level of education. As a result, a number of Swedish immigrants were actively involved in education in their new country, even starting their own schools.

From 1860 to 1914, 30 schools were established in the United States by Swedish immigrants. Sixteen of these schools were created by the Augustana Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (Anderson, 1993). Swedish Methodists established schools as well. Thus, when the Swedish Evangelical Mission Covenant Church was founded in America in 1885, its members soon wished to start their own schools too, opening their first, called Skogsbergh's school, in Minneapolis in 1891. Three years later it moved to Chicago and the North Park community taking the name "North Park College" (Anderson, 1993; Carlson, 1941).

By the time they were finished with this phase of their American experience, Swedish immigrants of various denominations had established 30 schools in all in the United States. Despite their good intentions, however, only six of the 30 still remain in operation today, and one of the six is North Park College (now North Park University) (Anderson, 1993).

Possessing some level of education, particularly having the ability to read, helped Swedish immigrants make their way in their new homeland (Olson, 1990). In addition, many Swedish immigrants felt a sense of control when involved in the education of their

children. Blanck (1997) reports that the founding of several colleges in the Northeast by Swedish churches played a deciding role in the creation of the Swedish-American identity. The availability of such schools helped immigrants learn English, earn a better living, and become more “Americanized.” At the same time, a strong sense of Swedish identity was retained among the immigrants. From 1908 to 1917, the Swedish language was part of the public schools in Chicago (Anderson, 1993).

Once the immigrants settled in their respective areas, they formed ethnic communities. There are endless definitions of a community in the literature on ethnic groups. According to Nisbet (1966), “community is a fusion of feeling and thought, of tradition and commitment, of membership and volition...Its archetype, both historically and symbolically is the family and in every type of genuine community the nomenclature of family is prominent” (p. 47). Community study is a form of inquiry, and the purpose of it is to study the conditions in which a community exists (Arensberg, 1954). The present study focuses on four persons associated with the North Park College community from 1900 to 1920.

According to the U.S Census of 1900, there were almost 50,000 Swedish immigrants living in the Chicago area. Only the Germans and the Irish immigrants had higher numbers residing in Chicago (Department of Commerce and Labor Bureau of the Census, 1900). An obvious draw was the development of the railroads, which brought so many immigrants to the city and enabled them to seek a variety of employment opportunities. Early on, Swedish immigrants settled in the northwest part of the city, and this attracted other Swedish immigrants because it was a place where they found cultural

support, mutual-aid networks and increased opportunities for employment. This area became the North Park community (Nelson, 1979).

North Park Community. North Park was commonly called 'Swede town' because of the large number of Swedish immigrants residing there. Geographically, the community was located in the area bounded by Chicago, Division, Larabee and Franklin Streets (Olson, 1990). In comparison to other communities in Chicago, North Park was a working class, immigrant community, yet a place where businesses, schools, churches and other institutions flourished with two of the dominant institutions soon becoming North Park College and the Swedish Mission Covenant Church.

North Park College In 1894, the Swedish Mission Covenant Church founded North Park College and Theological Seminary in Chicago, which later became North Park University in 1997 (North Park University, online, 2006). When the college opened it consisted of the Seminary Department, Primary Department, Commercial/Business Department, Music Department, as well as the Academy. Even though the school struggled with its enrollment during its first ten years of operation, the establishment of the school helped make North Park into a more close-knit community because it became the gathering point where social, religious and educational events and learning took place (Carlson, 1941). In this communal setting, North Park College became a vital institution in furthering the education of Swedish immigrants and others.

The present study investigated four Swedish immigrant women associated with North Park College between 1900 and 1920 in an attempt to develop a better

understanding of the challenges and issues faced by these women during the opening decades of the twentieth century.

Research Questions

The study focused on four research questions with regard to Swedish immigrant women attending North Park College in Chicago from 1900 to 1920. The research questions are as follows:

1. What importance did the pursuit of education have for the Swedish immigrant women attending North Park College?
2. How did attendance at North Park College impact the socioeconomic status of the Swedish female immigrants?
3. What importance did religion have for the Swedish female immigrants at North Park College, a church supported institution?
4. What importance did the student societies and school organizations have for the Swedish women immigrants at North Park College?

Significance of the Study

Compared to other nations, Sweden had a significant number of Swedish single women immigrating at the turn of the century. This study highlighted the educational experiences for three selected Swedish women immigrants from 1900 to 1920 at North Park College in Chicago and after as missionaries in China. The present study revealed the educational importance of social networks, including student organizations and societies for the Swedish women immigrants.

Lena Sahlstrom was the first female faculty member of North Park College and she served the school for 34 years. This study examined her teaching career at North Park, including her contributions as a tutor for students, music teacher, faculty sponsor and published author.

Selection of the three Students and the Faculty Member

Three students were included in the present study, Hilma Johnson, Hilda Rodberg and Victoria Welter. They were selected because of the archival information about their lives at North Park. In addition, they each had a unique story that was deemed appropriate and important for the present study. More specifically, Hilma Johnson migrated by herself as a young woman to the United States. She enrolled at North Park and only one year later became the first of two women sent to China as missionaries. Hilda Rodberg was the first student to graduate from the Swedish Covenant Hospital Nursing School and the second student (along with Hilma Johnson) to depart for China, also embarking upon a missionary career. Important to note are the reasons for including Hilda Rodberg in this study. She was not a graduate of North Park College, but the Swedish Covenant Hospital Nursing School and North Park College collaborated closely during this time frame. Students who enrolled in the nursing program during the time period of the present study were required to take the academic courses at North Park College. Therefore, Hilda Rodberg spent time as a student at North Park, and was certainly a part of the North Park College community. Her association and connection with the North Park community is also evident in her being chosen to go to China along with Hilma Johnson. The third student included in the study was Victoria Welter, the first

woman to graduate from the Seminary Department at North Park College, who also became a missionary in China.

Caroline Lena Sahlstrom was the first female faculty member at North Park College, starting at the College in 1902. She served the school in many roles throughout her years: teacher and Director of the Primary Department, teacher in the Music Department, and Dean of Women Students. She also served as the faculty sponsor for student organizations, and provided individual tutoring to students who needed additional help. The reason for including her in the present study is that she served the college a total of 34 years, and her contributions to the College not only deserves attention and recognition, but she serves as an example of the kinds of people and educational guidance afforded to students at North Park College.

Methodology

Historical Research

The present study is a historical research study. It is an investigation using both primary materials and secondary sources, and subjecting them to scholarly analysis and interpretation. This method of inquiry contains three different parts: Research, or the gathering, identification and location of sources and the selection of evidence from them; analysis, or subjecting the research evidence to internal and external criticism; and synthesis, or the reasoned interpretation of the evidence and the attempt to clarify meanings and draw warranted conclusions from the results (Griggs, 1991, p. 228; Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

According to Lawrence Stone, (1981), there are six major fields of historical inquiry: history of science, demographic history, history of social change, history of mass culture, urban history, and history of the family. In the present study on Swedish women immigrants, following Stone's lead, the primary field is the history of social change; the secondary fields are history of the family and urban history, but with a special focus on education. The history of social change examines the interaction of the individual and society: urban history involves what happens in cities; and the history of the family examines family life, kinship ties, family structures, marriage, and changing gender roles (Stone, 1981). In the overall sense, however, the present study is a history of education, which, according to Brickman (1973), is needed to understand fully the educational system in any country, "to take into account the evolution of its educational institutions, practices and ideas" (p.227).

Primary Sources. Written documents are an important part of primary sources, including letters, diaries, journals, newspapers, court records, and other documents such as official minutes. Primary sources also include artifacts such as images, drawings, paintings, photographs and such things as physical geographical and geological conditions during the time period studied.

The primary sources used in the present study included letters, diaries, personal papers pertaining to the time, church minutes, Swedish-American organizational records, and institutional records of North Park College and numerous other documents of similar nature. It is generally agreed that in historical research, primary sources provide the most essential and necessary evidence (Griggs, 1991).

The author collected the sources needed for the present study using different archival collections in both the United States and Sweden. The F.M Johnson Archives and Special Collections in the Brandel Library at North Park University in Chicago contains important primary records, documents, artifacts, and other aspects of its collection regarding the history of North Park College as well as significant primary and secondary materials on Swedish-Americans in the Chicago area and in the Covenant Church. The Library's collections also contain the archives of the Swedish-American Historical Society, the records of the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Studies, the denominational records of the Evangelical Covenant Church, and a variety of student-related records of North Park College such as student newspapers, ledger books and personal papers, and correspondence. The F.M Johnson archives contained the majority of primary sources used in the present study.

In Sweden, two archives were utilized in the present study. One was the Swedish Emigrant Institute in Vaxjo, Sweden, which provided passenger lists from the ships that took passengers to America, official Swedish immigration records, personal letters, church records, family papers, and other personal information. The other was Carolina Rediviva, the library of Uppsala University in Uppsala, Sweden, the largest and oldest research library in Sweden. Among other things, it houses collections of "America letters" to and from immigrants, correspondence between officials at North Park College and the Archbishop of Sweden, numerous church records related to the Evangelical Covenant Church, and newspaper accounts and other writings pertaining to the time period of the present study.

In the present study, approximately thirty percent of the primary sources were written in Swedish. Some of the correspondence between David Nyvall, the President at North Park College, and Lena Sahlstrom were written in Swedish, as well as some of the letters written by the three students. Faculty minutes and organizational meeting minutes and attendance books are also examples of other sources written in Swedish. All the translations into English were done by the author.

Secondary Sources. Secondary sources not only help confirm evidence found in primary sources, but also aid interpretation and understanding of the subject matter. Secondary sources include published materials that discuss primary sources and summarize events described in some of the primary sources. An important aspect of secondary sources is to help evaluate and analyze primary sources.

The secondary sources most helpful for the present study included books and articles about the history of Swedish immigration, publications on immigrant women, and studies on the Swedish female immigrant experience. In addition, important background information on the history of China and the working conditions there were supplied by secondary sources, as well as background information about the history of women's education in the United States, with regard to both students and faculty members.

Evidence Collection. The researcher used a purposeful sampling method based on the country of origin, gender, and enrollment status of students at North Park College from 1900 to 1920. By necessity, the researcher selected individuals who left a sufficient collection of correspondence to family and friends on which to conduct research. This included three individual students who over a period of years consistently wrote letters to

North Park College, the Missionary Aid Society, and others. The one faculty member included in the study, Lena Sahlstrom, left her papers to the North Park University Archives, including a number of articles published in "*Forbundets Veckotidning*", which was the weekly newspaper of the Covenant Church that circulated both in America and Sweden. Among other things, the articles include materials on women and women's issues.

There are several methods for analyzing secondary sources that the researcher incorporated in the design of the study, including biographies. Marshall and Rossman (1999) state that life histories are uniquely suited to depicting the socialization of a person into a cultural milieu and making theoretical sense of it. Thus, one understands a culture through the history of a person's life development within it, told in ways that capture that person's own feelings, views and perspectives (pp.120-121). Use of life histories was important for the present study because it helped the author reconstruct and understand how the selected female lives evolved.

Historical research seeks to uncover, verify, and interpret what happened in the past. According to Marshall and Rossman (1999) "historical analysis is particularly useful in obtaining knowledge of previously unexamined areas and in reexamining questions for which answers are not as definite as desired" (p.124). The present topic of the educational and career experiences of Swedish immigrant women has been a largely unexamined area; hence, the intent of the present study to conduct historical research and analysis on this topic seems justified.

To recap, the collection of evidence was completed through extensive use of archives located at:

- North Park College of Chicago, Illinois
- Chicago Public Library
- Covenant Church archives at North Park College
- Swedish-American newspapers
- Carolina Redeviva in Uppsala, Sweden
- Emigrant Institute in Vaxjo, Sweden.

Analysis and Evaluation of Evidence. After collecting the evidence, the researcher examined and evaluated it through internal and external criticism. External criticism helps determine the genuineness and authenticity of the documents. When using letters, diaries, institutional records and other similar documents, the researcher must compare such things as handwriting samples, watermarks, chemical analysis of the document, etc. to verify authenticity and the authors' style and consistency in a given piece of evidence (Brickman, 1973). This process attempts to answer whether or not the source is what it seems to be, and whether or not it answers the question "why, where, when, how and by whom" the document was written (Brickman, 1973, p.93). This is very important since it distinguishes authentic evidence from hoaxes and misrepresentations.

Internal criticism is a process of analyzing information provided within the documents used for a study. The document itself may be genuine, but it is equally important to validate the information provided. Internal criticism is also valuable in detecting any biases evident in the source used. This is done through finding out whether

or not the author of the document was an eyewitness to the event described, what kind of sources were used in documenting the event, and did the author have any evident motivations when writing about the event (Brickman, 1973).

Following internal and external criticism is the process of analyzing the evidence collected. Boyce (2000) identified three important steps in historical analysis (p. 334):

1. Allow for all possible answers in framing the questions.
2. Consider whether the logic of an analysis is open to the charge of arbitrariness or circularity, and alter it if necessary.
3. Review the evidence to remove sources of bias, and consider the possibility of widening the range and sources of evidence.

The kind of analysis used in historical research is usually qualitative and inductive, although quantitative and deductive analysis is also used. The present study on Swedish immigrant women used inductive qualitative analysis. In historical research, data are generally presented in a narrative style, but when appropriate, researchers may also utilize figures and tabulations (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997). Social history in particular relies heavily on statistical data and often engages in sophisticated statistical analyses to arrive at valid and reliable conclusions about the past. Whatever the specific methodologies used, the serious historical researcher should provide reasoned descriptions of the evidence and construct meaningful explanations of past events. During the collection phase of the present study, evidence was organized, and where appropriate, stored digitally. Sorting all materials into a separate file on each Swedish female immigrant helped do this.

The final part of historical research, according to Brickman (1973), is the organization, synthesis, and interpretation of the facts into a logically structured form. This researcher continually organized, synthesized and interpreted throughout the collection of evidence and analysis of the selected Swedish immigrant women in Chicago.

Rigor. The researcher enhanced design validity by using participant language and verbatim accounts where appropriate. Since the goal of the study was to understand the experiences and perspectives of the Swedish women immigrants, it was important that their language be used where appropriate (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997). The researcher enhanced reliability of the study through “audibility” by recording data management techniques, codes, and categories as a “decision trail”. This helped the researcher with organizing and confirming the emerging themes.

Summary

The purpose of the study was to examine the educational and career experiences of Swedish immigrant women at North Park College during 1900-1920. The time period is important because large-scale immigration from Sweden to the United States occurred during that period. The importance of religion, student societies and school organizations for women at North Park College were also examined. The present study is significant because current literature is very limited about the experiences of Swedish women immigrants.

Three students were included in the present study, Hilda Johnson, Hilda Rodberg and Victoria Welter. All three women were born in Sweden and migrated to the United

States. Johnson migrated by herself as a young woman, while Rodberg and Welter migrated as children together with their families. All three women left Chicago for missionary work in China.

Caroline Lena Sahlstrom was also born in Sweden, and migrated with her parents and siblings when she was a young child. She started her teaching career in Minneapolis, and started at North Park College in 1902. She was the first female faculty member at North Park, and she remained at the College for 25 years as a teacher and an administrator. Her contributions to North Park College were included in the present study.

The methodology used in this study was historical research. Primary sources were gathered in both Sweden and the United States, with the majority collected at the F.M. Johnson Archives in the Brandel Library at North Park University. Secondary sources included major studies on immigration to the United States, educational studies, and other sources deemed appropriate for the present study, but special attention was paid to the studies on the history of Swedish immigration, immigrant women and the experiences of the Swedish immigrant women.

CHAPTER II

Review of the Literature

Introduction

The literature review is divided into two broad categories, secondary sources and primary sources. The secondary sources included immigrant studies, educational studies, and ancillary material. There are numerous studies on various immigrant groups, including Swedish immigrants: however, there is scarce information regarding the Swedish female immigrant experience. The following secondary sources were selected with several criteria in mind: The pattern of immigration, the number of individuals immigrating, and the significance of immigration for both the country of origin and the United States. Sweden had a large proportion of its population to emigrate, and during the period of time covered by the study, most of them settled in urban areas. Hence, the place of settlement was also a factor when choosing the selected works.

Secondary Sources

Most immigrant studies published in the last century were community studies, usually characterized by an author spending a significant amount of time in a particular immigrant community to document life events and significant changes in that

community. The community studies were addressed first in the following review. Next, selected studies on different immigrant groups were reviewed because they describe lives of immigrants in America during the era of large-scale immigration covered by the present study, and they provide useful comparisons and contrasts. For instance, despite the differences between various ethnic groups, most studies show certain common experiences among all immigrants during the time period.

The bulk of the secondary sources reviewed below are devoted to Swedish immigration, but only a small portion of this available literature is on Swedish immigrant women. Indeed, this is a characteristic of the history of immigration generally speaking, for although there have been numerous studies published on various immigrant groups, almost all of them lack one thing: the details, descriptions, and stories of how life was for female immigrants in the United States.

Immigration Studies

The review of immigration studies is divided into community studies, studies on immigrant women, Swedish immigration studies, and studies on Swedish immigrant women.

Community Studies. The field of community study is not a newly formed type of inquiry; the fields of anthropology and sociology have used this method for a long period of time, and it has been widely used to study various immigrant groups in American society. A classic form of community study was *Middletown* by Robert and Helen Merrell Lynd (1929), and while it was not specifically aimed at immigrants, the Lynds'

goal was to find a typical American community where they would be able to study many aspects of life in a natural setting. They were predominantly interested in social change and how the community dealt with the various social changes occurring in the beginning of the twentieth century. They wanted to show change in the process of how past behavior affected new behavior between 1890 and 1924.

The Lynds' used census data, interviews, observations and questionnaires to gather their data. Interviews covered areas such as employment opportunities and employment satisfaction, family structure and family life, and the values and beliefs of the people in the Middletown community. Observations were also made of housing, community life, leisure activities, education and child-rearing. They found that the rate and direction of change was highly variable within Middletown. People often experienced stress from change, but some experienced stress from the failure to change, most often when it came to situations involving their children. If children gained some advantages from change, their parents were more likely to change and adapt themselves (1929, p.498-499).

Carol Stack's *All Our Kin*, (1974) is a classic ethnographic community study. Stack gathered information about daily life in "Jackson Harbor", which is a pseudonym for a city in the Midwest. She focused her research on "The Flat" community, which consisted primarily of a black population within Jackson Harbor. Because she felt there was a lack of good community studies on black families, she deliberately chose to study daily life in a black urban community. Although most previous studies had portrayed black families as poor, uneducated and deviant (1974, p.22), Stack examined a variety of

family issues, including portrayals of women's lives, domestic relations within the community, and the network of kinship among the members. Stack spent three years in "the Flats", during which time her status changed from being a white woman outsider, to a friend and advocate who was considered to be part of the community. Particularly of interest for the present study was her focus on the female perspective and what an understanding of womanhood and parenthood meant in this community (Stack, 1974).

One key study is Florian Znaniecki and William Thomas, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (1996). The authors examined the culture and social organization of Polish immigrants in the United States from 1880 to 1910. They attempted to make a thorough examination of family, neighborhood and community ties, and found that most Polish immigrants adapted to American life by adapting to groups who were experiencing changes themselves and by associating with whom they felt comfortable (p.xiii).

The Polish family was the primary focus of the Znaniecki and Thomas study. The authors wanted to show the effect immigration had on family life, and an important result was the authors' analysis of letters sent from immigrants back to their families in Poland, a body of material that provides fascinating information about how Polish immigrants created new identities in the United States, even though it was generally believed that most Polish immigrants were peasants who resisted assimilation and preferred sticking together in their ethnic communities. One set of letters was written by peasant wives left back in Poland to their immigrant husbands in the United States. Although the letters displayed a great deal of helplessness, despair and longing for their husbands to come back to Poland, requests for money by the wives were one of the most common topics in

the letters. Interestingly, there was hardly any discussion of the wives traveling with their children to the United States to be reunited with their husbands. Apparently, a wife's social status and sense of financial security in Poland was dependent upon the success of her husband in America (Znaniiecki and Thomas, 1996).

Elderly parents also wrote letters to immigrant sons in the United States, just as immigrants wrote to their extended families back in Poland, and these forms of correspondence provided important background for the study. Such letters provide a great deal of insight into how individual immigrants adapted with varying levels of success to American life. While the Znaniiecki and Thomas study is an excellent example of an immigration study, one weakness is the paucity of comparable description of what it was like for Polish females in an immigrant community in the United States.

William Foote Wythe's *The Street Corner Society* (1943) is a classic study of an Italian community in Boston. Similar to many other studies on immigrant life in America, Wythe's book provides insight into male Italian immigrant experiences and perspectives on life in "Cornerville" society, including social life in the community, and the structure of the different gangs in the neighborhood. Wythe also provides very useful information about the political and social structure in Cornerville. For example, the different social clubs in the community were important for the men, and influenced the level of success achieved. Many of the Italian men who joined various clubs wanted to achieve social and political success within the community, but women were not allowed to join any of the social clubs operated by men in this Italian community.

Indeed, there is little exploration of the Italian female immigrant experience in Wythe's study. The only time a female makes a fleeting appearance in the book is when reference is made to a male having plans to marry, or when a female is mentioned as a secondary figure to a primary male. Wythe (1999) described the life of the Italian female in Cornerville as,

...not nearly so interesting and pleasant for the girls as it was for the men. While young men had complete freedom to "wander and hang around", young women were expected to divide their time between their own homes, the homes of girlfriends and relatives (p.299).

This type of treatment is quite common for immigrant females, and most extant studies on the different immigrant communities in America lack an adequate treatment of the female immigrant experience.

William Høglund (1979) wrote *Finnish Immigrants in America: 1880-1920*. Around 1883, Finland started to experience a wave of immigration to United States and Høglund claims that departing immigrants were quite frequently criticized for leaving the country. Churchmen, writers and public officials alike questioned the immigration phenomenon. The majority of Finnish immigrants came from rural areas, and by and large their goal was to achieve a better standard of living in the United States. According to Høglund, most of them dreamed of coming to America, becoming wealthy and returning home to Finland where they then could enjoy a higher standard of living. Most Finnish immigrants settled in Minnesota and Wisconsin and, similar to the Italian immigrants studied by Wythe, they organized many organizations and societies where

they could be heard and understood, the majority of such organizations being affiliated with religious institutions. Again, the records of these institutions and organizations were valuable sources for understanding Finnish immigration to the United States, but scant attention was given to Finnish immigrant female experiences.

Norway's immigration history is similar to Sweden's, although Norwegian immigration to the United States was sporadic from 1825 to 1836. Similar to Swedes, Norwegians immigrated primarily to Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, and Minnesota. From 1860 to 1920, approximately 770,000 Norwegians came to the United States in hope of achieving a better life (Zempel, 1991). Indeed, immigration to America was usually encouraged in all Scandinavian countries, and one primary source of encouragement stemmed from the so-called 'America letters', which were letters written by people in America back to their friends and families in their native countries. For many people, this was a major source of information they had about America, and individuals viewed this information as very valuable and reliable.

In their Own Words, edited by Solveig Zempel (1991) is a collection of letters from nine Norwegians who immigrated to America from 1871 to 1920. Similar to Swedish immigration, the first wave of Norwegian immigration was mostly composed of families who migrated to and settled in rural areas and supported themselves by farming. Starting around 1870 it became more common for young unmarried Norwegian men and women to immigrate to America (Zempel, 1991).

The letters were selected to provide an important sample of Norwegian-American life, balancing geographic areas, social class, and letters from men and women. Each of

the individuals included kept a consistent correspondence to friends and family at home. All of the letters published gave insight to the immigrant experience, but of special interest was the chapter that included a single female's letters to her family back in Norway. The chapter was called "A Single Woman in Illinois", and it examined the letters of Berta Serina Kingestad's from 1885 to 1893.

Berta Serina Kingestad was one of a family of eleven children, four of whom immigrated and settled in America. Before she immigrated, Kingestad wrote to her brothers already in America about her desire to immigrate. The brothers were very encouraging and suggested that opportunities for a single woman were much greater in America as compared to what she faced in Norway. In 1886 Kingestad endured the long journey to America by herself, but she arrived to a community where she had a lot of friends and relatives already established. Her letters home portrayed the Scandinavian-American community as being very close, with Swedish and Norwegian strangers taking her in and helping her find her brothers without any hesitation.

Kingestad first took employment on a farm in Fox River Valley, Illinois, and she wrote about daily life there. The letters are mostly written in a positive tone, but she described her longing for home and her feelings of loneliness. "It is true that many a tear has fallen since I departed from my beloved home... but I also have happy hours in between and so time passes for me as for many others, alternating between joy and sorrow" (1991, p.34). It is very evident through reading the letters that Kingestad settled in a community that provided the support of friends and relatives from home. Kingestad later married and moved to Rowe, Illinois.

The letters selected by Zempel were written during the time when most Scandinavian immigrants settled in rural areas and supported themselves by farming. It was interesting to note that even though the letters came from different individuals living different lives in America; there were still some common themes. Despite the difficulties of rural life for the immigrants, all the letter writers considered themselves lucky to be part of American society and did not regret their decision to immigrate. In addition to writing about daily life and family and friends who also had immigrated to America, religion was a frequent topic in their letters, particularly Biblical references.

Studies on Immigrant Women. One of the few studies on immigrant women was on the Dutch. Suzanne Sinke (2002) in *Dutch Immigrant Women in the United States: 1880-1920* found that while the Netherlands had fewer individuals migrating to the United States as compared to other European countries, they still experienced a fairly significant level of migration at the end of the nineteenth century. Sinke acknowledged that many studies have been published on Dutch male immigrants in the United States, but the female side had not been told. Dutch women differed from most other immigrants from the Scandinavian countries, because it was not common practice for female immigrants to come alone to the United States. When women migrated, it was usually together with their husbands and families. Sinke's study was significant because it examined Dutch immigrant women and their daily experiences in families and communities in the United States.

Marital status was extremely important in the Netherlands during this era and the value of marriage was evident among the families who migrated to the United States. A

daughter unmarried by her mid-twenties often compelled parents to explain why.

Marriage was considered to be a central part of a woman's identity, and it was assumed that women would soon become pregnant after marriage (Sinke 2002).

One common value in the Netherlands was the important role of religion. It was a very important part of the Dutch females' life and it was expected that families would attend church together. Church not only served as the place for worship, but for many women it was the place for socialization and a safety net in times of need (Sinke, 2002). This is something that is evident in the literature on Swedish women as well.

The majority of the Dutch immigrant women were expected to work, and most did. During the earlier phase of immigration, many women worked on farms but later most were employed as domestic help, usually after they finished their education and before they married. Another common feature among Dutch women in America was the strong will to keep the Dutch language. Sinke (2002) noted this was much stronger among women than men. One woman cited the Dutch poem:

I was raised in the Netherlands

I learned to speak in the Netherlands

I will continue to promote the same

kinds of love for the language

Not that I revile the foreign

Everything has its worth

But I say for me, Dutch

is the most beautiful language on earth (Sinke, 2002, p.184).

One additional work that addressed immigrant women was *Peasant Maids, City Women: From the European Countryside to Urban America*, an anthology edited by Christine Harzig (1997). This book addresses women who immigrated to Chicago from four countries in Europe: Germany, Sweden, Poland and Ireland.

Generally speaking, women perceived the migration process differently depending on their cultural background. After investigating each immigrant group's experience, the researchers found that the German female immigrants usually came for the same reasons as other women; to earn more money, enjoy more spare time, and improve their prospects for marriage. Letters home from previous immigrants were named as one of the most powerful forces inspiring immigration for all the four national groups. Again, economic and social opportunities were the reasons most frequently cited reasons for the women, despite their country of origin.

Peasant Maids also included a thorough discussion about women's new lives in Chicago. Social life among the first generation of Irish female immigrants centered on the community and the church; however, the second generation took advantage of the opportunity to further their education. There was a portion in the book on the Swedish female immigrant and that portion will be reviewed in the appropriate place below.

One common factor in the literature on the female immigrant experience is that life in America involved a three-stage assimilation process. During the initial phase, the focus was on meeting basic needs, such as finding employment, shelter and having food to eat. The second phase involved life in the urban community. This is where the women became involved in institutions such as churches and schools. The last phase was defined

as the Americanization phase, which took place when the women were ready to fully assimilate into the American society (Herzig, 1997; Sinke, 2001).

Swedish Immigration Studies. Florence Edith Jansen (1931) authored *The Background of Swedish Immigration, 1840-1930*, which explains the reasons why so many Swedes chose to make the long journey to America to start a new life. Of particular importance were the economic conditions in Sweden during this period. She also examines specific geographical regions in Sweden and for their employment opportunities and quality of life. She found economic freedom as one of the main reasons for immigration but also the wage differences between Swedish and American male workers from 1866 to 1925. The greater earning power of American workers as compared to workers in Sweden was central. In 1890, the average man working on a farm in the United States earned more than double what they could earn in Sweden.

Although Jansen did not give much attention to the daily life of Swedish women immigrants, she points out that women's wages were lower than men's. Many Swedish women found jobs in the domestic field, the wages for which were significantly higher in the United States than in Sweden, with the work itself being more highly valued in the United States. Jansen also describes the hardships of female maids working for a family on a farm, having to take care of the animals as well as do the chores for the household. Settling in rural areas and working on farms rapidly declined among the women around the end of the century. During the new immigration period the majority of Swedish female immigrants settled in urban areas and obtained employment there.

Anita Ruth Olson (1990) studied Swedish immigrant life community in *Swedish Chicago: The Extension and Transformation of an Urban Immigrant Community, 1880-1920*. Although Olson focused on the proliferation of Swedish churches and secular organizations in Chicago from 1880 to 1920, she did not concentrate on a single community but on a variety of locations where Swedish immigrants formed their own ethnic communities. Olson found that “their community grew to encompass more than Swedish neighborhoods”. Furthermore, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, there was a strong existence and heavy development of churches and social institutions throughout the Swedish communities (p.13).

Olson devoted considerable space to the role of the churches in Swedish communities and the impact they had in the Swedish immigrants’ lives. As early as 1880, there were 13 Swedish churches in Chicago, representing a variety of denominations. During the 1880’s, 27 additional Swedish churches were founded throughout the city. Churches not only functioned as institutions of religion and peace, but also as places where education took place. Furthermore, churches also served as critical settings for Swedish immigrants to maintain their Swedish identities and socialize with other Swedish immigrants. The Swedish churches were especially important to women, and at the turn of the century there were a great number of young, single immigrant women in Chicago. For many of them, the relationships with the people in the church were their source of “family support” in the United States (Olson, 1990).

Olson also examined the structure and organization of Swedish associations and social clubs within the immigrant community. However, the majority of people studied

by Olson were males, with little attention given to women's roles in those societies and clubs. She did note an increase in women's participation and development of organizations at the beginning of the twentieth century, but did not elaborate on the matter.

Olson's study was very helpful in gaining knowledge of the vital role that institutions and organizations played for Swedish immigrants in Chicago. A strong sense of community developed among Chicago Swedes, for "within their own community, Swedish immigrants could create facets of their lives over which they had complete control" (Olson, 1990, p.293).

Ulf Beijbom investigated the early Swedish immigrants in America. His 1971 study in particular explored was the demographics of the 1846-1880 immigration, with an exceptionally detailed description of geographical backgrounds of Swedish immigrants and their significance for integration into the American labor market. In addition, he also explores the meaning and significance of Swedish organizations and churches in the lives of immigrants.

The importance of education was highlighted by Beijbom (1971), particularly the number of educational institutions founded by Swedish churches in Chicago that provided educational programs for immigrant children. One of the concerns many Swedish immigrants had about public schools in America was the lack of religious instruction; therefore, many Swedish immigrant churches and schools provided this in their own programs. Still, the churches were not only places for religious and educational activities, but also for social activities. Beijbom illustrates this by examining activities

conducted by the Immanuel Church on the North Side in Chicago, including singing groups, sewing circles and youth groups. While Beijbom made an important contribution to the literature on Swedish Americans, there was little analysis of the lives of Swedish-American women in his work.

An important collection of letters and diaries of Swedish immigrants is provided by Arnold Barton (1975), including those by individuals from different social classes and geographical areas in Sweden. The first sets of letters, from 1840 to 1864 were the immigrants called “the pioneers”, most of whom were farmers. The letters help document the long ocean voyages over and the conditions in the new country upon arrival.

The second group of immigrant letters, dated from 1865 to 1889, mostly describes the farmers who settled in the Midwest. The last group, written during 1890-1914, concerns the period of the largest wave of immigration from Sweden, when immigrants became more varied. Most of the letters during this period were from immigrants who settled in the major cities (Barton, 1975).

One important influence on Swedish American education was the Augustana Synod, of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, which founded Augustana College in Minnesota in 1860 (Augustana College, online, 2006). Dag Blanck (1997) provides an informative study of the Augustana Synod in *Swedish America and the foundation of Augustana College in Minnesota*. Blanck specifically focuses on the development of Augustana College and what struggles and processes had to be overcome regarding Swedish American identity. The college was able to maintain a Swedish-American identity with many Swedish traditions and values with regard to religion,

culture and education. The book is a great resource for Swedish-American immigration studies, particularly those that look at the role of higher education in immigrant communities.

There are several well-documented studies on the Swedish-American experience in Chicago and the Illinois area, including the daily experiences and challenges faced by the immigrants, including the roles of education, religion and Swedish organizations and societies. For example, Johnson and Peterson (1880) authored *Svenskarne i Illinois* (written in Old Swedish), which provides a comprehensive story about the adventures and experiences of the first influential Swedish immigrants to settle in Chicago. In 1842, P. Schneidau was one of the first Swedish immigrants to settle in Chicago and he became a friend as well as a caregiver for the next set of Swedish immigrants arriving there. Johnson and Peterson provide a thorough description of the many difficulties the Swedes experienced during this time period, including the cholera.

Johnson and Peterson (1880) note that during the “old” immigration phase, most Americans were generous and friendly towards Swedish immigrants, many of whom were able to make a good life for themselves in their new country. Some of the early Swedish settlers reported receiving money from Americans who wanted to help them get started. Likewise, earlier immigrants helped later arrivals. The Swedish immigrant Gustaf Unonius started a church congregation for Swedish people in 1849 that proved to be important for many immigrants. In 1853 minister Erland Carlson came to Chicago and founded the first Swedish-Lutheran church in Illinois, an institution that also proved beneficial to new immigrants as well (Johnson & Peterson, 1880).

Another study written about Swedish American immigrants in Chicago was the *Svensk Amerikanska folket. I Helg och socken*, by E. Skarstedt (1917), also published in Swedish. Skarstedt points to a difference between Swedish Americans in the eastern and western parts of Chicago: as Skarstedt puts it, the immigrants who settled in the east were more intellectual than in the west, he claims; with the East Chicago settlers better representing “Swedishness”. However, Skarstedt does not present much evidence to back up his claims about the intellectual and geographical differences of Swedish immigrants. Despite the author’s evident biases, he still provides helpful information about Swedish immigrants and higher education. For example, in 1915 thirty-three Swedish-American immigrants had earned their doctorate degrees from Yale University (Skarstedt, 1917).

Studies on Swedish Immigrant Women. Only one book and two articles were specifically dedicated to Swedish immigrant women. Joy Kathleen Lintelman (1991) conducted the study *More Freedom, Better Pay: Single Swedish Immigrant Women in the United States, 1880-1920*. The first part is based on letters from Karolina Eriksson to her family back in Sweden over a ten-year period, starting in 1882. Eriksson immigrated in 1882, along with three female friends from Sweden. The letters address life in America with regard to employment and social life. The tone of the letters is mostly positive, with Eriksson giving her family numerous descriptions and stories about her work as a domestic maid in several different families. Eriksson also described what kind of leisure activities she had with her Swedish friends. In one letter to her parents in March, 1887, she wrote the following:

I am with such nice people. There are six in the family and I have it so very good

here. I need not get up before 6:00 and 6:30 a.m. or sometimes 7:00 a.m. and then I am free at 7:00 p.m in the evenings and there is never any strenuous work (Lintelman, 1991, p. 5).

From reading the letters in Lintelman's study, there is a sense that while life in America was certainly not always easy, it still provided the women with an opportunity to earn a living for themselves while also having time to enjoy their new life in America. Lintelman concludes that finding employment was not so difficult, because Karolina Eriksson herself left several jobs for more promising employment, and "each position was better than the last in terms of both wages and job tasks" (Lintelman, 1991, p.10).

Lintelman also analyzes the life of Swedish women prior to their decision to emigrate. Furthermore, she describes the experiences of female immigrants working in the domestic field compared to other source of employment. Before immigrating, a number of Swedish women worked as seamstresses, but it was generally thought that domestic service was preferable over being a seamstress once they arrived in America. Lintelman concludes that the majority of her subjects had positive experiences as immigrants in the United States (1991).

Lintelman also wrote the article titled "Single, Swedish and Female", in which she examines the lives of a few females who settled in Chicago. She concludes that most of the women obtained successful lives in America. Most of the single immigrant women usually started out their lives in America as domestic servants, and this type of job had several advantages for them: It was a familiar form of employment; the job often required the woman to be a live-in maid, which was viewed as a positive thing because

the women avoided the trouble of finding a place to live; and, the wages afforded them not only basic necessities, but also the occasional theater, dance, picnic, and purchase of clothing (Lintelman, 1996).

According to Lintelman, Swedish immigrant women usually entered marriage at a later age than other immigrant groups. Male immigrants assumed they needed to work for a couple of years to acquire a decent place to live and to save some money before they should ask a woman to marry. For women, however, it seems that many were quite happy being on their own, not knowing whether, they would be able to have the recreational activities and afford the same type of clothing after marriage that they had gotten accustomed to while single.

Similar to other sources, Lintelman maintains that a primary reason for Swedish women to immigrate was the perceived economic opportunities. American wages for domestic servants, waitresses, seamstresses and factory workers were higher than Swedish wages during the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries.

The section on Swedish immigrant women in the book *Peasant Maids, City Women: From the European Countryside to Urban America* was written by Matovic (1997). She wrote that many Swedish congregations conducted their own schools, motivated by the belief that the American public school system did not give adequate religious instruction. The Swedes were also eager to provide an education that would give their children an opportunity to progress in America.

Researchers found that Swedish female immigrants were well informed about economic opportunities and the positive and negative aspects of immigration. Work as a

maid in Sweden was not highly respected at the time and many single Swedish women immigrated to America as a protest to their work situation at home. A great number of Swedish women also worked as seamstresses and factory workers in Chicago. The authors concluded that the Swedish female immigrant experience differed from the male experience, particularly in females feeling freer with higher self-esteem, than males (Harzig, Ed.1997).

Educational Studies

This portion of the review is divided into three categories: studies on American higher education, women's education, and North Park College.

American Higher Education. Two classic studies on the history of higher education helped shed light on the Swedish immigrants' educational experiences at North Park College. The work by Frederick Rudolph (1962, 1990) in *The American College and University: A History*, portrays the changes in student life and the relationship between professors and students. Rudolph's description the role of the "old-time" professors, who during the early twentieth century were not primarily expected to publish, but to teach students academics, develop their characters and look out for their moral well being. Many professors during this time had some theology background. Lawrence Veysey (1965) *The Emergence of the American University* examines the institutional structures of the colleges emerging during the early twentieth century. He maintains that there was constant conflict during the development of the colleges with regard to finding their own identities, yet the emerging pattern of colleges and

universities became very successful. Their struggle for identity was also a leading issue for North Park College, which will be discussed below.

Women's Education. The present study focused on a time when many changes were occurring in the history of American education in general and women's higher education in particular. The present study included both students and a faculty member at North Park College and it was important to gain knowledge about the trends and issues occurring within the history of higher education for women. Elene Farello's *A History of the Education of Women in the United States* (1970) provided valuable background information regarding the evolution of women's education. Carolyn Bashaw's "*Stalwart Women*" *A Historical Analysis of Deans of Women in the South* (1999) provided great insight into the struggles faced by women faculty, and the number of responsibilities that were expected by women faculty at most educational institutions at that time.

North Park College. One of the most important secondary sources for the present study was Leland Carlson's *A History of North Park College* (1941). The College had its beginnings in a school founded and operated by Swedish immigrants in Minneapolis from 1891 to 1893. During the annual Covenant School conference in Rockford, Illinois in 1893 it was decided that the school should be moved to Chicago. The reason for the move was that the school was in desperate need for a new school building, and everyone involved thought that the best location for future growth would be in Chicago. Thirty-one successful Swedish immigrants formed a real estate association in Chicago and called themselves "The Swedish University Association". They raised money and bought a total of ninety acres for the new location of what would become North Park College. The

association offered the land to the Covenant Church, which accepted the offer and shortly thereafter began construction. It is important to note that a number of the members of the “Swedish University Association” also served on the executive board of the Covenant Church. It was obviously an easy decision to make, one that benefited the decision-makers themselves, as well as countless others over the years to come. In the summer of 1894 professor David Nyvall and others moved to Chicago to open North Park College. Even though the main purpose of the school originally was to train ministers for the Covenant Church, the full scope of the curriculum increased the outreach to a wider range of students. After one year of operation in Chicago, the school had approximately 100 students, of which twelve were young women (Carlson, 1941).

President David Nyvall struggled to make the College’s program appeal to a larger audience than only students of ministry, and this generated some dispute. Some in the Covenant Church thought Nyvall’s opinions were too liberal and there was no need for any departments other than the Seminary. Even though differences in opinions continued to exist over the mission of the school, enrollments and programs slowly increased over the coming years.

The issue of language became another area of conflict within the school and the Swedish community. The older generation wanted the Swedish language to be used in instruction and sermons, while the younger generation preferred the use of English. It was not until 1928 that the Covenant Church voted to make English the official language. Even after this, however, students continued to be able to take a number of courses offered in Swedish (Carlson, 1941).

Carlson called the years 1910-1917 “the years of confidence” for the school as enrollments, community support, construction of new buildings, and growth of the faculty occurred. Instruction was not only offered during the day, but in the evenings, too. Indeed many kinds of students were able to take advantage of the various kinds of programs offered by North Park College (Carlson, 1941).

In 1917 enrollment started to decline, mainly due to the United States entering World War I. There were also some disagreements occurring among students, faculty and the supporting Church community regarding the importance of religion and the Swedish influence. By the 1919-1920 school year, however, the school was able to launch a successful fundraising drive that resulted in a successful building expansion and enrollment growth.

Carlson’s work encapsulates a number of important events in North Park College’s history that proved most helpful for the present study. It shows how education was valuable to Swedish immigrants, and provides a helpful resource on the history of Swedish immigrant higher education. It is particularly useful regarding the relationship of higher education and religion, and how they both played complementary roles in Swedish American life.

Another important secondary source was Scott Erickson’s (1996), *David Nyvall and the Shape of an Immigrant Church: Ethnic, Denominational and Educational Priorities among Swedes in America*. Nyvall served as the president at the College during the crucial years from 1894 to 1923. Erickson’s study is important in showing the relationship of education and religion for Swedish immigrants and in describing Nyvall’s

endeavors in the Swedish-American community, Erickson also provides vital information about life in the North Park community at the turn of the century.

As portrayed by Erickson, Nyvall was one of the major founding fathers of North Park College who wanted all Swedish immigrants to be educated to enter into American culture while also maintaining a Swedish identity. Nyvall was very interested in the concept of the immigrant being “at home away from home”. This kind of point is touched upon by a number of immigrant studies, and Erickson (1996) delves into such challenges Nyvall faced in his own life, a struggle between his loyalties to the Swedish-American community, to the Covenant Church, and to North Park College.

Ancillary Material

Ancillary studies were reviewed, pertaining to two subcategories; the geographical, social and political conditions in China, and church history.

Geographical, Social and Political Conditions in China. In order to gain background information about the conditions in China during the beginning of 1900's, several books were reviewed and consulted and used because the selected students included in the present study all chose to become missionaries in China. They arrived and worked in China during a time of great political and economic change. Such secondary sources were vital in understanding working conditions in China, political conflicts, and Chinese attitudes towards foreign missionaries. David Wright's *History of China* (2001), Kwang-Ching Liu's *American Missionaries in China* (1970), provides valuable descriptions of daily life for selected American missionaries in China. In addition, Marjorie King's discussion about women's work in China in her article “Exporting

Femininity, Not Feminism: Nineteenth-Century U.S Missionary Women's Efforts to Emancipate Chinese Women" (1989), and Kenneth Latourette's *History of Christian Missions in China* (1967), were especially helpful and were utilized in the present study.

Church History. By One Spirit by Karl Olsson (1962) is a valuable study of the Swedish Evangelical Covenant Church in America. Olsson had lifelong experiences in the Covenant Church, which played a role for many Swedish immigrants across America. Olsson examines the cultural and religious institutions of Sweden that gave rise to the Covenant Church as well as the period of pre-Covenant history in the United States (1860-1885), with particular attention to its founding and its struggle for a new identity after 1883. This book was a valuable resource for understanding the role of the Covenant Church, and its role in the lives of Swedish immigrants.

Another helpful study on the history of the Covenant Church in America, and its attitudes towards education was Steven Elde's *The Hearth and the Chimney: Covenant Attitudes toward Education* (1991). Elde discussed and explained the disagreements within the Covenant church regarding its beliefs on higher education. David Nyvall did not believe in education as only practical or as only educating boys to be ministers, his views were broader and included education for a greater mass of people. Throughout his tenure at North Park, he was met with resistance from some church members who believed he was too liberal. Elde's article provided much helpful background information about the Covenant's history and its struggles regarding intellectual freedom at North Park.

The importance of religion for immigrants was evident in Erik Wallgren's *A Swedish American Preacher's own Story* (1963). Wallgren describes his experiences and difficulties as an immigrant who arrived in Chicago in 1901 with his wife and their four sons and two daughters. They settled in the North Park community and Wallgren worked as a minister in one of Covenant churches. His son Axel attended the seminary at North Park College and his daughter graduated from North Park's school of music. Wallgren's diary contains fascinating stories about the Swedish immigrant experience, including the family's visit back to Sweden in 1926, and one of his sons becoming a professor at North Park College in 1929. The author paints a very detailed description life in North Park during this time, but he provides few details about life for Swedish female immigrants.

Primary Sources

Primary sources included in the present study were the dominant sources for the examination of the selected students and faculty member at North Park College. There were numerous of primary sources that made the present study possible, most of which came from the F.M. Johnson archives in the Brandel library at North Park University. In addition, the Emigrant Institute in Vaxjo, Sweden provided additional valuable information about what life was like in Sweden at the time the four persons examined in the present study immigrated to America. The archival collections at Carolina Rediviva in Sweden also provided some correspondence of David Nyvall, as well as government immigration records.

F.M Johnson Archives of Brandel North Park University

The section below is divided into two main sections, the archives at North Park University, and the two archives in Sweden. More specifically, the primary sources from the archives at North Park are divided into categories of correspondence, institutional records, North Park College publications, and other materials.

Correspondence. The archives held an extensive collection of David Nyvall's personal papers, including an extensive amount of correspondence. The large amount of letters to and from Nyvall provided the author with priceless evidence regarding the climate and issues taking place at the College and in the Swedish American community, and also great insight into Nyvall own life and his unique qualities.

Nyvall kept a steady correspondence with the three students included in the study, Hilma Johnson, Hilda Rodberg, and Victoria Welter. The correspondence between Nyvall and the students lasted for over thirty years, beginning with Hilma Johnson in 1902. Once Welter returned to Chicago, and later moved to Wisconsin, he continued the correspondence with her.

Nyvall's correspondence included numerous letters to and from Lena Sahlstrom over a period of 35 years. This included letters before Sahlstrom joined the faculty in Chicago, during her long tenure as a faculty member at North Park College, and during her years as a retiree. Sahlstrom also corresponded with Nyvall's wife, Louisa. During Sahlstrom absence from North Park College, correspondence was found from Nyvall to various individuals regarding Sahlstrom's status of health.

Institutional Records. The archives at North Park College contained attendance records and student ledgers. This showed the student name, local address, home town,

and in which department the student was enrolled. The student ledgers provided similar information that served as second sources of validating accurate records.

North Park College Publications. *The North Park College News* was used throughout the entire time period of study. This publication included news, academic announcements, alumni notes, club activities, athletic news and Church announcements. Letters from the missionaries included in the study were also published in the North Park College News, as well as several pieces written by Lena Sahlstrom. Lena Sahlstrom also published short stories and poems in other school and church publications, which were included in the present study.

Another publication included in the primary sources was "The Cupola," which was an annual student newspaper published by the senior class at the College, and this included humorous notes about student life and updates of the past year's student activities.

Other Materials. North Park College catalogues included enrollment records and yearly updates about the various Departments at the College. In addition, the archives also hold a number of books kept by the secretaries of different organizations and societies at the College which also added vital information about student life at North Park College. More specifically, this included program brochures of events and minutes of their weekly meetings by the Philharmonic Literary Society, the Ciceronian Literary Society, and the Missionary Aid Society at North Park. In addition, information about the NOPACO club and its meetings were also important primary sources. The archives also

hold important materials about the Swedish Covenant Hospital Nursing School, which were valuable primary sources for the present study.

The archives had a wonderful primary source in the form of photographs, which added significant value to the present study. Other essential primary sources found in the archives at North Park University included the Caroline Hall log book, which was a log book kept in the women's dormitory where the women wrote about daily life at the school, and faculty minutes and other Swedish American immigrant collections.

Swedish Archives

The Swedish Emigrant Institute is located in Vaxjo, in the south of Sweden. The institute has a museum and a library in addition to its research center and archives. The Institute holds a number of official Swedish immigration records, including passenger ship lists, and official individual and family migration notes. The Carolina Rediviva library is one of the libraries at Uppsala University in Sweden. This library contained correspondence from Nyvall to various official individuals in Sweden, including the archbishop. In addition, they keep some official immigration records pertaining to the period of large scale immigration. The material found at the archives in Sweden were important because it provided the researcher with personal information about the women included in the study, such as birth dates, birth order, geographical information, and migration records.

Summary

The review of the literature uncovered only a limited number of secondary sources directly connected to Swedish women immigrants; however, secondary sources still added valuable information about the immigrant experience during the time period of the study. It may be assumed that settling in a new country was experienced differently for women than men and, as the review revealed, there is only a small body of material on Swedish women immigrants. The literature on Swedish immigration indicates that even though some Swedes certainly struggled, the majority of Swedes acquired a successful life in the United States through hard work and determination. Limited though it was, the research found on Swedish immigrant women indicates that most women did not experience much difficulty finding paid employment, did not wish to return to Sweden on a permanent basis, and considered themselves to be successful once they became established in the United States. It also suggests that many of these women were involved in immigrant organizations and societies, including churches and schools.

The secondary sources used in the study included immigrant studies, community studies, women immigrant studies, Swedish immigrant studies and studies on the Swedish immigrant women. In addition, the secondary sources also included histories of American higher education, Swedish- American higher education, and the specific institution of North Park College.

The majority of the primary sources used in the present study came from the F.M. Johnson archives at North Park University. Sources included: correspondence, institutional records, North Park College catalogues, publications, and other materials.

Finally, two archives provided additional primary sources of interest: The Emigrant Institute and Carolina Rediviva Library in Sweden.

CHAPTER III

Women Students at North Park College 1900-1920

Life at North Park College for the young women attending in the early 1900's was filled with many new experiences, but academic options were limited to four areas of study: the Primary/Preparatory Department, the Academy, the Commercial/Business, and the Seminary. Many students, most of them women, were also enrolled in the Music Department although no degrees or diplomas were offered there in the beginning. The ministry was not an option for women during the time, and very few women graduated from the Seminary Department at North Park College. In addition to the academic options at North Park College, the Swedish Covenant Hospital Training School for Nurses was one of the options available to women students during this time period; the admission requirements, their daily schedule and other aspects of the nursing students' lives will be examined.

The content of this chapter will provide further information about life as a female student at North Park College in Chicago during 1900-1920. Not only were courses taken, but literary societies also offered a variety of activities to students. Daily life in Caroline Hall dormitory proved still another form of experience.

To gain a better perspective, the lives of three students are examined in greater detail below. The first student discussed is Hilma Johnson, a Swedish immigrant who attended North Park College for one year studying business, before she left as a missionary for China. The second student is Hilda Rodberg, also a Swedish immigrant who was the first student to graduate from the Swedish Covenant Hospital Nursing School. The school during this time required part of their academic courses to be completed at North Park College. Rodberg traveled with Hilma Johnson to China in 1902. The third and final student, Victoria Welter, was the first woman to graduate from the Seminary Department in 1903. She, similar to Johnson and Rodberg, also left North Park and Chicago for a life as a missionary in China.

Curriculum Options

Primary/Preparatory Department. The Preparatory Department was aimed towards students who lacked elementary school education, or for immigrants who had the basic education, but needed to learn the English language. In 1902, Lena Sahlstrom joined North Park College and was the sole teacher in the Primary department, teaching many classes every day.

The students in the Seminary Department were required to take courses in the Preparatory Department for the first two years, unless they had completed equivalent work in Sweden or at another school in the United States. During the early 1900's, the majority of the students were required to take courses in the Preparatory Department (North Park College News, 6 November, 1926)

The Academy. During North Park's first few years of operation in Chicago, the number of students enrolled in the Academy was small. The Academy offered high school courses in natural and social science, language and literature. The students enrolled studied subjects such as English, Algebra, Swedish, Latin, History, Literature, Chemistry and Geometry. The Academy was accredited in 1900 and the faculty at North Park College was very proud of the fact that graduation from the three year Academy would allow students to enter the University of Illinois (Carlson, 1941).

The Commercial/Business Department. During North Park's early days, this field of study drew the largest number of students. The students enrolled in this department took courses in Business practice, bookkeeping, stenography, typewriting, correspondence, commercial law, shorthand, and penmanship.

Music Department. Students usually enrolled in the music department in addition to taking courses in another department at North Park. Piano lessons and participation in the Brass band were two popular choices during this time. It was not before 1905 that students started to graduate with a teacher's certificate from the music department.

The Seminary Department. The classes were generally small in the Seminary Department, ranging from six to ten members of each class. The majority of the students enrolled in the Seminary Department during this period had elementary school education. Naturally, many of the Swedish students struggled with the English language. For students lacking the necessary background education in languages, arts or sciences, they were required to enroll in the Preparatory department for two years. In 1900, President Nyvall was one of the two faculty members teaching in the Seminary Department. The

students studied courses in Hermeneutics, Philosophy of Religion, Homiletics, Poetry of the Bible, Pedagogy, Anthropology, Logic, Systematic Theology, Pastoral Theology, Geography of the Bible, History of Missions and Liturgics (Carlson, 1941).

Nursing School. The Swedish Covenant Hospital was founded in 1886 by the Swedish Evangelical Mission Covenant Church. The hospital actually opened and began its service in 1893. The goal of the hospital at the time was to “care for the sick and needy among the Scandinavian people, especially the Mission friend” (A Brief Historical Sketch, 1926, p. 14). Mr. Palmblad who was a missionary in Chicago at the time, sought a place to care for the needy. He found a building and persuaded the Covenant Church to buy it. During the first few years of its existence, it was not actually considered a hospital, but a place to go for the sick, called the Swedish Home of Mercy. In 1893 the building was expanded to twice its original size, and doctors and surgeons began working along with the missionaries.

The Swedish Home of Mercy’s actual school for nurses opened its doors for instruction in 1898. According to the board of Directors in 1899:

The Swedish Home of Mercy offers a course of training to women who desire to enter the profession of nursing, including work in the hospital, special nursing with private patients, instruction by superintendents, lectures by the staff of physicians and general academic instruction at North Park College (Board of Director’s Minutes, 3 October, 1899).

During their studies, the nurses lived at the Old People's Home (Also called Swedish Home of Mercy) and helped the elderly and the sick. The nursing curriculum changed from two years to three years in 1903. The requirements for admission were:

1. A Christian character
2. Fluency in Swedish preferred,
3. Good health and good morals.
4. Age requirement for entry between 18.5 and 35 years old.

Regarding prior academic work, one year of high school or it's equivalent was required. Interesting to note was the additional requirement that the women must have hair long enough to pin it up properly, both off and on duty. If an applicant's hair was too short, she had to wait until her hair grew long enough before being admitted. This rule was in place until 1926 (Superintendent to Hogberg, 10 November, 1926).

The hospital continued to grow at such a rate that in 1917, the hospital staff asked for a larger new building in order to serve the growing needs of the community. The old hospital building was then turned into the "Old People's Home" where Lena Sahlstrom among many other North Park community members spent her last days in life (After Forty Years, 1926).

The Nursing School had on average six graduates every year from 1900 to 1920. All students enrolled were female (After Forty Years, 1926). Many of the graduates in the early 1900's served as missionaries either to China, Venezuela, or Africa. Figure 1 shows a photo taken in 1903 and illustrates the graduates of that year.

Figure 1. Nursing School Graduates of North Park College in 1903.



Photograph courtesy F.M. Johnson Archives, North Park University, Chicago, Illinois.

Swedish Immigrant Women. According to Swedish government statistics, single adult women over the age of fifteen comprised 34 percent of the total Swedish emigration to the United States from 1891 to 1900, and 29.9 % from 1901 to 1910 (Lintelman, 1991). A significant portion of these single women settled in Chicago. Not everyone enrolled in school, since for many of these immigrants, the dream of finding better employment was a first priority when arriving in America. However, education was something many Swedish immigrants valued, and most of the women who immigrated to America were literate and wanted either to learn how to speak English fluently or further their education within one of the four careers then open to them: teaching, business, health care, and missionary work. In those fields, North Park College was able to provide convenient and readily available preparation for its women students.

Student Life for Women at North Park College

Before the women's' dormitory, Caroline Hall, was built at North Park in 1925, some female students were housed in make shift quarters on campus, but a common housing solution was with private families close to campus who were willing to rent rooms. The cost of staying with a family was sometimes less than staying on campus, so for some students this proved to be a good alternative to on-campus housing. In 1911, the board fee for meals on campus was \$ 3.00 per week during an academic term of eighteen weeks. The cost of on-campus lodging was \$ 2.50 per month. The cost of lodging with a private family varied, but in 1911, the average private fee ranged from \$ 2.50 and up per

month while board varied depending on where a student chose to take meals (North Park Catalogue, 1911-1912).

Students who attended North Park were expected to take an active part in community activities and to reside in the community, either on campus or off. One common social bond at North Park College during the early 1900s was that most students were either immigrants or children of immigrants. The women students at the school varied in age and background anywhere from 17 to 27 years old (Carlson, 1941).

Rates of Tuition. The rates of tuition for an eighteen week semester in 1911 are provided in Table 1. It should be noted that two of the most popular training courses for women were short hand and typewriting and they were among the more expensive, while advanced piano was the most expensive of all (See table 1).

Tuition and fees for North Park in 1911 along with on-campus room and board ranged from \$79 to \$101, depending on the type of courses in which the students enrolled. North Park College claimed that their school's tuition and fees were less than any other private school in the area (North Park College Catalogues, 1911-1912; 1912-1913).

Enrollments at North Park College

From 1894-1901, the first seven years of North Park College's existence, the school struggled with low enrollments. Carlson (1941) notes that the weak enrollment numbers were due to the lack of public transportation out to North Park, and that the local community was still sparsely inhabited during this time. By 1900, the enrollment started to increase, and there were two main reasons: North Park College's Academy was

accredited in 1900 and became a more attractive choice for students. At the same time the North Park community started growing in population (Carlson, 1941).

Table 1

Tuition Rates for Courses at North Park College in 1911

Department	Length of Course	Tuition Rate
Preparatory Department		\$ 15.00
Seminary Department		\$ 15.00
Academy Department		\$ 18.00
Commercial Department		
Business training course	One Semester	\$ 30.00
	One Month	\$ 8.00
Shorthand and Typewriting course	One Semester	\$ 30.00
	One Month	\$ 8.00
Music Department		
Piano-beginners	One Term	\$ 9.75
Piano-intermediate	One Term	\$ 22.75
Piano-advanced	One Term	\$ 36.00
Violin-beginners	One Term	\$ 12.00
Violin-advanced	One Term	\$ 18.00
Vocals-beginners	One Term	\$ 12.00
Vocals-advanced	One Term	\$ 18.00
Harmony-class of 3 or more	One Term	\$ 9.75
Harmony-private lessons	One Term	\$ 15.30

(North Park College Catalogue, 1911-1912, p. 45).

The Primary Department offered lessons in the English language for people with minimal to no English skills. It also offered a “good common school education” (North Park College Catalogue, 1911), including courses in arithmetic, English reading, geography, spelling, penmanship, grammar, and translation. The Academy Department was a three-year diploma program, upon completion of which a student was able to enter a four-year college. In the beginning, the Business Department was called the Commercial Department, and had always drawn the largest enrollment, because its offerings attracted students wishing to pursue careers in business. Throughout the time period studied, the Music Department had a substantial number of women enrolled, especially in piano (North Park Catalogues, 1900-1920). The Sunday School Teacher Correspondence Course was also a popular choice for women around 1916-1920. In addition, in the 1917-1918 year, the school introduced a course in physical education. This class was separated by gender and there were a total of 28 women enrolled in this course (North Park Catalogue, 1917-1918). Table 2 demonstrates the average enrollment percentages of women students compared to the total number of students in three different departments from 1900-1920:

Table 2

Average Women Enrollment Percentages by Department from 1900-1920

Department	1900-1905	1905-1910	1910-1915	1915-20
Primary	25.0 %	36.0 %	45.5 %	49.0 %
Academy	28.0 %	27.6 %	37.4 %	38.0 %
Business	36.6 %	34.0 %	42.7 %	43.0 %

(North Park Catalogues 1900-1920; Student Ledgers 1900-1920).¹

Choices for Women. In 1900, Anna Lindsten graduated from the Academy and became an elementary school teacher. Ruth Bolander, Hulda Frisk, Mathilda Johnson, Hanna Swanson, and Ellen Youngquist graduated in bookkeeping from the Business Department, while Lydia Erickson graduated in shorthand. The shorthand courses were marketed as an ideal fit for women, “because we know of no other vocation more desirable for the young woman who desires to earn her own way in the world” (North Park Catalogue 1912-1913, p.35).

The Underwood Typewriter Company was the company from whom North Park College rented and purchased its typewriters. Underwood also conducted proficiency examinations for the students in typewriting, and after the students took the exam, the company would send North Park College a written note with the students’ names and scores. (The overwhelming number of names on the archived documents is for females). The Underwood Typewriter Company also offered to “place these young women in good positions at the earliest opportunity” (Letter to North Park College, 7 May, 1914). If the students knew about the possibility of being placed in a job, it probably increased their interest in enrolling and doing well in the courses.

¹ The enrollment data collected for the present study varies from the data published by Carlson (1941), *A History of North Park College*. Carlson obtained his information from the *Yearbooks* and annual summaries of the conferences in *Missions-Vannen*. The enrollment data published in the present study was gathered from both the North Park Catalogues and the Student Ledgers in the F.M. Johnson Archives and is believed to be more accurate.

Literary Societies

North Park College had a number of societies in which many students were involved. Each society always had a faculty sponsor, but meetings were run by students. Participation in a literary society was viewed as a positive thing, and it was believed that the students earned valuable training as active members. Both men and women students took an active part in the different societies offered at the school.

NOPACO Club. Of special interest is the NOPACO Club, because it was organized by women students in the winter of 1913. When it started, 38 women were members. NOPACO was an acronym for: NO (North), PA (Park), CO (College).

The objectives of NOPACO Club were for members to:

1. Become better acquainted with each other than mere class meetings
2. Help new students feel at home in both school and community.
3. Beautify the young women's reading room with money from monthly membership fees (5 cents) and any entertainment that might be given.
4. Further the general interest of the women students.

NOPACO meetings were held every Wednesday afternoon after classes. First there were short programs, after which special needs and interests of the women students were discussed. NOPACO was sponsored by Lena Sahlstrom. The NOPACO Club was especially significant when examining the different societies on campus, because it was the only society restricted to women students, who seemed to take their membership and duties very seriously. For example, NOPACO engaged in numerous fundraising activities, and this seemed to be a particularly important activity for the women at the

College. Moreover, fundraising was taken very seriously by NOPACO's faculty sponsor, Lena Sahlstrom (Carlson, 1941; Catalogue of North Park College, 1913-1914).

The Ciceronian Literary Society. The purpose of the Ciceronian Literary Society was to promote interest in literature, composition, debating and music. All members of the Academy, the Primary Department, and the Music Department were eligible to join. The Society met every Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. in Lena Sahlstrom's room.

Meetings always started with a prayer, followed by a speech and/or debate, ending with questions and answers. Songs and readings were also important parts of meetings. Both men and women were invited to join the Ciceronian Literary Society. The Society helped its members become aware of and develop understanding of some of the leading intellectual issues of that day. Two of the debate topics held in 1908-1912 included: "Is football a desirable form of athletics?" and, "women and suffrage". There were also quite a few debates and discussions concerning women's employment opportunities and what women could achieve during that time. In addition to these serious debate topics, there were occasions when humorous readings were included in the meetings (The Ciceronian Literary Society Secretary's Book, 1908-1912).

Missionary Aid Society of North Park College. The purpose of the Missionary Aid Society was to intensify the missionary interest among the students and to support the work of the Covenant Church in foreign missions. The Missionary Aid Society was open to all teachers, students and alumni and it was the only campus organization with a major financial obligation. In 1912, the Society's membership fee was a minimum of one dollar per year. Meetings always opened with prayers and songs, followed by a speech.

Missionary news was reported, and any new business was discussed before ending the meeting. The students met every Thursday for a small gathering, and once a month the Society held a public meeting where missionaries often gave lectures regarding their choice of work (Missionary Aid Society's Secretary's Book, 1911-1932).

The Philharmonic Literary Society. The Philharmonic Literary Society reflected the value North Park College President David Nyvall placed on education, and the activities of this society were taken very seriously. Nyvall believed that education was for everyone and should be directed toward developing the whole person. (The Philharmonic Literary Society has continued in existence since the school started and its membership remains open to both men and women). One of the original purposes of the Society was to give the students an opportunity to train themselves in public speaking, debating, reading, declaiming, music appreciation and similar arts. In addition, the Society intended to foster a shared experience among the students in all departments at North Park College.

Members met every Friday evening at 7:30 in the College chapel. There were debates and discussions during these meetings. Some of the topics were:

1. Should capital punishment be abolished?
2. Which is more inspiring, poetry or music?
3. Politics
4. The trial of Christ from a lawyers' point of view
5. Resolved: that the memories of the past are more beneficial than the hopes of the future.

6. Should United States senators be elected by direct vote of the people?
7. Does the fear of punishment have greater influence on human conduct than the hope of reward?
8. Does the school have a greater influence on the character than the home?
9. Has the Negro suffered more wrong in this country than the Indian?

(The Philharmonic Literary Society Secretary's book, 1908-1915).

The meetings always started with a prayer, followed by roll call and an introduction of any new members. This was followed by singing, and perhaps a piano solo or duet performed by students. There were readings in both Swedish and English and the meetings ended with a debate or report. In 1901, the Philharmonic Literary Society had 53 members, of which 15 were women, and by 1902 the membership stood at 80. There was always a faculty member serving as a judge during debates, and in 1902, Lena Sahlstrom took on this duty (The Philharmonic Literary Society Secretary's Book, 1902-1908).

The Philharmonic Literary Society took its meetings seriously and attendance was considered mandatory. If a student was absent three times in a row, without valid reasons his or her membership was revoked. The Society also competed in debates against other schools in the area. Even though women were actively involved in the Philharmonic Literary Society, it was not until February of 1913 that a woman was elected president of the Society. Before 1913, women might serve as secretary or as a program committee chair, but not as president. In 1913, Hanna Anderson was the first woman to serve as

president of the Society (The Philharmonic Literary Society Secretary's Book, 1908-1915).

Athletics /Gymnastics

Male students participated in competitive intercollegiate athletics at North Park College from its beginning, with the main sports being baseball and basketball. In May of 1903, the school has its first track meet. Women students did not participate in these sports, but they did play intramural volleyball. During the 1915-1916 school year, women could for the first time take gymnastics (Carlson, 1941). In 1917, the new gymnasium was erected. This building was a very controversial topic at the school, and not everyone agreed with Nyvall's idea of building the gymnasium. In fact, some members of the school protested both the new building plan and the increased interest in sports among the students at North Park. Figure 2 illustrates women student athletes at North Park in 1916.

Figure 2. Physical Education Students at North Park College in 1916.



Photograph courtesy F.M. Johnson Archives, North Park University, Chicago, Illinois

Dormitory Life at Caroline Hall

The Caroline Hall Log Book provides some fascinating material on the daily life of the female students. The dorm kept a running log of students' daily activities at North Park College, and it is interesting to note that many of the topics found therein are very similar to young women's discussions today. Caroline Hall residents seemed to think and feel along shared lines, doing many things together and helping each other out. Residents also made collective decisions as to what life in the dorm should be like, such as curfew and "lights out" times.

At the beginning of the school year when new students arrived, returning students helped them move in and get acquainted with life on campus. The log even contains discussions about such things as holidays, romantic relationships, and friendship issues. Students were curious about each other's future engagement and marriage plans, especially after vacations when they had not seen each other for extended periods of time. Even though most students seemed to take school seriously, it is also clear that they usually stood together and had fun, probably very similar to dormitory situations today (Caroline Hall Log Book).

Introduction of the Three Women Students

Hilma Johnson, Hilda Rodberg and Victoria Welter Sjoquist were included in this study because of the wealth of primary sources found in the archives at North Park College. Important and interesting to note is their chosen careers as missionaries after attending North Park College and the Swedish Covenant Hospital Nursing School. Hilma Johnson arrived at North Park with the intentions of graduating from the Business

Department, but after only one year, she was asked by the Missionary Aid Society and accepted their offer to go to China. Hilda Rodberg was the first female graduate from the Nursing school and although what prompted her to become a missionary is less clear than in Hilma Johnson's case, she accompanied Johnson as the second woman missionary from North Park sent by the Covenant Church to China. The third student, Victoria Welter, was the first female to graduate from the Seminary Department in 1903. Apparently, missionary work was a natural choice for her, and she left Chicago for China in late summer of 1904.

Conditions in China. At the start of the twentieth century, the Boxer rebellion was sweeping through northern and central China. One of the main reasons for the Boxer uprising was their great anger about foreigners taking over China, and part of their xenophobia was directed especially at Protestant and Catholic missionaries in China. During the summer of 1900, Boxer adherents gathered in Peking. Most of them were practitioners of traditional Chinese martial arts who sought to drive the foreigners out. They believed that martial arts training would make them impervious to foreign bullets. They were also called the Righteous and Harmonious Militia (Wright, 2001). On June 3, 1900 Boxers blocked the railway link between Tianjun and Peking to cut off the foreign legations from the outside world. Throughout June, the Boxers burned foreign homes and churches throughout Peking and murdered many Chinese Christians. On June 19, the Empress Dowager announced she was cutting off all ties with foreign nations which many took as support of the Boxer cause. It was not until August, that 20,000 troops from

Western nations and Japan arrived and ended the Boxer uprising. During the battle, 231 foreigners were killed (the number of Boxers killed were unknown) (Wright,2001).

Finally, in 1901 peace settlements were achieved. It was said that these events robbed China of its self esteem, but in many places throughout China the Boxer Rebellion changed people's attitudes toward foreigners from condescension to fear. Important to note is that most of the events and widespread fear were largely in the north; while most of the south was not attacked by either the Boxers or the foreign forces (Wright, 2001).

Swedish missionaries from the Covenant Church arrived shortly after the Boxer Rebellion, and the three women students/missionaries described in this study all settled in the south, west of Shanghai, in Fancheng province. While extant literature does not reveal much information regarding the political environment in their specific areas, the time period following the uprising was marked by many changes in China, and Fancheng province could not have been totally immune to such changes. It should be noted that during the period following the Boxer Rebellion many people in China, especially many of the older Chinese, still resisted the help of foreigners, including foreign missionaries, while the younger generation was more open to new ways and ideas (Liu, 1970).

Education and health care were increasingly an important part of the missionary work, especially after 1890. Early missionaries became teachers by necessity; but during later years American missionaries in China had advanced degrees and acted as educators as much or more than ministers (Hyatt, 1970). The three missionaries of concern to the present study arrived in China in the beginning of 1900's, when a rebirth of interest in

education was occurring in Chinese society. The majority of the missionary teachers in China were unmarried women (including the Swedish ones). Unmarried women were considered better suited for teaching and mission work because they had no family and could devote their entire lives to their work. It seemed that the Chinese people tolerated foreign women teachers better than foreign men teachers in the schools. Many of the mission schools offered day classes for girls and home economics training for housewives (Liu, 1970).

In 1905 the Ministry of Education of China was created, and it organized a system where both Western and Chinese ideas were studied. This started a trend where many young Chinese people went abroad to study in Europe, America, or Japan. Along with these educational changes, there were political reforms led by the Empress Dowager. The Manchus, the ruling family of the Qing, attempted to guide the educational reform movement to their advantage. During this period, many technological and economic changes occurred in the transportation and communication fields, including railways, steamships; the telegraph and a Western style postal system. Prices on goods were also increasing. In addition, between 1900 and 1920 the Chinese were more open to foreign missionaries' ideas and values; consequently the missionaries also experienced one of the most prosperous periods in China (Latourette, 1960)

According to Liu (1970), around 1900 there were 1000 American missionaries in China, and by 1930 the number exceeded 3000. The missionaries formed the Medical Missionary Association of China in 1887 and the Educational Association of China in 1890, and the attitude among the teachers, nurses, and doctors became more professional

by the later years. Medical and educational services flourished in the early twentieth century but by the 1920's the Chinese government forced the missionaries to give up their compulsory attendance at religious worship.

Hilma Maria Johnson

Hilma Johnson was born in Ostegotlands lan in Sweden on Nov 18, 1873. She was one of four daughters. Only eighteen years old, she migrated by herself to America in 1891. The Swedish immigration records note that she was an “avid reader” and had a “good knowledge of Christianity”. She settled in Chicago for a few years before moving to Denver, Colorado. In 1898, while she was living in Denver, she became a Covenant member (Our Covenant, October, 1962). Johnson returned to Chicago in the fall semester of 1900 to enroll in the Business Department at North Park College. The most common option for women enrolled in the Business Department during this time was book-keeping or shorthand/typewriting and Johnson spent one year at North Park College enrolled in short hand and type writing courses before she left to become a missionary in China. Apparently the Missionary Aid Society had their eye on Hilma Johnson to become a missionary. It was David Nyvall who informed Johnson about the Missionary Aid Society's decision to ask her to become a missionary. According to Nyvall, the Society at “its last meeting last evening unanimously decided to extend the call to you to become our missionary to China, and we all most heartily wish that you will receive this call as a call from the Lord, and make up your mind to accept the same” (Nyvall to Johnson, 9 October, 1901). This letter seems to be the first time Johnson became aware that the Missionary Aid Society was even considering her to serve as a missionary. From the

circumstances, it seems that the Society fully expected Johnson to accept, but added some forceful language to encourage her in that direction as well:

Now please decide in favor of the wishes of your comrades and friends and let us know as quickly as you can, and I would suggest that you come to North Park Friday afternoon or evening this week, and let us know and give us a definite answer (Nyvall to Johnson, 9 October, 1901).

Going to China as a missionary was an enormous change in a young woman's life, and it would perhaps need more than a couple of days to decide upon. Nevertheless, on October 15, 1901, Johnson accepted the call to go to China, after "due consideration and praying over the matter" (Johnson to the Missionary Aid Society, n.d.).

Johnson in China. Everything moved quickly, and on December 3rd 1901, Johnson sailed from San Francisco. Before leaving however, she returned to Denver for a visit, where she met with Hilda Rodberg, another Swedish immigrant and the first woman to graduate from the Swedish Covenant Hospital School of Nursing at North Park College. Rodberg's story will be examined in more detail below, but suffice it to say at this point that Johnson and Rodberg knew each other before meeting in Denver, had studied together at North Park College, and sailed together from San Francisco that December. In order to make the trip easier for them, Nyvall sent a letter with them certifying the conditions of the trip and asking responsible persons to make their journey as unproblematic as possible (Nyvall, 21 Nov, 1901).

Shortly after arriving in China, Johnson wrote Nyvall that the voyage had been peaceful and that she and Rodberg had arrived safely in Shanghai on December 28th,

1901. They traveled to Hankow and then on to their final destination of Siang Yang. The journey was slow but they had pleasant company, a total of 14 other missionaries on the boat trip up the river (Johnson to Nyvall, 31 March, 1902).

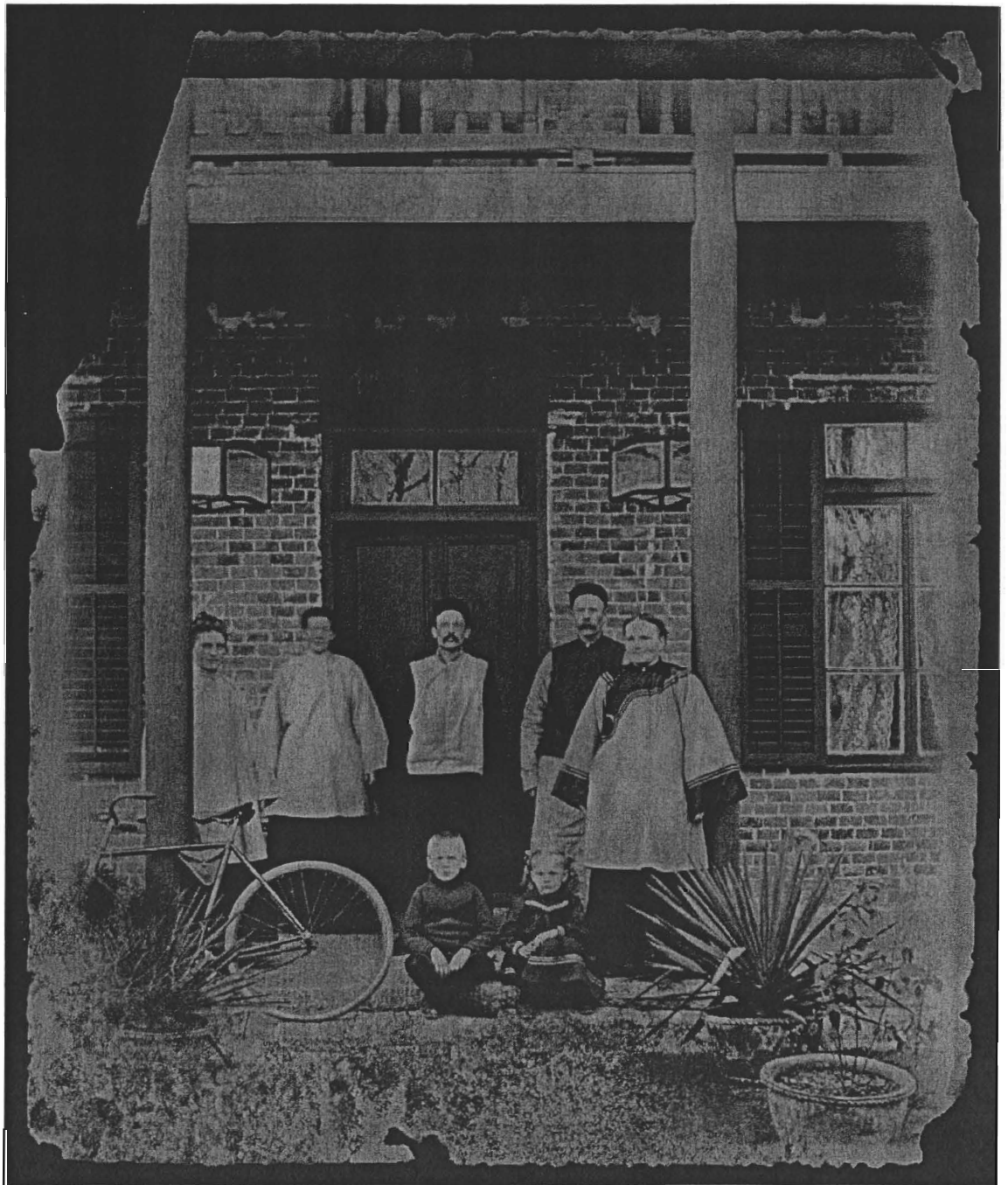
In Siang Yang Johnson met Peter Matson and his wife Christina, Swedish missionaries already established in China. Their two children, Esther and John, would later become missionaries themselves. Johnson and Rodberg were welcomed by the Matsons and many other missionaries during their trip (Johnson to Nyvall, 31 March, 1902).

Johnson learned the Chinese language quickly, even though she found it a challenge. Her workload as a missionary was very heavy, but she expressed appreciation for the opportunity that had been given to her. During her study of Chinese, she was also in charge of “women’s work”, that is, working in schools, educating young girls during the day, and educating the Chinese women in topics such as child rearing and being a good housewife. Johnson was placed in charge of women’s work in Fancheng, a city located across the Han River from Siang Yang (Johnson to Nyvall, 31 March, 1902).

Johnson corresponded frequently with the North Park Missionary Aid Society, reflecting over the events that took place in her life. For example, she wrote of being impressed with how many “believing Chinese people had learned to appreciate the value of God’s gift, Jesus Christ” (Johnson to the Missionary Aid Society, 29 December, 1902).

Figure 3 below is a photograph (from front left) of Hilma Johnson, Hilda Rodberg, Isaac Jacobsson, Peter and Christina Matson with children. The picture was taken in China and dated 1903.

Figure 3. Missionaries in China in 1903.



Photograph courtesy F.M. Johnson Archives, North Park University, Chicago, Illinois.

Throughout her stay in China, Johnson carried on a correspondence with Nyvall. She respected Nyvall, both as the President of the College and for his thoughtfulness in

providing Johnson and her North Park alumni colleagues in China with news from home. During the time, Nyvall published several books and apparently he sent her (and Rodberg) copies. This gave Johnson great pleasure, and she was very appreciative of Nyvall for his consideration. In turn, Johnson kept Nyvall informed about her work and those of her colleagues as well (Johnson to Nyvall, 7 July, 1906).

Political Climate in China. It is important to note that Hilma Johnson and Hilda Rodberg were the first two women missionaries sent to China by the Covenant Church in Chicago. Johnson kept up a steady stream of correspondence with the Missionary Aid Society at North Park College informing them about conditions in China and how this impacted the work of the missionaries. For example, many of the Chinese people were disillusioned with the Qing dynasty and the imperial regency, and they wanted to change the political climate in China. In 1911, republican revolutionaries took over the city of Wuhan, which was centrally located in China. Hunan province soon followed and thereafter many other provinces also declared their independence from the Qing dynasty.

One of the most influential persons in the 1911 revolution was Sun Yat-Sen. He was a medical doctor who had long been impressed with the Western nations, and he worked hard to get the Chinese people to revolt along with him. Sun's ideology was based on the "Three Principles of the People": nationalism, socialism and democracy. Unlike the Boxers, Sun's revolt was not against foreign influence and the many missionaries; instead, he actively sought foreign support. After the 1911 revolution, Yuan Shikai was made the president of China. People had high hopes for his new regime, but it

turned out that Shikai wanted to run the country similar to the Quing dynasty (Wright, 2001).

Throughout the instabilities and many changes in China, Hilma Johnson and her fellow missionaries continued their work. For eighteen years, she immersed herself in work in China. She did receive a year-long furlough in 1912-1913 and spent the time back in Chicago, visiting friends and working with the Missionary Aid Society at North Park College before returning to China in September of 1913. Indeed, after her return in 1913, it would be ten years before she took another furlough. In fact, during Johnson's 40 years of service in China, she only took two furloughs. After her death, it was noted that she had been one of the Covenant Church's most dedicated missionaries (North Park College News, 1962). After her 1912-1913 furlough, Johnson continued doing the women's work, but increasingly became involved with the operations of the schools.

The eleven year period in China between Yang's collapse in 1916 and Chang Kai-Shek's triumphs in 1927 was called the warlord period. Different warlords took over small geographical regions in China, and oftentimes they fought against each other. In general, there was a lack of a common ideology in China, and this caused Chinese students and others to voice opinions more freely regarding what philosophy the future government should follow. Many of the major figures in China's educational development were men who had studied abroad and returned home to influence the educational quest in China. Cai Yuanpei was China's minister of Education in 1911. Due to his disagreements with the developments in China, he left for Europe. Returning in 1916, he became the chancellor of Beida University, a prominent university in Peking.

Many of the young people in China agreed with Yanpei's educational philosophy and this helped create a period of educational growth. Many of China's young people were disappointed with the Versailles settlement after World War I, and this increased their questioning of Western rules and traditions. Still, the value of education continued to be strong (Wright, 2001).

This was also seen among the missionaries, and Johnson corresponded about the increased need for missionaries, especially women. In January of 1923 from Fancheng, China, Johnson noted the demanding work schedule, but she kept good health and spirits. During this time, the Covenant Church sent more women missionary/educators to help with the work in China, for which Johnson and her fellow missionaries were most grateful (Johnson to the Missionary Aid Society, January, 1923).

Correspondence with Nyvall. In her correspondence with David Nyvall, Johnson recalled the first time she met him, at a Missionary Aid Society meeting at North Park. She remembered that Nyvall had said of Jesus that, "He is to have the glory- as it is his grace." She told him how she was able to keep those words in mind during her years of service, and how the words helped her, especially during times of hard work and long hours. She also confided how she always prayed that she would never shy away from her duty and would remain faithful to her work until her retirement. Sometimes she wondered what her life would have been like, had she not accepted the call to China (Johnson to Nyvall, 27 January, 1923).

During this time, Johnson's friend Christina Matson, (wife of Peter Matson) died, and this was particularly hard for Johnson and the other Swedish missionaries. The

Matsons' had been in China since 1901 and were very close to all the Swedish missionaries in Siang Yang and other nearby locales. In fact, Johnson mentioned in several letters how much they all missed Christina Matson. Such interludes of uncertainty and grief eventually receded for Johnson, because she seemed to bounce back and return to her steady and dedicated life as a missionary. From all the evidence, it seems that she accepted missionary work as her true calling in life (Johnson to Nyvall, 27 January, 1923).

The Nyvall-Johnson correspondence proved to be of great value for the present study, as did the correspondence of all three of the missionaries included in the study. For one thing, it is clear that their correspondence with Nyvall was very important to them. Nyvall was not only the president of North Park College, a minister and also a Swedish immigrant, but he also served as the long-distance mentor for the three women. In addition, his letters always brought welcomed news from their beloved North Park, and he was clearly respected and admired by them. For Johnson in particular, he may also have been a father figure, since she immigrated as a young woman by herself and had no immediate family in America. Throughout the women's long sojourn in China, they stayed in touch with Nyvall, a relationship that was clearly important to them.

Before Johnson's second furlough in 1923, Nyvall assured her that North Park College was her home while in America and wished for her to stay in the missionary housing at the College so everyone could see her on a regular basis. He wanted Johnson to know that they were waiting for her arrival and that they would all welcome her home (Nyvall to Johnson, 2 March, 1923).

Nyvall and Johnson continued their correspondence, with Johnson always showing appreciation for Nyvall's letters and the news from home. That news led Johnson to understand that much had changed in America since she last saw it, but she wanted to return to China and hoped her best work there was yet to come. However, she also told the North Park Missionary Aid Society she longed for the time when she would be able to "take my seat as a scholar at North Park" once again, because it would always have a "special place in my heart." She was looking forward to returning for her second furlough, even though she knew many of her friends would no longer be there (Johnson to Nyvall, 22 March, 1923).

Nyvall informed Johnson to expect changes, particularly changes in language expectations because World War I had increased the pressure for immigrants to become "Americanized." Although some people were still in favor of keeping to the Swedish language, the rising generation wanted English. Nyvall appeared tired of the battle to maintain Swedish, but he allowed that "the next generation has to use their own tongue and also have their own principles. We can only hope and pray that they find them in a good book." He noted other changes she might see as well, such as the rent inflation around the North Park College campus (Nyvall to Johnson, 17 April, 1923).

Johnson's Second Furlough. The furlough came eleven years after Johnson's previous visit back home and she departed for home in August of 1923. Esther Matson (the daughter of Peter and Christina Matson) returned to Chicago with her, so she had company on the long trip home. Johnson stayed in America until the end of 1924, partly in Providence, Rhode Island, to visit friends, and partly in Chicago. While in Chicago,

she was invited to speak at North Park College on several occasions, once before the Missionary Aid Society where she spoke about her willingness to go to China, and her decision to return (Johnson, Notes, n.d.). While in Chicago, Johnson contributed an article to the *North Park Alumni Notes* about the satisfying work to be done in China and the great need for more workers (North Park College News, December 1924).

On November 29th, 1924, a number of Johnson's friends gathered to say goodbye to her. According to the *North Park College News*, the gathering was pleasant and informal, but it also had a serious note about the "high calling Johnson was embarking upon" and the hope that more women would take up the call to become missionaries. The news called Hilma Johnson "our own missionary," of great character and commitment, a true, kind spirited human being who spent her life helping others. After her furlough, Johnson returned to China and continued her missionary work for the next sixteen years. Back in China, Johnson was often seen working early mornings to late evenings, offering help to the people in need. It was also said that Johnson hardly ever took any vacation; rather she spent her summers helping the people that needed her most. (North Park College News, February 1927; North Park College News, December 1924, p. 2).

Financial Support. Throughout her long stay in China, Johnson was sometimes given support by the North Park student body. Donations were sent over time from students and the Missionary Aid Society at North Park. For example, in December of 1934, the students at North Park raised a total of \$ 600.90 for Hilma Johnson. North Park College organized a "missionary week," full of prayers and information about missionary

work in different fields. At this time, due to the impact of the great depression, many of the North Park College students were not in good financial situations themselves, and the amount of money raised for Johnson was greatly appreciated because of this fact.

According to the school paper, the students showed generosity by supporting Johnson in many ways, not only financially, but “also with their prayers” (North Park College News, December, 1935).

Financial support for Johnson was continued, in November of 1937, when students and faculty at North Park raised over \$ 500 to support her. The goal of raising a total of \$1,000 was met through the services students conducted every Sunday in different Covenant churches in Chicago. Apparently, the missionaries sent by North Park College were highly respected by both the students and the larger college community, who continued to give support for many years.

From Hankow, China, Johnson wrote to the *North Park College News* to express her grateful thanks to the members of the North Park Missionary Aid Society for all its support and help. She also thanked members for their letters and gifts, as well as the news they sent from home. Johnson’s sense of appreciation was a fairly constant theme in all her letters, to friends and organizations at North Park College (Johnson, 19 February, 1935; North Park College News, April, 1935).

Johnson’s Retirement

While there is scarce information regarding Johnson’s daily life beyond her work in schools and with the women of Fancheng, the evidence suggests that she undertook her duties from a deep religious commitment and a belief that she was fulfilling her duty to

God by helping people in need. Finally, in October of 1941, Johnson retired to Chicago after being in China for sixteen years since her last furlough and a total of 40 years of service altogether. The evidence does not reveal if Johnson had formally requested retirement, or whether the Covenant Church thought it was time for her to retire since she was now 68 years old and conditions in China were chaotic due to World War II.

Historians speak about a “three-way war” in China: The Chinese Communists and the Nationalists were fighting each other, and both were fighting the Japanese (Wright, 2001).

In 1941, when Johnson finally arrived at the train station in Chicago, there were many people from the North Park College community there to greet her. Although aged and “small in stature and slight of build”, she still had a confident demeanor as she greeted those who met her at the train station. The passage of years and generations meant she did not know many of her greeters, but she was now back at home at last (North Park College News, October, 1941).

On October 27, 1941 an informal reception was held at the College in honor of Johnson. An outpouring of students came to meet the missionary they had heard so much about over the years. The reception was considered a great success and it was said that the crowd seemed to reflect the excitement of a football game (North Park College News, November, 1941).

Johnson formally retired from active missionary service in 1942 and settled in Chicago. In 1955 she moved into the Covenant Home in Chicago where she remained until her death at age 89 on October 7th, 1962. She was survived by her three sisters,

Signe, Agga and Ingrid. Signe and Agga still lived in Sweden while Ingrid lived in California (Our Covenant, 1962).

Hilda Rodberg

Hilda Rodberg migrated with her parents to America. Records are virtually non-existent concerning Rodberg before her arrival in the North Park community in 1898, when she enrolled in the nursing school. The course of study at the nursing school at the time lasted two years. The first class consisted of only three students, and two of them did not graduate, because they decided to enter the missionary field before finishing their studies. The available evidence did not reveal as to where these students undertook their missionary work, except that apparently they did not go to China. Hilda Rodberg was the sole nursing student who lasted the full two years to become the first graduate of the school in the summer of 1900. Figure 4 below depicts Hilda Rodberg after graduation in 1900.

Figure 4. Hilda Rodberg as a Nursing School Graduate in 1900.



Photograph courtesy F.M. Johnson Archives, North Park University, Chicago, Illinois.

Rodberg in China. Similar to Hilma Johnson, Hilda Rodberg accepted a request to become a missionary and in December of 1901, she accompanied Hilma Johnson to China. As the Covenant Church's first trained nurse, she organized the first Covenant hospital in China, with her colleagues Dr. John Sjoquist and Victoria Welter Sjoquist. Rodberg was also in charge of the training school at a second hospital at Kingsmen, China (After Forty Years, 1926, p.29).

Similar to the other two female missionaries from North Park College, she kept up steady correspondence with David Nyvall during her tenure in China. In 1902 Rodberg reported that the missionaries enjoyed themselves in China, but the work required long hours and lots of patience and she trusted God that she would be able to complete her work successfully. She also noted that both she and Hilma Johnson had been fortunate to stay healthy, even though they both sometimes became lonely when they talked about friends and family back home. They also missed the church services in North Park terribly, in part because in 1902 they were still unable to completely understand the services in Chinese. Rodberg reflected that she had not attended a sermon she could fully understand since the year before (Rodberg to Nyvall, 10 June, 1902).

Rodberg's Work. In 1902, Rodberg and her colleagues helped build the first Covenant hospital in China, a much needed facility for the large number of sick people there. It would be nothing compared to the one at home in Chicago, but Rodberg expressed eagerness to begin work in the new hospital (Rodberg to Nyvall, 10 June, 1902).

Hilda Rodberg seemed satisfied with her work in China and did not complain much about overwork. This is interesting to note since she worked in the medical field, which was often criticized by others for keeping overly long hours with little rest. Rodberg did observe that people in America seemed to have forgotten the needs in China, but she knew how much the work needed to be done and she had a passion for doing it. She always expressed appreciation for Nyvall's support and asked if he could arrange for the next Swedish missionary to bring some books for the missionaries. She asked for both music and reading books and offered to pay for them herself. Rodberg did receive the books but the evidence did not reveal who covered the expenses (Rodberg to Nyvall, June 10, 1902).

During her first tour of duty in China, Rodberg stayed in Siang Yang and, as noted above, worked with Dr. John Sjoquist, to open the first Covenant hospital in China. During her second tour she was again in Siang Yang and Fancheng, working as a nurse. During her third tour however, she was sent to Kingsmen to help run the Covenant's second hospital in China. Rodberg was proud that North Park had sent so many of its graduates to work alongside her in China (Rodberg to Nelson, n.d.).

Rodberg's Retirement. The record does not show precisely when Rodberg left China to come back home for good; however, an undated letter from her to Selma Nelson, was in reply to the Swedish Covenant Hospital for its 40th Anniversary in 1939. Nelson, an alumna of the nursing school, requested information from Rodberg about "old times" at the hospital to be used in the *Swedish Covenant Hospital Alumnae Publication* in honor of the school's anniversary. At the time of Rodberg's reply to

Nelson, she was in California taking care of her elderly mother. Rodberg wished to attend the celebrations and graduations in the coming spring, but was unsure if she could leave her ill mother. She apologized to Nelson for not recalling more about the old days at school, but related that she had much more information recorded in her books “back home in Kingsmen”, China. Her reference to Kingsmen as her home indicates that she may have planned to return to China, but no additional evidence was found regarding Rodberg’s retirement or her death (Rodberg to Nelson, n.d.). Indeed, of all the women included in the study the evidence is most sparse concerning Rodberg’s later life.

Victoria Welter Sjoquist

Victoria Welter was born on November 24th in 1878 in Malmo, in the south of Sweden. She was the youngest of five children. According to Victoria, she and her family belonged to the Mission Church, and she was involved in religion from birth (Welter Sjoquist, n.d.). Her mother died when Victoria was very young and it was after this death, Victoria migrated to America with her father and her older siblings. They settled in Chicago in 1889 (North Park College News, November 26, 1930). Victoria first attended Sunday school herself, and then she served as a teacher in the school. She was also very involved in the youth organization and the church choir. She became a full member in 1900, at age 22 (Welter, Notes, n.d.).

Attending seminary seemed to be the natural fit for Victoria Welter because she was so strongly drawn to religion. Consequently, she enrolled in the Seminary at North Park College in 1901 and took up residence at 800 N. Fairfield Avenue. In 1902, the number of Seminary enrollees was only 18, but when Welter graduated in 1903, it had

grown to 27, with Welter being the first woman to complete the theological course of study at North Park College. However, the emancipation of women was “more an ideal than actuality in 1903”. This can be seen in the absence of Welter from the official class photograph. When the graduating class of 1903 had their class picture taken, the men of the class voted to exclude her (Carlson, 1941, p.155; Student Ledger, 1901).

Family and Work. After graduating from North Park Seminary, Welter accepted the call to become a missionary in Siang Yang in Fancheng Province, China. She left for Siang Yang in 1904 and one month after her arrival, she married Dr. John Sjoquist on September 1st, 1904. It is unclear how long she knew him beforehand. At the time, John Sjoquist, was a missionary medical doctor stationed in Fancheng. Born in Vitsand, Varmland Sweden in 1863, he migrated to America in 1887 where he became a student at the Chicago Theological Seminary. He first went to China as a missionary in 1893 but came back to Chicago in 1896 to pursue his medical degree at Rush Medical College, from which he graduated in 1900. Sjoquist returned to China in 1901 as a medical missionary. His first wife died in 1901, three years before he married Victoria Welter in 1904. Dr. Sjoquist and his first wife had a son together, Herbert, who was just a small child when his mother passed away (In Loving Memory, 1967).

Victoria Welter Sjoquist and her new husband worked as missionaries in China for thirteen years, during which time they had two children. Unfortunately, Dr. Sjoquist died in August of 1917 when he was only fifty-four years old, apparently from heart disease and overwork. Victoria often expressed concern about the difficult tasks they undertook in China, and how understaffed they were. Several scholars have noted that the

field of medicine was respected in China since its early days but properly trained doctors and nurses were very scarce. The volume of the work done by the available doctors and nurses was astounding, and it was not uncommon for a physician to see up to 200 patients a day. In addition, they also made house visits, and although the church expected them to spread the Christian word as well, it was common knowledge that they were completely overworked and simply had no time for pastoral work or rest and recreation. In consequence, many of the missionary doctors died relatively young, as did John Sjoquist (Liu, 1970; Wright, 2001).

After her husband's death in 1917, Victoria became even more determined in her efforts to ease medical missionaries' work loads. She wrote Nyvall as follows:

Sometimes I get almost bitter in my mind when I think about how hard he worked and how much he suffered, when he should have been home in bed.... I could tell that no one believed that he was as burned out as I was telling people he was. He also had trouble sleeping the last few years, and now this last time it was his weak heart... I am happy that he gets to rest now, but that does not help in my longing for him. I guess the Lord felt that I needed this sorrow and trial in order to form me for the life He has chosen for me (Welter Sjoquist to Nyvall, 9 Nov, 1917).

The time following her husband's death, Welter Sjoquist was not sure of her future. It was hard to stay in China and be reminded of everything that had happened, but it was also hard to go home to America and leave China behind. She wanted at least to come home to Chicago in the spring of 1918 to thank her friends for all their support during her years in China (Welter Sjoquist to Nyvall 9 Nov, 1917). She also needed to think about

finding employment while at home to provide for herself and her children. Since she spent a “full period” in China she believed she was entitled to a furlough, and was quite determined to take one. She wanted to enroll her children in school in Chicago and stay with them for a couple of years. Besides, she had not heard from the board of the Covenant Church as to what she was expected to do in the future; therefore she felt her first duty was to enroll her children in school (Welter Sjoquist to Nyvall, 9 Nov, 1917).

Perhaps a result of grief over the death of her husband, Welter Sjoquist was very direct about how overworked the missionaries were (a very different story from Hilma Johnson’s). According to Welter Sjoquist:

Everyone out here has too much to do; it should be a law against opening more stations than he/she can be in charge of, without getting overworked. But, it is hard to say no when one person after the next comes and begs us that he [sic] should open a station in their area” (Welter Sjoquist to Nyvall, 19 Nov, 1917).

Nyvall interceded with E.G Hjerpe of the Covenant Church concerning Welter Sjoquist’s desire to come back to America. He explained her conditions in China and her desire to find employment when she returned to Chicago. Based on her plans for employment, it seems she was uncertain about her future duties with the Covenant Church. Nyvall reassured Hjerpe that Welter Sjoquist only wanted to stay home a few years for her children’s schooling. If the Covenant Board wished for her to return to China, he was sure that she would respect their wishes. Nyvall even suggested that perhaps the Church might help with Welter Sjoquist’s living expenses while she was in Chicago (Nyvall to Hjerpe, 19 December, 1917).

In fact, Nyvall wrote to Victoria Welter Sjoquist that he interpreted her letters to mean she would go back to China after a period of time for her children's education. Apparently there were no specific rules regarding missionary pensions, because Nyvall felt Hjerpe should take her case before the Board. He was apologetic about having to bring up such business matters about employment plans and a possible future return to China (Nyvall to Welter Sjoquist, 19 December, 1917).

The evidence suggests that the Missionary Aid Society and the Covenant Church were probably inclined to help Welter Sjoquist and her family, but only if she intended to eventually return to China. However, the records reveal no other Covenant missionaries from North Park having concerns about money or pension, so it is unclear whether this was a unique situation, perhaps prompted by her husband's death and her wish to return to Chicago for a prolonged stay.

Welter in Chicago. Victoria Welter Sjoquist never went back to China, but remained in Chicago and eventually sent her two children to North Park College. She remained a good friend of Nyvall, and when there were later disagreements between President Nyvall and other members of the administration at North Park, Welter Sjoquist openly supported Nyvall and assured him that her children were going to remain at the school.

Victoria Welter Sjoquist later remarried in 1922, this time to Robert O. Cronholm. They continued to live in Chicago at 3434 Potomac Avenue, until six years before her death, when she moved to Mikana, Wisconsin. After her marriage to Cronholm, she traveled quite frequently to Mikana, while her children were still enrolled at North Park.

Once while away in Mikana, Welter Sjoquist confided to Nyvall that, “it seems queer that I married again, but to tell the truth I felt unable to keep on the way I have been doing every since I came home, the strain was too great on my health and nerves” (Welter Sjoquist to Nyvall, 4 September, 1922). Apparently, she was referring to the necessity of being employed for income while also taking care of her children. She was not complaining, she told Nyvall, but remarriage seemed to be “the best way out of it for all concerned” (Welter Sjoquist to Nyvall, 4 September, 1922).

Nyvall assured her that her children were in good hands at the College, and he was pleased to have her son in his own Swedish class so he would stay connected with her family. He also assured her that she could delay paying tuition for her children until she was able to visit North Park in person (Nyvall to Welter Sjoquist, 7 September, 1922).

Welter's Death. Victoria Welter Sjoquist Cronholm endured until her death on January 26, 1967, survived by her son Herbert Sjoquist of Mikana, Wisconsin, and her daughter Mille, who was married and lived in Chicago. In addition, she was also survived by two stepsons, Robert and Andrew Cronholm, both of Lockport, Illinois, and one married stepdaughter, Evelyn Harlvorsen of Chicago. She also had one granddaughter and many step grand children (In Loving Memory, 1967).²

Figure 5 below is an undated photograph of Victoria Welter Sjoquist.

² It is interesting to note that Victoria Welter Sjoquist Cronholm's story as a missionary will be published and her portrait hung in the North Park Seminary Hall in 2006 to honor her as the first female graduate from the Seminary. The current administration at North Park thought it would be fitting to include her portrait because she was excluded from the graduating class picture back in 1903.

Figure 5. Undated photograph of Victoria Welter Sjoquist



Photograph courtesy F.M. Johnson Archives, North Park University, Chicago, Illinois.

Summary

Life for women students at North Park College in the beginning decades of the twentieth century was not always easy, but it proved to be highly valuable nonetheless. The importance of religion was a dominant theme not only among North Park's seminarians, but also among other students as well. The three women students examined by the present study took the value and importance of both education and religion very seriously, and they performed accordingly. During the time frame studied, there were limited options for most women in American society, but Swedish immigrant women who attended North Park improved their chances of finding careers that differed from ordinary female occupations. By attending North Park College, they primarily had options of becoming teachers, secretaries, nurses, and missionaries. At the College, women were involved in different campus organizations and societies that not only enhanced their academic education, but got them involved in taking up issues of the day and forming relationships with other people.

Hilma Johnson, Hilda Rodberg and Victoria Welter Sjoquist were all Swedish women immigrants who attended North Park College and the Swedish Covenant Hospital Nursing School. The three women students accepted the path of helping others in need by becoming missionaries in a far off land. Their lives involved inconveniences and hardships but they accepted such conditions as part of their duty to God and to others, although Hilma Johnson and Hilda Rodberg accepted these conditions with less complaint than Victoria Welter Sjoquist. Of the three women, Welter Sjoquist were clearly the most vocal in voicing her opinion regarding working conditions in China, and

the extreme work load that was expected out of them. Interesting to note is that she was the only one of the three who requested a prolonged return to Chicago, and once there did not return to China. Her decision to stay in Chicago may have been influenced by her husband's death while in China, but it should be noted that she was also the only one of the three who had children to nurture and support. Hilma Johnson and Hilda Rodberg maintained their decisions to lead lives as missionaries, even though they sometimes grew homesick and missed their friends and families and often stayed overseas for years before receiving furloughs. Whatever the individual circumstances, they ran missions, operated schools, established hospitals and provided help, as best as they could with limited resources, to the poor and the sick, and one of them was even able to bear and raise children during part of this process.

CHAPTER IV

Caroline “Lena” Sahlstrom: Professor, Mentor and Role Model

Caroline “Lena” Sahlstrom was the first female faculty member at North Park College. She served the school for 34 years, of which 25 took place at North Park College in Chicago. She served in many different roles at the school, some of which included Dean of Women, Director of the Primary Department, and a faculty member in the Music Department. Her dedication to the students at North Park was thorough, and her story is important to tell when addressing Swedish immigrant history and the education of women in America.

Sahlstrom believed in the power of education, perhaps as strongly as she believed in her religious faith. Both were vital parts of her life, and motivated her to work endless hours with students and especially to improve education of the women students at North Park College. The following analysis will describe Sahlstrom as a person, including her early life, her decision to become a teacher, her work as a published author and active member of North Park College and, finally, her life as a retiree. The following chapter will attempt to demonstrate Sahlstrom’s character by way of her exceptional career at North Park and her retirement years.

Early Life

Caroline "Lena" Sahlstrom was born October 28, 1861, in Likiberga, Orebro, Sweden. When she was six years old her parents August and Lovisa, immigrated to America. Lena was the youngest of four children (she had two older brothers and one older sister) and in April of 1867 she and her family joined countless other Swedes on the grueling voyage to America. They arrived at the port in New York but soon settled in Stockholm, Wisconsin, remaining there only one year before moving to Chicago. Lena's father was able to buy a three story building in the city where he opened up a hardware store. The Sahlstrom family also lived in this building (Swedish Immigration Record, n.d.; *The Covenant Weekly*, 1940).

Life for the Sahlstrom family in Chicago at first proved to be successful. Unfortunately, on October 8, 1871, the horrendous Chicago fire destroyed a great deal of the city (Chicago Historical Society, 1971). Lena's family was tragically affected by this because the fire completely destroyed the Sahlstrom's house and business, and Lena and her family had to live under a bridge with other refugees for two days before they were able to leave for Minneapolis, where the Sahlstrom's had friends from Sweden. Some other Swedes affected by the fire stayed in Chicago and rebuilt, but it is unclear why the Sahlstrom family chose to move to Minneapolis rather than rebuilding in Chicago (*North Park News*, 2 January, 1940).

Both of Sahlstrom's parents were devout Christians, and religion was a very important part of their daily lives. Growing up, Sahlstrom was always interested in reading and listening to Christian scriptures. She recalled in later years how, after she had

been put to bed in the evening, she would be able to hear her father call the older family members together for worship.

I would then quietly get up, slip down to the foot of the stairs, and lie down on the floor, where, through the crack between the floor and the door, I would easily hear... Often I was in tears during these fifteen, twenty minutes when heaven seems so much nearer to me and the earth, and my Savior and the angels more real than my playmates. I have always felt that it was then that I gave my heart to Christ. Oh, that the perfect faith of childhood continue with us undisturbed and unwavering through life (North Park College News, 1929).

Similarly, throughout her upbringing Sahlstrom was surrounded by the value and importance of education. She was sent to elementary school in the Minneapolis community where the family lived. Later, Sahlstrom also took courses at Tabor College in the late 1880's, but she never earned a Bachelor degree. Education had long been a strong value in Swedish society, a value that many Swedish immigrants brought with them to their new homeland to instill in their children and their communities, thus a number of schools were established by Swedish immigrants in America (Blanck, 1997).

Sahlstrom lived with her family in Minneapolis until she moved to Chicago and the North Park community, but evidence is scarce for the time Sahlstrom lived in Minneapolis, except for her schooling, her study at Tabor College, and her involvement in the church and work as a teacher (Women in the Covenant, n.d).

Teacher

Sahlstrom's venture into teaching started in Minneapolis in 1888, when she became involved in both instruction and editing. She started by editing a Christian publication for young people, and before long she was an editor of the Swedish paper *Linnean*. In Minneapolis, Sahlstrom was also a Sunday school teacher in the Tabernacle Sunday School.

August Skogsbergh was a Swedish minister who immigrated to Chicago in 1876. He moved to Minneapolis in 1884 to serve as the minister of the Tabernacle Church. There he became a friend of the Sahlstrom family and an important figure for Swedish immigrants. Soon after arriving in Minneapolis in 1884, Skogsbergh founded a school which was housed in the basement of his home. During this time, there were many Swedish immigrants in Minneapolis and some of them came to the Skogsbergh house to study the Bible and learn the English language. By 1885, the house proved too small to hold all the students, so Skogsbergh and his colleagues acquired a church in which to conduct classes. The school was a combination of elementary school, Bible institute, business institute, and a preparatory experience for high school (Carlson, 1941).

In 1886, David Nyvall became a teacher at Skogsbergh's school for the 1886-1887 academic year, but he later moved to Chicago to be a part of the Chicago Theological Seminary. In 1887, Nyvall married Skogsbergh's sister Louisa and returned to Minneapolis in 1890. Due to the growth of enrollments at the start of its seventh year the school changed its name to the "Minneapolis Business School and Bible Institute" (Carlson, 1941, p.26). Even though the school was a success, both Skogsbergh and

Nyvall wanted to found a school specifically under the auspices of the Covenant Church (Carlson, 1941).

The Swedish Evangelical Mission Covenant Church was founded in 1885 in the United States, and Nyvall was an active member from the start. He worked hard to convince members of the Covenant Church that they needed a school of their own. In September of 1891, Nyvall's efforts paid off when members voted in favor of this venture. Nyvall insisted that the purpose of the school should be not only to help boys become ministers, but also to provide a general program where both male *and* female students could learn practical and academic subjects. The location of the school was a concern among the members of the church, and Nyvall and Skogsbergh both agreed that they would open the school in Minneapolis to serve the Covenant Church (Carlson, 1941).

On September 19, 1891, the Covenant School in Minneapolis was opened in the basement of the Swedish Tabernacle Church. A.L. Skoog was a Swedish friend of the Sahlstrom family and also one of the English teachers in the new Covenant School, as well as a composer of church music. It was he who lured Lena Sahlstrom into her long and successful teaching career. Although Skoog was a teacher at the Covenant School, he did not particularly enjoy teaching and wanted to devote his life to music (Carlson, 1941).

At this time Lena Sahlstrom, along with her editing work, was teaching private music lessons in Minneapolis. Music had always been a part of her life, and so she started giving piano lessons at an early age. Skoog convinced Sahlstrom to visit his class at the Covenant School one day, and when she arrived she was handed a note from a student

saying that Skoog had to leave unexpectedly and he hoped she could teach his class that day. Although Lena felt nervous and certainly not ready to be a teacher, she handled the task well because she felt it was not fair to the students not to receive instruction that day. Skoog asked Sahlstrom to come back and visit the next day again. She agreed, and when she arrived, she was once again told that Skoog could not be present and would she please teach his class.

Thus, Sahlstrom started her long teaching career by becoming, in effect, Skoog's teaching assistant. Shortly thereafter, she became the English teacher at the Covenant School, but she continued to provide music lessons as well. Sahlstrom jokingly maintained throughout her career that she had been "lured" into the teaching profession (North Park College News, 1926; Carlson, 1941).

While teaching in Minneapolis, Sahlstrom earned a salary of \$ 20 per month. She was very modest and felt she did not deserve a higher salary. When she was offered a raise to \$ 25 per month she maintained that she was not worth it because she was still inexperienced (Carlson, 1941).

The Covenant School operated in Minneapolis for three years before it moved to North Park, Chicago. Although it was a success in Minneapolis, school leaders and Covenant Church members believed they needed a newer and larger building to accommodate more students. Thus it was that in 1894 the Covenant Church dedicated a building in Chicago to house the new Covenant School. This building would become known as the Old Main building, which is still standing at North Park University today. It seemed natural for the school to move to Chicago because of its central location. Carlson

(1941) observes however, that it was with “mixed feelings” that the Nyvall and Skogsbergh families left Minneapolis for Chicago and North Park.

On September 18, 1894, the school, newly renamed as “North Park College,” officially opened its doors in Chicago. Lena Sahlstrom was not part of the faculty at this time because, when asked by Nyvall to make the move, she demurred because she did not think it was right for her to leave her parents at that time (North Park College News, 5 November, 1926). Hence, from 1894 to 1902, she remained with her family in Minneapolis where she continued to give music lessons, edit papers, and teach in “The Northwestern Collegiate and Business Institute”, another school founded by Skogsbergh with Sahlstrom’s brother serving as president (North Park College News, December 6, 1926).

Sahlstrom at North Park College.

It was not until 1902 that David Nyvall finally convinced her to move to Chicago to be a part of the North Park College faculty. In May of 1902 Sahlstrom accepted and inquired of Nyvall about her work day as a teacher and what the expectations would be, such as how many hours a day and what classes she was expected to teach. She believed she could teach the subjects she was already teaching in Minneapolis, but did not feel capable of taking up new subjects. Sahlstrom also wanted to teach beginning students in the music department (Sahlstrom to Nyvall, 19 May, 1902).

After Nyvall responded encouragingly, Sahlstrom replied, “If you think I can fill the position you offer to your satisfaction, I am willing to undertake the work and I think you know that I will do my best” (Sahlstrom to Nyvall, 24 May, 1902). The

correspondence between Sahlstrom and Nyvall continued during May and June of 1902, about details of the work, including salary: "If my being in your school can be of any service I shall gladly give all I have to give. As to the salary (\$ 50 per month, or \$ 500 per year) I think that will be a satisfactory arrangement. The music lessons also will help" (Sahlstrom to Nyvall, 24 May, 1902).

Before Sahlstrom set out for Chicago, she also corresponded with Louisa Nyvall, David's wife, regarding her upcoming move to North Park. Sahlstrom had specific questions regarding housing, since her mother might come to live with her at North Park. Sahlstrom's mother was in poor health, and Lena was concerned about her having to climb stairs (Sahlstrom to L. Nyvall, 2 June, 1902). Sahlstrom's father accompanied them on the trip to North Park, departing from Minneapolis on August 20, 1902.

Sahlstrom started at North Park College in the Primary Department. Prior to her arrival, North Park did not have a distinct separation of the Academy and the Primary Department. The North Park Academy was accredited in 1900 by the inspectors of schools in Illinois (Carlson, 1941). When the accreditation of the Academy occurred, the enrollment doubled during the next couple of years. Thus, the Academy was very successful and was the first school in the state of Illinois to become an accredited academy. Everyone at North Park was proud that their students could graduate from the Academy and be eligible to enter any of the universities in Illinois (Carlson, 1941, p.163). Due to the heavy increase in enrollment and the different types of students that were at the time sharing classes, the separation of the Primary Department was seen as necessary and beneficial.

According to Carlson (1941) Sahlstrom's arrival at North Park was important for the school and particularly for the female students:

A significant step was taken forward by the school in 1902 when Lena Sahlstrom was called as a director of the Primary department; a piano teacher in the music department and Lady Principal...Her function was not so much of a principal as the Dean of women. Such work was needed for the thirty-one young women who constituted roughly $\frac{1}{4}$ of the enrollment in 1902. In the capacity as an advisor for the girls, Lena Sahlstrom was marvelously fitted for her work. Tactful, understanding, patient and deeply spiritual, she embodied the necessary traits for a competent counselor (p. 171).

Upon arriving at North Park College, Sahlstrom found her schedule as a teacher, tutor, and advisor for the girls to be very demanding and challenging. She taught seven classes every day, and every Tuesday and Friday she gave six music lessons in addition to her regular work schedule. The students who attended North Park College during this time varied in ability and background preparation, which made the work more demanding for Sahlstrom. She had to provide individual tutoring for certain students to make sure they were keeping up with the curriculum. Many of the students in the Primary Department at this time spoke only Swedish since they were recent immigrants from Sweden, and Sahlstrom helped them with their translations from Swedish to English. According to Carlson (1941)

The instruction given by Lena Sahlstrom in the Primary Department was very important for the development of the school. Of necessity her work included

much laborious digging, grubbing among the roots, loosening the stones and removing the lumps before a proper foundation could be laid. The work was tiresome, difficult and obscure. Whereas others could build above the surface, she had to dig down into the soil. But this below the ground work made possible the building story upon story above. To a few choice teachers fell the privilege of adding walls, roofs, cupolas, pinnacles, spires. But without the work of Miss Sahlstrom these finishing touches could not have been made. Only with much sacrifice by others is man made educationally complete. (p. 173).

Figure 6 is a picture of the faculty at North Park College during the early 1900's, when Sahlstrom was the lone woman on the faculty.

Figure 6. North Park College Faculty in the Early 1900's.



Photograph courtesy F.M. Johnson Archives, North Park University, Chicago, Illinois.

A challenge later recalled by Sahlstrom was the fact that the theological students at North Park only attended seven months a year. So, Sahlstrom actually taught the regular students in the Primary Department for one whole month before the theological

students arrived. This happened both in the fall and winter semesters and made it difficult for her to help the theology students catch up with the curriculum and progress properly. Sahlstrom wrote that she never understood why they came late to school, and it concerned her greatly. Conditions were such that she had to devote her free time to help her students. As she recalled,

The first year I could give these extra sessions only three days a week, as on Tuesdays and Fridays I was giving six music lessons after the other classes were over. It is wonderful how busy this world has always been. There were [sic] not time these two days to go home for supper (North Park College News, 6 December, 1926).

In 1903, the school also hired Blanche Waldenstrom to teach in the Music Department, so in Sahlstrom's second year her schedule was at least slightly less demanding (Carlson, 1941). Upon Waldenstrom's employment, Sahlstrom was no longer the sole female faculty member.

During this time, women's education was emerging in American colleges and schools, and the need for women faculty members increased as well. At North Park's neighboring school, the University of Chicago, ten women faculty members were hired as early as 1898. Generally speaking, however, by 1901, women were still a distinct minority among the faculty at coeducational institutions, except in traditional fields such as nursing and home economics.

At the same time, there was a growing recognition of the benefits of women attending college, particularly because American society needed more teachers, educated

women who could contribute more to the general culture and be better prepared to fulfill their duties as members of society, as well as wives and mothers. Some of the negatives reported by women attending college included beliefs that women could not achieve the same mastery of the subject matter as men, and that women scholars would lose their femininity. In addition, some believed that once they married, women's education would go unused. Another concern voiced around 1900 was that fewer women who attended college actually married, causing a decline in the birthrate (which was not seen as good for the society at that time). Nevertheless, the attendance of women in colleges and universities continued to increase, and this boosted the quest by women students to have more female faculty members in their schools. By 1911, women comprised nine percent of all faculty members at American colleges and universities (Farello, 1970; Bashaw, 1999).

At North Park College, Sahlstrom's main teaching duties throughout her career were among students who lacked both an adequate elementary education background and sufficient English language skills. She also taught music, geography and arithmetic as well. She continued teaching in the Primary Department until 1924, when its function was transferred over to the Academy. For years, the Primary Department was driven by the influx of immigrants to Chicago, but after 1924, when immigration was significantly reduced by the U.S government, there were fewer immigrants arriving in Chicago (Tozer, 2004). North Park College decided to abolish the Primary Department and transfer its work to the Academy, which now shouldered all preparatory functions before students undertook the college-level curriculum. In Sahlstrom's reminiscences published in 1926

in the *North Park College News*, she stated that of all the classes she taught, translation was the one she enjoyed the most. She felt that the students in this class were very motivated, bright and eager to learn. This included all students, even the older students willing to take on the challenge of mastering a new language (*North Park College News*, 17 December, 1926).

Sahlstrom's Roles at the College. Sahlstrom occupied many roles during her years at North Park College and as a result was a major role model for women students. She held many titles, including Head of the Primary Department and Dean of Women. During the early 1900's, the role of the dean of women at American colleges and universities included numerous responsibilities. It has been noted that deans of women were expected to help students adapt to campus life and that they were, at least in church-supported schools, supposed to be concerned about students' religious and social adjustments as well as their health, housing, and medical services. The role of dean of women was in some respects similar to that of a mother, nurse and minister. Deans of women were to make sure that women students lived and studied properly, just as they were also expected to stimulate and inspire the students towards good citizenship and service. This could be done through different involvements in organizations and societies at the school, and through providing proper social activities such as school clubs. The deans had many demands placed on them, in addition to providing and caring for the students: they were to be intelligent, dependable and very enthusiastic individuals who led students by example (Farello, 1970, Bashaw, 1999).

It is clear that Sahlstrom was viewed by Nyvall and other leaders at North Park College as having all the qualities necessary to serve as that school's Dean of Women. Even though her teaching schedule was demanding, Sahlstrom took the dean's role and responsibilities very seriously. In addition to her multiple roles and functions at the College, she also taught Sunday school at North Park College for the first seven years of her career there.

Extra Curriculum

In addition to her teaching and administrative duties, Lena Sahlstrom also was the editor of the *Sunday School Friend*, with a circulation of 23,000 in the United States in 1913. The Covenant Church considered the *Sunday School Friend* to be important for young Swedish immigrants because it taught them Christian values (The Covenant Companion January, 1928).

Sahlstrom also served as the faculty sponsor for the NOPACO Club, which was founded in the fall of 1913. NOPACO (which stands for North Park College) was only open to women, and the members met every Wednesday night in Sahlstrom's small dormitory room at the College. The objectives of this society were to:

1. Help women students to get to know each other better outside the classroom,
2. Help new students feel at home both at North Park College and in the local community,
3. Improve the young women's reading room with money from the club's monthly fees of five cents.

4. Further the general interest of females (North Park College Catalogue (1912-1913).

Figure 7 shows the members of NOPACO Club during the 1914-1916 academic year.

Figure 7. 1914-1916 NOPACO Club Members.



Photograph courtesy F.M. Johnson Archives, North Park University, Chicago, Illinois.

Due to her regular teaching load as well as providing music lessons and individual tutoring, Sahlstrom had little free time on her hands. Despite this, she found time to help students develop and further their educational and personal development through the NOPACO club. In 1924, the club was very involved with fundraising for the new women's dormitory. As seen in various articles in the *North Park College News* and from reading the "Faculty Minutes" it was clearly expected that the women students should

participate in this activity that, among other things, helped supply the furniture in the reception room of the new dorm.

In addition to the NOPACO Club, Sahlstrom also was very involved in the Ciceronian Literary Society. The purpose of this society was to promote literature, composition, debating and music, and both female and male students were eligible to join. Sahlstrom devoted her Tuesday evenings to the Ciceronian Literary Society and the meetings were held in her room (The Ciceronian Literary Society Secretary's book, 1908-1912).

As can be seen, Sahlstrom's work schedule was extremely demanding, but she believed in education and wanted to help her students in any way she could. The evidence clearly suggests that Sahlstrom exercised a spirit of self-sacrifice; moreover, her students seemed truly to appreciate her not only as a teacher, but as a mentor and mother-figure and this may have been where she played her most important functions as a role model for her students (North Park College, 2 January, 1940). Sahlstrom was in many respects what Rudolph (1962) describes as an "old style professor" who cared as much or more about the students' character and moral well-being as their academic achievement.

Sahlstrom also seems to have been appreciated for her sense of humor. On one occasion, one of her female students in the Primary Department expressed concern about the challenges of mastering the Swedish language. The student was keeping company with one of the Swedish male theology students, and Sahlstrom's reply was, "My dear, if you spent less time with your Swede and more with your Swedish your success would be assured" (The Covenant Weekly, 1940, p. 95). Overall, Sahlstrom was a respected

teacher and a committed Christian. She was clearly viewed as an asset and a support for the women enrolled at the College, although her male students also appreciated her caring and loving character as well (Covenant Weekly, 1940).

Personal Challenges

Despite her commitment to education and her students, Sahlstrom would experience her own personal challenges in the coming years. Census data indicates that Lena Sahlstrom's mother was living with her at North Park in 1910. Her mother was at this time 83 years old. While her mother stayed with her, Sahlstrom checked on her in the morning, at lunch and dinner, and during the night, leaving her exhausted from interrupted sleep over a period of several years. It was said that Sahlstrom took care of her mother without any complaints, and never let the quality of her work diminish while experiencing this challenging time. The precise reason for her mother living with Sahlstrom is unknown, but apparently it was necessitated by age and poor health, including the inability to care for herself. The next Census data published did not include Louisa Sahlstrom, so it may be assumed that the mother had passed away (Thirteenth Census of the United States-1910 Population; Fourteenth Census of the United States-1920 population).

In February of 1919, Sahlstrom unexpectedly resigned from North Park College. Her brother was ill, and she journeyed to San Francisco to be with him. She may also have planned to stay with her elderly father after her brother's passing. Precisely why Sahlstrom resigned is not clear, but it seems reasonable that she could have, and indeed would have been given a personal leave of absence by the College. Nyvall was

supportive of her going, but the evidence shows that he also wanted her to return to North Park and not resign her post (Sahlstrom to Nyvall, February 1919; Nyvall to Sahlstrom, February 1919).

Also occurring in February of 1919, letters were written from Nyvall to a Dr. Bassoe in Chicago, where Nyvall inquired Bassoe about Sahlstrom's condition, and if she had discussed her resignation plans when seeing him. According to Nyvall, Sahlstrom gave ill health as her reason for resigning, but he wanted to find out from the physician whether the illness was "mental suffering or physical" (Nyvall to Bassoe, 25 February, 1919). Bassoe merely replied that he was not at liberty to discuss the patient's symptoms with Nyvall, but he did disclose that he "discussed the matter of her resignation fully with her" (Bassoe to Nyvall, 17 March, 1919). Nevertheless, it seems that Nyvall himself suspected that Sahlstrom was not well. Perhaps she was suffering from anxiety or even depression, and this may explain why she resigned, although no concrete evidence was found to confirm this.

Another possibility is that the years before 1919 were very busy but fruitful years at the school, for enrollments had increased significantly, what Carlson (1941) calls the era of "development of confidence." However, World War I did eventually have a negative impact, including an enrollment decrease, and a special new emphasis on patriotism that many immigrant institutions feared because it threatened their cultural traditions, which was also the case at North Park College over its Swedish identity. As it turned out, however, the College actually expanded as the war ended. In 1919 the Junior College was started, and in 1921 a Bible Institute was created. It is not known if the war

years directly impacted Sahlstrom's personal life, but she did indeed ask to resign in 1919 (Carlson, 1941).

In March of 1919, Sahlstrom wrote from San Francisco that her brother had improved slightly after her arrival. Unfortunately, he soon relapsed and died shortly thereafter, in June of 1919. Sahlstrom expressed gratitude to Nyvall for allowing her to be with her brother before he died (Sahlstrom to Nyvall, 29 March, 1919). After her brother's death Sahlstrom visited her father in Portland for a few days, and then her niece in Astoria, Oregon. Furthermore, she was planning to return home to Chicago and hoped to see Nyvall and his wife soon (Sahlstrom to Nyvall, 5 June, 1919).

Nyvall seemed genuinely concerned about Sahlstrom and her overall well-being and replied with a check for her salary since leaving North Park, assuring her that both he and his wife were excited about the prospect of her return to Chicago and inquiring of her if she would consider returning to work at North Park once she felt well again. He informed her that the board would give her as much time off as she needed, and wished for her return to North Park College (Nyvall to Sahlstrom, 6 June, 1919; 12 July, 1919). Sahlstrom returned to work in 1919 and remained until her retirement.

According to Carlson (1941) she did experience problems with her health. For example, she traveled to "Mediterranean lands" in 1912 to improve her health, and returned to do exceptional work with the growing Primary Department (1941, p. 290), but the records remain unclear about Sahlstrom's health in either 1912 or 1919. Suffice it to say that she apparently suffered poor health on at least two occasions, once when she took a leave of absence for travel in 1912, and the other when she resigned during her

brother's illness in 1919. In addition, she also seemed to experience health problems during her retirement years (see section on *Retirement* below).

Publications

Lena Sahlstrom managed to find the time and energy to write a number of pieces for different Christian periodicals. In one article, published for *Skogsblommor, Illustrerad Kalender for 1907*, (Wildflowers, Illustrated Calendar for 1907) Sahlstrom provided a feminist analysis of the role of Socrates' wife Xanthippe, and questioned the traditional roles for husbands and wives. There should be no surprises if Xanthippe occasionally lost her temper, Sahlstrom observed, especially when Socrates wandered the streets with a flock of admirers following him, while Xanthippe alone provided for their children's needs at home. Sahlstrom believed Xanthippe deserved sympathy and that it was wrong for Socrates to be celebrated while Xanthippe was ignored. Many of Sahlstrom's published pieces were intended to make people think about various issues in life, and in almost every piece there is evidence of her strong religious faith. Some of it is sentimental, such as, "My Mother," published in 1931:

Today is Mother's Day. What can I do
 To show her I revere and love her too?
 No gift of money would I bring. That could
 Not prove my love- nor lace, nor jewels rare!
 Such were unworthy things to offer her
 Who led my feet from infancy to now,
 Watched over me both day and night: and more,

Much more! Her spirit sweet had ever guided
 Mind and soul, has taught me clearly see
 That there's a life beyond this one of earth.
 Which is the REAL life- this life which has
 No end, a life where all is love and joy
 And Jesus Christ, my Savior, Lord and King!
 All this my mother taught me. I will twine
 A crown of fairest flowers- pure as the angels
 Round the throne of God- and they will speak
 A language that I can not. They will tell
 My love for her, my love for her- my Mother! (The Covenant Companion, 1931).

Caroline Hall

The Covenant Women's Auxiliary Society was formed in 1916 "for the purpose of aiding the Home of Mercy and North Park College". As early as 1917, the Society was discussing its plans to build a dormitory for women at North Park (Carlson, 1941, p.295). On April 25, 1925, P.J. Johnson, president of the Covenant Women's Auxiliary Society, took the initial step to build the first women's dormitory at North Park College, to be named Caroline Hall in honor of Caroline "Lena" Sahlstrom. In fact, Sahlstrom herself made several anonymous donations toward its construction (Covenant Memories, 1935, p. 205). Although she never earned much salary she gave willingly, donating a total of over \$ 400, a significant amount considering her salary and the value of the dollar at that time. Although her donations were anonymous, it was later discovered that she was a

source. The estimated total cost of the building was about \$55,000, and the Covenant Women's Auxiliary Society was responsible for raising \$40,000 of that amount (Carlson, 1941).

On October 4, 1925, the new Caroline Hall was dedicated. Not only did it improve housing for women, but it also honored Sahlstrom for her long commitment and years of service to North Park College (North Park College News, 16 October, 1925). David Nyvall complimented Sahlstrom for what she was to the school, and said of her that she "was known in many continents" (Nyvall to Sahlstrom, 30 December, 1930). A modest person who was both overworked and underpaid, Sahlstrom had long served the school and helped the students as best she could. The honor accorded her by naming the building Caroline hall, and David Nyvall's seemingly exaggerated (but truthful) statement about her being known 'in several continents', were in the final analysis richly deserved accolades to a woman of remarkable spirit. ³

Retirement

Lena Sahlstrom was a teacher at North Park College in Chicago for 25 years, and she served the Covenant Church's educational goals for a total of 34 years, if including the early years in Minneapolis. When she retired in 1926, the president and other faculty at North Park College asked Sahlstrom to write some "reminiscences of school life" (North Park College News, 6 Nov, 1926, p. 2). Her reminiscences were published in four different installments of the *North Park College News*, providing readers with insights

³ While Nyvall exaggerated, his words were literally true, nonetheless: She was known in Europe by kinsmen in Sweden, in North America by family, friends and acquaintances in the United States, and in Asia by missionaries in China she taught at North Park College.

into her character and life. Reflecting on the changes in the expectations and values held by the young people in her own youth as compared with those of 1926, Sahlstrom maintained that hard work was something that always showed through, and needed to be valued and demonstrated by young people. She also reminisced about how she enjoyed teaching, her choice of career and calling in life:

Could I again begin my life and choose my life work, I would choose the same, and I should most decidedly choose the same schools. There are many mistakes I would try to rectify; much I would try to improve. I would like to work with the same teachers and have the same students. And I should want the same chapel experiences! Thank God for what has taken place in our chapel. Perhaps there is not a spot on that floor on which has not kneeled someone who there found the Savior. Are our Christian schools worth sacrificing for? Let our estimate of the value of an immortal soul answer that question. Sacrifice! That word has been dragged down till it seems no longer to include its real meaning of sacredness and consecration. The mere giving of anything above the value of a quarter now seems to be considered a sacrifice. Nothing has been given, nothing done for our school that is not rewarded by untold values in immortal coin. I thank God for having vouchsafed me the privileged of having had a part, however humble, in our Covenant school. When I can do nothing else I shall at least pray for it as long as life shall last (North Park College News, 1926, p.5)

Lena Sahlstrom never married, and the evidence is slight to non-existent of any romantic relationships in her life. It may also be assumed that even though Sahlstrom

certainly experienced struggles and hardships during her life, her commitment and religious faith helped her through adversities. She once wrote that as a child, she did not think that she could dare to become a teacher, but once she started her life long career of service in the teaching profession, she knew that it was her true calling (North Park College News, 1926).

When she retired from North Park, she was greatly missed by not only her students, but also by the faculty members. She was very well respected and admired among faculty and she was viewed by her colleagues and students as a very intelligent woman, known for her tremendous ability to ease the burden on the students who struggled with learning (The Covenant Weekly, January 2, 1940).

After her retirement, Sahlstrom continued as the editor of the Covenant Church's paper, the *Sunday School Friend*, until 1930 when her health did not allow her to work any longer. She also lived on the North Park campus until 1930, at which time she moved to the Swedish "Old People's Home" in the North Park community, in close proximity to the College.

Retirement Troubles. Letters from Sahlstrom to David Nyvall in December of 1930 showed her concern about the inadequacy of her pension, as set back in 1925. Although the exact details are not clear, it seems that her pension was actually decreased in 1925. It seems that Sahlstrom felt this was due to the new President of North Park College, Karl Ohlson. Nyvall sympathized with Sahlstrom about her monetary concerns but he did not believe anyone was trying to deprive her of anything, and he was sure that the administration would settle any outstanding issues. Nyvall reported to her that

Reverend Bowman was arranging, “with Sahlstrom’s permission, an exchange of one pension which was considered temporal and irregular for another regular and lasting” (Nyvall to Sahlstrom, 13 Dec, 1930).

From the letters, it is clear that Nyvall wanted Sahlstrom to understand that the leadership at North Park was not against her, and Nyvall wanted to make it right with her. It is not completely clear why Sahlstrom thought people were against her, but apparently she felt that her long commitment to North Park College was not adequately reflected in her pension. Nyvall assured Sahlstrom that he believed President Ohlson “like myself and others are united in an effort to do right with you. It is the duty of all concerned to make you happy, Lena Sahlstrom, not by resigning your rights, but by establishing them” (Nyvall to Sahlstrom, 13 Dec, 1930).

The perceptions encountered from reading the letters between Nyvall and Sahlstrom hint at Sahlstrom’s mental or emotional health. Nyvall insisted that any problems with her pension were not intentional, and that the Covenant Church and North Park College would do everything they could to correct it to Sahlstrom’s satisfaction. He tried to convince her not to worry so much, and encouraged her to go out and respond to invitations she received from her friends. Nyvall also advised Sahlstrom that “We must while trying to correct faults protect our institution and the character of those who are in positions of trust. If we cannot help, we certainly should not destroy, should we?” (Nyvall to Sahlstrom, 13 December, 1930).

For reasons of her own, it seems Sahlstrom believed that President Ohlson had no good intentions toward her. Nyvall disagreed, and assured Sahlstrom that Ohlson

respected her and, in fact, wanted her to write a full account of her memoirs about her life and work at North Park College. No evidence was found that Ohlson personally requested this of Sahlstrom, but Nyvall seemed to think so. He apparently hoped his assertion would help convince Sahlstrom that Ohlson was not her enemy and, instead, was of a friendly mind toward her. Nyvall encouraged her to write something, every day. Unfortunately for history, Sahlstrom never took Nyvall's advice about writing her memoirs (Nyvall to Sahlstrom, 13 December, 1930).

Sahlstrom continued to correspond with Nyvall until her death. He was always supportive of her and, during her retirement years, tried to relieve her anxieties, first about Ohlson and later her beliefs about someone was trying to take her life. In 1935, Sahlstrom claimed that a "mysterious bottle" had appeared in her room, and she was convinced that someone was out to do her harm, perhaps even kill her, since she believed the content of the bottle was poisonous. Furthermore, Sahlstrom wrote Nyvall that she feared some "terrible event" had happened, but she never revealed more specific details. She even suggested that this terrible thing might cause her to have her name removed from Caroline Hall and that she would bring shame upon her family record (Sahlstrom to Nyvall, 1935).

The evidence is clear that Nyvall was concerned about Sahlstrom's mental condition during this period of time: "This reminds me of your suspicion concerning that mysterious bottle making you fear a plot from someone to take your life. Of course there can be no such thing. I urge you to dismiss the thought. I am equally sure that this trouble is equally fanciful as far as any hurt coming to you," he explained:

Weakness induced by long suffering and age has a tendency to shatter formal resistances and make us the victims of ills which really don't exist but in our own anticipation. Rest assured you are bomb free behind the protecting by God (Nyvall to Sahlstrom, 18 May, 1935).

Sahlstrom never mentioned this matter again in her correspondence with Nyvall. Whatever the issue at hand actually was, it was nevertheless a very serious issue for Sahlstrom, causing her worry and pain late in life. As far as records show, however, Sahlstrom did not attempt to remove her name from the dormitory, and the building is still called Caroline Hall today.

Death

Sahlstrom died in her room in the Old People's Home on December 23rd, 1939. She was 78 years old. Before her death, she was ill for a brief period of time. Those who knew her at the time said she felt it was time to go too, she did not want to suffer any longer, and she talked about her desire to "depart and to be with Christ, for it is very far better" (The Covenant Weekly, 2 January, 1940). Former students, colleagues and friends wrote in the Swedish-American papers about her death, and the common thread throughout the writings was Lena Sahlstrom's strong and noble character. Many former students wrote of the difference Sahlstrom made in their lives, how they were so fortunate having had her as a teacher and how she counseled and nurtured them in the spirit of a sympathetic mother. It was noted that while she was underpaid and overworked, she was according to her means one of the most generous donors to the school who never sought recognition for it. One example of her generosity is a note

written from Sahlstrom to Nyvall in 1923, with a donation of \$ 100 to the school. Nyvall was touched by her generosity: "If persons gave in proportion of their ability measured by your example we should drown in the flood of money. I know one who wrote one thousand on his check hearing of your gift" (Nyvall to Sahlstrom, 3 April, 1923). Such was the appreciation for Sahlstrom's character and commitment to the school (Sahlstrom to Nyvall, 31 March, 1923; *The Covenant Weekly*, 2 January, 1940).

Summary

Lena Sahlstrom was the first female teacher hired at North Park College. From the start she was very well respected by faculty, students and other members of the community. She dedicated her life to religion, the school, and her students. Even though Sahlstrom taught both males and females, she made perhaps the biggest difference in the lives of her female students. It appears that early on Sahlstrom was sensitive to the social status of women, and she questioned the traditional gender roles in society. Yet, almost invariably when there was a fundraising to take place, or a community function of some sort, she seems to have energetically applied herself to the role assigned to women faculty and students to provide pastries, bread and other refreshments, a role viewed by the dominant assumptions at the school as fitting for women members. Throughout her long career, Sahlstrom complied with most everything at North Park but she was surely aware of the gender inequities.

The schedule that Sahlstrom had to maintain during her career was rigorous and should have left no time for volunteer work or extra curricular activities, yet Sahlstrom was always involved with school events and several different student organizations at

North Park College. The leading women student's organization, the NOPACO club, met at least every Wednesday in Sahlstrom's own room. She was its faculty sponsor and was very involved with its work to improve life for women at North Park College. She truly wanted to better their lives, and many times she sacrificed her own needs in order to help her them. Sahlstrom believed in the power of learning and she was a demanding, but loving teacher. She expected her students to be good, productive individuals, which in Sahlstrom's eyes also included being good Christian citizens.

Not only was Sahlstrom vital in the many roles she held at North Park for all students, and particularly the many *immigrant* women students at the school in her work as a teacher of English and as a translator. As time went on, there were more second generation immigrants attending the school, and most of them knew the English language, but in the early years Sahlstrom was not only a "teacher for the immigrants", but someone to whom they could turn to help ease their transitions into American society. Thus, Sahlstrom served her students as teacher, mentor, mother-figure, fellow immigrant, and role model. Figure 8 is a photograph of Lena Sahlstrom, faculty member at North Park, which was undated.

Figure 8. Lena Sahlstrom as a Faculty Member at North Park College.



Photograph courtesy F.M. Johnson Archives, North Park University, Chicago, Illinois.

CHAPTER V

Summary and Conclusions

The present study examined the lives of selected Swedish immigrant women at North Park College in Chicago from 1900 to 1920, with the focus on three students and one faculty member. The three students were Hilma Johnson, Hilda Rodberg, and Victoria Welter and the faculty member was Lena Sahlstrom. All three students became missionaries in China, career choices encouraged by the particular environmental milieu provided by North Park College and its sponsoring institution, the Covenant Church. Lena Sahlstrom was the first woman to become a faculty member at the College, and she provided vital services during her tenure there as a teacher, administrator and mentor.

Research Questions

The study attempted to answer four research questions:

1. What importance did the pursuit of education have for the Swedish immigrant women attending North Park College?
2. How did attendance at North Park College impact the socioeconomic status of Swedish female immigrants in Chicago?

3. What importance did religion have for the Swedish female immigrants at North Park College, a church supported institution?
4. What importance did the student societies and school organizations have for the Swedish immigrant women at North Park College?

Importance of Education

Many of the Swedish immigrants arriving in America were already literate, but some chose to pursue their education further. The women at North Park College were expected to be very involved with academic life and saw it as an opportunity to gain advantages in life, whether it was through learning English in order to adjust to American society, or completing a full program at the College to pursue other careers in business, health care, teaching, church related work or other aspirations.

The number of Swedish female immigrants in Chicago who actually attended North Park College was perhaps small, but the three women students selected for the present study took their education seriously and dedicated their lives after college to serving their God and humankind. Their studies at North Park ranged from business courses to nursing and to seminary studies, but all three chose mission work as their life calling. From the available evidence, they took their choices seriously and pursued them with dedication. Certainly they enjoyed their families, friends and social lives as most people do, but each in her own way lived a life of exceptional commitment and determination.

During the time frame studied, the United States experienced the heaviest levels of immigration up to that point in its history. A large number of Swedish immigrants

entered the country and many of them settled in Chicago and in the North Park community. This time period, and the growth of institutions such as North Park College, certainly affected the ability of Swedish female immigrants to pursue an education. Many Swedish-American churches, including the Swedish Evangelical Covenant Church, founded their own schools, but many of them were directed towards single purposes such as learning the English language and were more elementary in nature. The opening of North Park College in Chicago by the Swedish Evangelical Covenant Church in 1894 certainly increased the availability and likelihood of higher education for both male and female immigrants. Although women of that time occupied a lower status and had less power than they have today, the evidence shows that many of the women graduates of North Park College were able to obtain employment and careers in different fields, such as business, health care and the teaching profession.

The importance of education for Lena Sahlstrom is most evident. She dedicated a total of thirty-four years to educational service, twenty five of which were at North Park College. Education was her passion in life, and she believed in helping students achieve their educational goals. She believed in the power of knowledge and helped many students who lacked basic elementary education, and immigrant students who needed to learn the English language. In her role as dean of women, one of the expectations was to guide the students toward the right educational path in life. Lena Sahlstrom was dedicated to North Park College and did everything she could to carry out its mission.

Socioeconomic Status

The women students included in the present study all chose careers in missionary work. When making such a choice, it is reasonable to assume that accumulation of financial wealth is not a goal. The three students included in this study never had much wealth and had to depend on contributions from their supporting church and from donations from individuals and groups, but they seemed satisfied with their career choice in life. After retiring from missionary service in 1942, Hilma Johnson retired to the Old People's home near North Park College until her death in 1962. Little is known about Hilma Johnson during her retirement years, but one might surmise that her economic means were limited, and she was dependent upon the Covenant Church for living and housing expenses.

Little is known about Hilda Rodberg's socioeconomic status during her retirement years. According to the evidence, Rodberg expressed a desire to return to China in 1939, but because of Japanese occupation of large portions of China and the strife occurring between the Nationalists, the Communists and the Japanese, it is extremely doubtful that she was able to return, particularly after the entry of the United States in the World War II. The record is silent on Hilda Rodberg after 1939 and her socioeconomic status in retirement remains a mystery.

Even though Victoria Welter returned to Chicago and did not continue her life in foreign missions, one might conjecture that had her first husband not died, she might have remained in China. She realized the hardships of being a single mother and having to provide financially for her children. After she returned to Chicago, she herself said that

the thought of remarriage appeared strange, but she found it necessary to provide for her children. With only fourteen years of active foreign mission service, there is no evidence that she received a pension, and if she did, it probably would have been small. Apparently she received no pension from the church, and she died near her son in Wisconsin.

For other women students at North Park College who chose other pursuits in life, attending North Park would likely have impacted their chances of being in a better socioeconomic status than before. Even though during the time frame of the study women were not encouraged to enter all fields of employment, it is clear that additional education improved their chances of not only finding more satisfying employment, but also earning more money.

If the choice of missionary work indicates a lack of economic ambition, the same could be said for teaching. Lena Sahlstrom did experience occasional economic difficulties, both during her career and in retirement. In the early years of her career at North Park, she found it necessary to provide music lessons in order to supplement her income. Sahlstrom also lived in campus quarters throughout her stay at North Park College, although this would not have been unusual for a single faculty member during the time period. In retirement, Sahlstrom complained of an inadequate retirement income and Nyvall said he would try to get it improved. While the record remains unclear whether improvements occurred or not, Sahlstrom did not mention it again in her correspondence.

However, even though of limited means, Sahlstrom made monetary contributions to the school throughout her career. While she may not have had an advanced academic

degree, a part of her economic condition and status was that of women generally during the period of study. For the most part, women had less economic power than men.

Despite all of that, Sahlstrom was clearly dedicated to her students and the mission of the school.

Importance of Religion

Clearly, a dominant theme was the importance of religion among the women at North Park College. The school was founded by the Swedish Evangelical Covenant Church, which was founded by Swedish immigrants themselves, and its religious beliefs were dominant factors at the school. Prior to the emergence of North Park College there were few opportunities for Swedish immigrant women in the Chicago area either to become missionaries or to make other professional choices dependent upon at least some higher education experiences provided by institutions sympathetic to Swedish immigrant needs. For example, even at North Park College, which actually welcomed women students, very few women enrolled in or graduated from the Seminary. Yet, the College clearly encouraged its women students, particularly those with devout religious beliefs who might take up lives in foreign missions, as was the case with the three students examined in the present study. Not surprisingly, most of their correspondence back to North Park College, once they were missionaries in China, included numerous references to their religious faith.

At the same time, religious faith was also prominent for women students not planning to enter the field of missionary work. In other words, the importance of religion for the Swedish women, as pointed out by other sources as well, is certainly confirmed by

the evidence of the present study. For the immigrant community, the church was used not only as a place of worship, but also as a family support and social gathering place for many other purposes. In numerous ways, the importance of religion was reflected by the three students in the present study, particularly how they relied on their faith to direct their careers and personal lives.

The importance of religion was also clear in the evidence collected and analyzed on the life of Lena Sahlstrom. She made references to the importance of religion as early as during her childhood, when her father gathered the family for the evening prayers. It was expected by the faculty and students at North Park during this time to be of Christian character, and Sahlstrom certainly fulfilled this expectation. Her faith was clearly one of her most significant values and this was shown throughout her professional activities as an educator. Thus, the present study found a particularly strong religious influence among the Swedish immigrant women at North Park College.

Importance of Student Societies and Organizations

While the evidence is sparse regarding the direct involvement of the three women in specific student organizations and societies at North Park College, it may be assumed that all three had some kind of participation in at least one organization—the Missionary Aid Society. Involvement in College-sponsored organizations and societies seemed not only to be expected of students by the College, but was an important tool for the women students to develop appropriate skills and understandings, foster relationships, and provide each other with support. Participation in the organizations was viewed as educational activities that supported the College's academic goals through debates,

discussions and analysis of issues, ideas and literary works. Of particular significance for the present study was the NOPACO Club, founded in the fall of 1913, which helped boost these goals among the women students at North Park College.

In addition to the student societies and organizations, many of the women took courses or lessons in the Music Department, primarily in piano and chorus, the school's most popular choices for women during this time. Finally, as organized sports appeared at the school, it was mainly for men, but after a few years, a volleyball team was formed for the women students, and soon thereafter a basketball team was also in place. Such activities offered the women additional educational and recreational experiences.

The importance of societies and organizations at North Park College was also clear with the faculty member examined in the present study, and the other educators at North Park College that she was associated with. Despite her busy teaching schedule, Sahlstrom was the faculty sponsor for the NOPACO club, and the Ciceronian Literary Society, and, she was also a judge of student debates in the Philharmonic Literary Society. Most of the societies and organizations had weekly meetings, so this commitment made by Sahlstrom showed that the institution indeed thought participation in the societies and organizations were very important.

The Three Students

Hilma Johnson and Victoria Welter were all Swedish immigrant women who attended North Park College. Hilda Rodberg was also a Swedish immigrant woman, who graduated from the Swedish Covenant Nursing School, and part of her curriculum was completed at North Park College. While it is unclear what religious motivations brought

them to North Park, it seems evident that their college experiences led them to embrace missionary work. Analysis of their experiences while at North Park, and later in their lives as missionaries in China, revealed some interesting patterns regarding the influence of educational and religious institutions in the Swedish immigrant community in Chicago.

Similarities and Differences in the Women. The three selected women students had similar character traits of determination, religious faith, and a commitment to helping others in need. Of course each reflected her own individual character as well, ranging from selfless dedication to staunch insistence on independence. They all chose to represent North Park College and the Covenant Church as missionaries. The choice of becoming one of the first missionaries sent to China by the Covenant Church in Chicago was not necessarily pre-ordained when analyzing Hilma Johnson's background. Johnson differed from the other students, by being the only one of the three who migrated to America by herself. At only 18 years of age, she decided to join numerous other Swedes in the hope of finding a better life in America. Migrating alone as a young woman to a completely foreign culture shows courage and independence, and this was again clearly seen in her life in China. Johnson also differed in coming to North Park College as a bookkeeping and shorthand student in the Business Department. While it is safe to assume that she was a Christian, the evidence did not show Johnson expressing a long held desire to leave North Park College and pursue life as a missionary in another foreign land, prior to the Missionary Aid Society's invitation to go to China as a missionary. Thus, after only one year of study at North Park, she agreed to become the Covenant

Church's first woman missionary into foreign fields. It may be assumed that she exhibited characteristics and behaviors that attracted the Missionary Aid Society's notice, possibly including faithful attendance at Church events and services.

The second student, Hilda Rodberg, came to North Park to study nursing, becoming the first student to graduate from the nursing school. She had migrated to America together with her parents and siblings, a move that was hardly her own initiative. After graduating from nursing school, however, she also accepted the call to become a missionary around the same time as Johnson, for they both left Chicago for China together. Her choice of the nursing profession certainly showed a commitment to helping people, and this may have paved the way for her becoming a missionary. It is safe to assume that she must also have exhibited characteristics that were valued and appreciated by the Missionary Aid Society.

The third student, Victoria Welter, was the one for whom that missionary work might seem natural since she pioneered the entry and graduation of women from the Seminary at North Park College. Victoria's mother died while she was a young child, and afterwards, her father decided to migrate to America along with his four children. Victoria clearly expressed her religious faith and its importance to her throughout her life and felt her dedication to God was her calling in life.

The students migrated from the same country but came from different backgrounds and sought out different fields of study while at North Park. Nevertheless, they all turned to religion and lives of missionary work in China. It appears that their experiences at North Park College with its strong religious emphasis exerted a

compelling pull over them. Worth noting is that all three showed a certain sense of adventuresome independence by leaving friends and families and going to a far away country where they hardly knew anyone, did not speak the language, and had to endure hard work and privation. But, Hilma Johnson had as a young woman made a similar journey when she migrated by herself to the United States, and both Hilda Rodberg and Victoria Welter came with their families as young children and had to adapt to a strange foreign land after they arrived in the United States. Thus, all three had prior experiences that showed certain degrees of independence and facing the unknown.

Hilma Johnson was clearly the student who communicated most frequently with the Missionary Aid Society throughout her long stay in China. She was often held aloft in *North Park College News* as ‘our missionary’, and students throughout the years seemed to take a special interest in Hilma Johnson’s missionary life in China, including raising money to help support her work. Johnson demonstrated a high degree of commitment by only taking two furloughs during her forty years of service to the Covenant Church. Even when she did spend time in Chicago, she was very involved with North Park College and specially the Missionary Aid Society, giving talks about her work in China and the need for continual financial support for that work. Unlike Victoria Welter, Johnson seldom if ever complained about the workload or the poor conditions she endured. She was dedicated to her work as a missionary and even when having rare moments of doubt, Johnson was able to reconcile her doubts and reaffirm her calling in life.

Hilda Rodberg also seemed satisfied with her work in China. While medical doctors and nurses were often very overworked, she seldom expressed complaints about it. Rodberg was passionate about the life and people in China and thought more people should share her views and concerns. She feared that people back home in America were unconcerned about people in need in China, and she was very passionate about helping people through her medical work. She was involved with the start of several hospitals throughout her stay in China, and she called upon the North Park College, the Nursing School and the Covenant Church for sending more missionaries to help this important work. Rodberg spent most of her adult life in China, and while she was home visiting family and friends, she was always intent on returning to China. She even came to refer to China as 'my home'.

Victoria Welter appeared to be the most independent minded of the three, unafraid to speak her mind to College and Church officials about the poor working conditions she faced in China. Just after arriving in China, she married Dr. John Sjoquist, a medical missionary serving the Covenant Church in China and also a Swedish immigrant himself. Interesting to note is that Victoria was the only one of the three students to marry and bear children. Unfortunately her husband passed away at a relatively young age, possibly due, to overwork and exhaustion, leaving her a widow of only 39 years of age with three young children at the time. This tragic event may have triggered Welter Sjoquist's outspokenness about how terribly overworked the missionaries were. Quite naturally, she was bitter about her husband's death and believed his death was partly caused by overwork. She was the only one of the three who

questioned the Covenant Church's financial commitment to the missionaries. In addition, she was also the only one who asked College and Church officials to allow her to return home to Chicago for an extended time. Even though the board expected her to return to China, she did not. She was quite honest about facing the many challenges being a single mother providing for her children in that time and place.

One similarity that stands out among the women is their close connection, both as students and missionaries, with North Park College President David Nyvall. It is clear that Nyvall was very important in their lives as a mentor and friend. Nyvall was very supportive of the Missionary Aid Society and was vital in the arrangement of sending the three students to China. More specifically in Johnson's case, it was Nyvall who informed her about the Missionary Aid Society's decision to send her to China, and it is reasonable to assume that he played a major role in the decision of asking Rodberg and Welter as well. The rich correspondence between Nyvall and the three women shows the deep level of respect and admiration they all shared of him.

Since Hilma Johnson migrated by herself to America, it might be possible that in addition to admiring Nyvall for his commitment and dedication to North Park College and the students, she might have viewed him as a father figure as well. Perhaps all three viewed him in that light, at least in part. Rodberg, for example, kept a steady correspondence with Nyvall throughout her years in China and always showed appreciation for his support and thoughtfulness. Even though Victoria Welter often voiced her concerns and complaints in quite direct fashion, it is clear she felt comfortable

enough with Nyvall and valued his friendship tremendously. This is also demonstrated through her sending her children to North Park and her unwavering support of Nyvall during times when members of North Park's Board questioned Nyvall's administration of the College.

Another important shared value among the three women was the importance of religion. Religion was naturally a prevalent value at North Park College, connected as it was with the influence of the Covenant Church. The importance of religion was seen in many facets of the school, including students, programs, student societies, school organizations, faculty and administration, and the institution's influences extended beyond the school. Of particular interest for this study was the deep religious faith shown by the three women missionaries after they left North Park College. They seldom seemed to question their choice of path in life or their faith in God.

Caroline "Lena" Sahlstrom

When Lena Sahlstrom was six years old, she arrived as an immigrant along with her family in her future home land. Throughout her upbringing, religion and education were two central sources of value that remained throughout her life. Sahlstrom started out her teaching career in Minneapolis, but spent the greater portion of her adult life at North Park College. Sahlstrom's important contributions to the school can be seen in her roles as a teacher in and Director of the Primary Department, a teacher in the Music Department, and as Dean of Women. She also served as the faculty sponsor for the all female NOPACO Club, and for the Ciceronian Literary Society, roles she took on in

addition to teaching a heavy load. She also found time to tutor students who needed extra help after school, and for a long time she gave private music lessons to earn extra income.

Sahlstrom was a selfless teacher who was dedicated to her students and to life at North Park College. Every day was filled with teaching responsibilities, and she spent almost every evening involved in different activities at school. In her role as Dean of Women, she was expected to provide guidance and support for the women students. Sahlstrom also managed to find the time to be a published author, in addition to her editorial work. Her dedication and commitment to the students and the school was very prevalent, and she was an important part of North Park College.

During her life, Sahlstrom had personal challenges that she suffered through. Her income was meager and she faced the need to take on extra work. Throughout her time at North Park, she was dependent upon the frugal largess of the College and the aid of such friends and confidantes as David Nyvall. In 1910, she took on the additional burden of caring for her ill mother, a burden that she maintained until her mother died five years later, all the while managing her various roles at the College.

Sahlstrom believed her religious faith would carry her through any and every difficulty she encountered in life, but her unexpected resignation in 1919 indicates that she sometimes faced formidable difficulties that, in this particular instance, forced her to see outside professional help. While the exact nature of her health condition remains unclear, the evidence suggests that she may have been exhausted from overwork. She also may have suffered from periodic bouts with depression, both after her brother passed away in 1919 and again during her retirement years after 1926. However, what remains

clear and even shines is that Lena Sahlstrom was truly a dedicated educator who committed her life to her students and to North Park College. When she retired from North Park College she received accolades from students, faculty, administrators and the community, but it is clear that she felt slighted by the meager retirement given her by the authorities at North Park College. She was clearly appreciated by her students, and by David Nyvall, but she was sometimes taken for granted and not given the full credit she deserved.

Similar to the three students, Sahlstrom had a very close relationship with David Nyvall. Their relationship was both closer and different, however. She knew Nyvall from his time in Minneapolis and over the years, Sahlstrom and Nyvall developed a close friendship. Even during Sahlstrom's personal health challenges, it was clear that she always had Nyvall's support. Sahlstrom relied on Nyvall numerous times during her tenure at the school, and it appears that she was usually completely honest with him about her personal life. The evidence clearly shows a long and continuing mutual respect and admiration between the two.

Limitations of the Study

While it is hoped that the present study provides rich and meaningful information about the lives of the women at North Park College, any study always has limitations. First, in order to make the study manageable, it was limited to North Park College, in Chicago. Second, the study was restricted to selected women at North Park College, three Swedish immigrant students and a faculty member between 1900 and 1920. Third, the documentary evidence available to and uncovered by the present study was mainly

limited to religion-oriented material, not by deliberate design, but by the nature of the available material.

Implications for Future Research

The present study only addresses the educational and career experiences of four selected Swedish women, so there is still a need for researching not only Swedish immigrant women, but other female immigrant groups as well. There is a clear gap in the literature on immigration to America, particularly regarding the female immigrant experience. Immigrant women play a significant part in American history and it is important that their voices be heard. It is this researcher's hope that the present study will shed some light of the importance of women's stories in history, and how much fascinating information is still out there to be discovered.

The women students selected for the present study used their North Park College experiences to further their goals and those of North Park College and the Swedish Covenant Church by becoming missionaries to China. Additional studies are needed of women students at North Park College who entered other fields besides mission work, such as business, education, the arts and other professions. It would also be informative to compare the lives of a variety of women after they left North Park College, especially with regard to subsequent occupational choice, family life and socioeconomic status.⁴

Another research possibility is to compare women students at North Park College with those from another college during the same time frame. Such a study could provide

⁴ It is important to mention that for anyone who wishes to pursue further research of the materials during the early periods at North Park College, an understanding of the Swedish language is helpful, since some of the early primary sources are written in the Swedish language.

additional understandings about what life was like for women in the early twentieth century as they began to break out of their traditional roles.

Finally, Carlson's (1941) *History of North Park College* proved very valuable for background information for this study. However, it is this researcher's belief that it would be beneficial to write a new history of the institution. Within this new study, there should be a greater focus on women, both as students and faculty at the school.

Summary

The evidence demonstrates that the Swedish women immigrants included in the present study led lives that different from other immigrant women, although they had some similar experiences, too. Even though life was not always easy, most Swedish immigrant women seemed satisfied with their choice of work and their life in America which is also true of the women included in the present study. The four Swedish immigrant women were all risk-takers of their time and showed character traits that encouraged social change and challenged traditional gender roles. Each woman was a pioneer in her own unique way.

For the Swedish immigrant women included in the present study, education was clearly important to them and they utilized their education in many ways throughout their lives. Hilma Johnson, Hilda Rodberg, Victoria Welter, and particularly Lena Sahlstrom served as role models for women students at North Park College.

The present study attempted to enlarge current understanding of Swedish women immigrants at North Park College by examining persons who have been given little or no scholarly attention. For Hilma Johnson, Hilda Rodberg and Victoria Welter, the three

students in the present study, the educational experiences at North Park impacted their lives both as students and later as missionaries in China in profound and lasting ways. Lena Sahlstrom, the professor, was an exceptional teacher who, despite dedicated work and personal challenges, stayed the course with North Park College throughout her career and made a significant difference in her students' lives.

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Appendix A

North Park College Students Arriving on Campus- Early 1900's

North Park College Students Arriving on Campus- Early 1900s



Photograph courtesy F.M. Johnson Archives, North Park University, Chicago, Illinois

Appendix B

North Park College Students, 1903

North Park College Students 1903.



Photograph courtesy F.M. Johnson Archives, North Park University, Chicago, Illinois

Appendix C

North Park College Students 1905

North Park College Students 1905



Photograph courtesy F.M. Johnson Archives, North Park University, Chicago, Illinois

Appendix D

North Park College Chorus, 1909

North Park College Chorus, 1909



Photograph courtesy F.M. Johnson Archives, North Park University, Chicago, Illinois

Appendix E

North Park Students' Picnic circa 1915

North Park Students' Picnic circa 1915



Photograph courtesy F.M. Johnson Archives, North Park University, Chicago, Illinois

Appendix F

North Park Students from Class 1917

North Park Students from Class 1917



Photograph courtesy F.M. Johnson Archives, North Park University, Chicago, Illinois

Vita

Sofia A. Hiort Wright was born on January 1, 1974 in Uppsala, Sweden and is a Swedish citizen. She came to the United States in 1994 on a tennis scholarship to Virginia Commonwealth University, where she graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Social Work in 1998. She earned her Masters of Arts in Social Work from Virginia Commonwealth University in 1999.

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