New York Orphanage: 
A Historical Background between 1872-1874
Jalyn Rivas, Yu Chen Huang, Mary Manchester, John Mari
History 106, Historical Perspectives on Justice & Inequality. Professor Andrea Balis

Introduction
During the time period of 1872-1874, there was an orphan asylum home in New York. They were open for many years and raised many children who didn’t have a family. They cared for those children everyday and gave them a place to sleep. They truly cared for the children in their orphanage.

General History
The general history of New York from 1872-1874 is full of various stories. These stories describe the culture of New York; these stories include, but are not limited to, all of the pickpocketing on the streets of crowded areas such as markets, by skilled thieves who weren’t just adults. Included in the ranks of these thieves were children who were pickpocketing and were extremely skilled. These children were thrust out onto the streets and learned not just how to “survive” but to prosper. Children who pickpocketed could easily come home with a hundred dollars in one day, when the average male worker in New York earned $1.56 a day during 1872-1874.

Letter
Here I am leaving my sweet baby boy. His name is Henry James. He is 3 months old. Pinned to the inside of his clothes is a baby blue fabric with our last initial, and I have the matching fabric the first initial. I will send a monthly amount of money, once I find my father who left us. This is why I am leaving Henry here. He is my first born, and I love him so much, but I can not support him. Once I find his father and get my money, I will come back for Henry, and I will care for my son. Right now, I just need a little helping hand.

Letter
Tonight, I have left my child on your doorstep. I am not a bad mother, I just need help. I love my daughter more than anything. She is my world, and it is killing me to write this letter and leave her here. I hope you accept her and care for her as I would. I left a fabric pinned to her, and I have the other half, so when I come to get her, I can identify her. I don’t know how long I’ll be leaving her here, but I want to come back and get her. Right now just isn’t the right time for me to raise a child on my own. I love my daughter Abigail Jones.

Institutional History
Orphan Asylum Home of Protestant Episcopal Church in New York was an institution that functioned as a home for homeless children. According to its annual reports from 1872 to 1874, they provided full care for children, such as free clothing, heat, and a bedroom. Moreover, during one whole year, the institution spent $14,925.97 on member’s salaries, necessary goods, and medication. In addition, the total income that the institution made was $16,487.95. Those funds were from donations, the board of children, and church auctions.

Acknowledgements