



## Who Says Women Can't Be Doctors?: The Story of Elizabeth Blackwell

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### Book Description

*Elementary | Biography*

This biographical picture book tells the story of determined Elizabeth Blackwell, who fought scorn and barriers on her way to becoming the first woman doctor in the United States, in a lively and engaging manner with bright, upbeat illustrations. The book includes an author's note providing additional information about Blackwell.

### Discussion Questions

- Have you ever been consumed by an idea--like Elizabeth was consumed with the idea of becoming a doctor?
- Have you ever been told that you couldn't or shouldn't do or be something that you knew you could do or be? What did you do?
- How do you think Elizabeth felt when she arrived at medical school to learn that her fellow students didn't want her there? What did Elizabeth do instead of giving up and returning home? What can you learn from her example?
- What profession do you want to have? Do you feel supported in this choice? Why or why not?

### Utah Connection

"Women founded their first formal medical organization in Utah in 1851 as the Female Council of Health. It met at least twice a month at the home of Brigham Young's first mother-in-law. In October 1873, Young announced he was sending Utah women to eastern universities to train as physicians. Some of the most remarkable women in the territory answered the call, and the next fall Romania Pratt, widow of LDS Apostle Parley P. Pratt, enrolled in the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania. Ellis Shipp joined her in 1875, working her way through school as a seamstress until graduation in 1883.

Pratt later ran a school of obstetrics for 20 years as a resident physician at the Deseret Hospital, which the LDS Relief Society operated from 1882 until 1894. Shipp trained nurses and midwives throughout the territory and gave birth to 10 children of her own, four of whom died in infancy. Martha Hughes Cannon studied medicine at the University of Michigan and the University of Pennsylvania. Her degree from the National School of Elocution and Oratory helped her become the first woman state senator in the U.S. in 1896."

From Will Bagley, "Despite Today's Legislators, Utah on the Forefront of Women in Medicine," The Salt Lake Tribune, September 1, 2002.



*Deseret Hospital Board. Front row, left to right: Jane S. Richards, Emmeline B. Wells. Middle row: Phoebe Woodruff, Mary Isabella Horne, Eliza R. Snow, Zina D. Young, Marinda N. Hyde. Back row: Dr. Ellis R. Shipp, Bathsheba W. Smith, Elizabeth Howard, Dr. Romania B. Pratt Penrose. Courtesy of LDS Church History Library.*