

Honors Scholarship Project Prospectus

The Orphan Trains in Literature

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## Abstract

We learn through story. Story allows us to travel to another time or place and learn about other people, cultures, and societies. History especially is shared through a story that is then critically analyzed. Because of the power of story, historical fiction has a unique ability to teach history in a way that is memorable and makes sense to the average reader. However, historical fiction is not held to the same standards as a true historical work in terms of historical accuracy. This lack of review makes it possible for information presented in historical fiction to be inaccurate historically and to therefore misinform the reader.

The orphan trains, a precursor to our contemporary foster system, represent an important time in American history, yet many Americans are completely unaware that the orphan trains ever ran, much less when or why. While scholars have written books on the subject, fiction authors have also written many books telling the stories of poor and orphan children riding the trains, hoping to find better lives out west. Because the story of the orphan trains is so little known by the general public, it becomes that much easier to accept historical fiction as truth without knowing the facts. For example, if a book of historical fiction claimed that a character rode on the maiden voyage of the Mayflower in 1776, most Americans would know that to be false. However, if a book contained a character who claimed to have ridden the orphan trains in 1820, not nearly as many people would know that that could not have happened because the orphan trains did not start running until the 1850s.

The question becomes, How much truth is contained in specific works of historical fiction? Are the authors inadvertently deceiving the public through the stories presented in historical fiction? How accurately is history presented in certain fictional accounts? This project

proposes to examine these questions, specifically as related to the fictional accounts of the orphan trains.

Because we learn so much through story, these stories shape the way that we view and understand history. While the author of historical fiction is expected to take some literary license, that author is also expected to present enough of history as it happened to make the story believable historically. It becomes the task of the reader, or in this case the researcher, to determine which elements of the story are true and factual, and which are merely literary sensationalism to make the story easier to read or to give it a happier ending.

In order to answer the questions that I have proposed, I will look at primary and secondary sources on the orphan trains as well as a series of fictional books about the orphan trains by Joan Lowery Nixon. The primary sources will provide me with first-hand accounts of actual orphan train riders as well as the motives and justifications behind the creation of the orphan trains. The secondary sources will provide more general information on the orphan trains and the public perception of them. I will then take the information that I have gathered from these historical sources and compare it to the stories presented in “The Orphan Train Adventures” by Joan Lowery Nixon. By using that comparison, I will attempt to determine the historical accuracy of those fictional accounts of the orphan trains.

The purpose of studying history is to remember and reconstruct the past as accurately as possible and to learn from it. History shows us where we come from and where we may be going. But if the history we learn never happened, we do not truly know from whence we came. While not providing any new history, I hope that this project will help to determine the accuracy of what is already being learned through fiction. Because historical fiction is not meant to be entirely true, I believe that the academic world has ignored the amount of information taken in

and accepted as fact, or at least as probably true, by the average reader. Because we cannot ensure that everything the average person reads or learns is true, we need to learn better how to differentiate between history and fiction.

By questioning what we have learned, we learn to think critically about what we know rather than accepting what we hear as fact. Through this project, I hope to become more capable of searching out multiple sources and drawing on all of those sources to formulate my own conclusions. I hope to increase my abilities in critically reading and examining works of literature and history to appreciate the contributions of each, but also to differentiate between the two. This project will also improve my time management skills by making me more accountable for setting a timeline for my own research.

#### Summary Review of Pertinent Background and Context

In the mid nineteenth century, thousands of immigrants were coming to America, especially through New York, looking for streets paved with gold and plenty of work for everyone willing. Instead, many of them found streets filled with garbage, crowded tenements, and no jobs. These immigrants, and their children, might end up crowded in an apartment with many other families or living on the streets. If the parents were detained at Ellis Island, the children might end up wandering alone around a strange city, unable to even speak the language. Such children survived by begging, stealing, or selling newspapers or pins. Some children ended up in crowded asylums or orphanages while others froze in the streets.<sup>1</sup> These children changed the face of America.

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<sup>1</sup> Askeland, Lori. *Children and Youth in Adoption, Orphanages, and Foster care: A Historical Handbook and Guide*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2006.; Brace, Charles Loring. *The Best Method of Disposing of our Pauper and Vagrant Children*. New York: Wynkoop, Hallenbeck, and Thomas, Printers, 1859.; Brace, Charles Loring. *The Dangerous Classes of New York and Twenty Years Work Among Them*. New York: Wynkoop and Hallenbeck, 1872.; Fry, Annette R. *American Events: The Orphan Trains*. New York: New Discovery Books, 1994.; Langsam, Miriam Z. *Children West*. Madison, Wisconsin: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1964.

Charles Loring Brace was a minister who was concerned about the plight of the poor, especially the children who came to be called “street Arabs”. He started a program, which ran from approximately 1854 to 1929, which he felt provided a solution to problem of the poor children living in New York City.<sup>2</sup> He took children from asylums which were overrun, from Newsboy Lodging Houses, and from the streets and sent them “out west” to live with farm families.<sup>3</sup> Brace wanted to prevent these children from dying too young or growing up to be criminals and a burden to society, by placing them with farm families that would provide them with love and morals and give them skills that they would need in order to be productive members of society.<sup>4</sup> He called this system “placing out” and in this way somewhere between 100,000 and 200,000 children were sent west over the roughly seventy-five years that the orphan trains ran.

However, from the beginning there were criticisms of “placing out”. People worried that the placing agents did not make enough effort in finding good homes and that children were ending up abused or neglected in their new farm homes.<sup>5</sup> In fact, some were mistreated. A farm family looking for cheap labor might take in a child and use him as a farm hand, especially as the War Between the States occurred early in the orphan train era. With the new lack of slaves, an

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<sup>2</sup> Brace, *The Best Method.*; Brace, *The Dangerous Classes of New York.*; Miller, Randall M, and Paul A Cimbala. *American Reform and Reformers: A Biographical Dictionary.* Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1996.

<sup>3</sup> Brace, *The Best Method.*; Brace, *The Dangerous Classes of New York.*; Holt, Marilyn Irvin. *The Orphan Trains: Placing Out in America.* Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1992.; Inskip, Carolee R. *The Children's Aid Society of New York: An Index to the Federal, State, and Local Census Records of Its Lodging Houses (1855-1925).* Baltimore: Clearfield Company, Inc., 1996.

<sup>4</sup> *New York Times.* “Children’s Aid Society: More Good Work Done During Past Year Than Previously. Success of the Brace Farm School: Over 100 Boys Trained There and Sent to Homes – A Total of 2, 059 Persons Provided for by the Society.” November 27, 1895.; *New York Times.* “Helping Poor Children; A Year’s Good Work by the Aid Society. Successful Efforts to Lift them Above Vice and Make Them Self-Supporting and Useful.” November 24, 1886.; Patrick, Michael, Evelyn Sheets, and Evelyn Trickel. *We Are A Part of History: The Story of the Orphan Trains.* Santa Fe: The Lightning Tree, 1990.

<sup>5</sup> Askeland, *Children and Youth.*; Langsam, *Children West.*; Miller and Cimbala, *American Reform and Reformers.*; Patrick, Sheets, and Trickel, *We Are A Part of History.*

orphan was a way to obtain labor for the cost of room and board.<sup>6</sup> Others might be physically, mentally, or emotionally abused. Efforts were made to prevent mistreatment of the orphans. The family taking in a child was expected to provide references, usually from a pastor and a community leader, but this rule was not always enforced. The families were expected to send the children to school and the children to write to their placing out agent at least twice a year to report on their treatment. New York passed a bill that required all placing out agents and agencies to be licensed and would revoke that license if the agent did not remove a child from a bad situation.<sup>7</sup> Minnesota has specific requirements for the types of families allowed to take in children and required the placing agency to enforce those requirements or be forced to send the children elsewhere.<sup>8</sup> Despite these efforts, many children ended up staying in many different homes before they were grown.<sup>9</sup> The placing agents were to keep in contact with the children that they placed through the orphan trains.<sup>10</sup>

Often the children who rode the orphan trains were not true orphans at all. Some were half-orphans: one parent had died and the other parent could not or would not take care of them.<sup>11</sup> Some were foundlings, dropped off at an orphanage, hospital, or church. Others had both parents living but for one reason or another, their parents could not take care of them and wished them to go west for a better life. When siblings rode the trains they were often separated.

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<sup>6</sup> Nixon, Joan Lowery. *Caught in the Act*. New York: Bantam Books, 1988.

<sup>7</sup> *New York Times*. "Placing Out of Children: The Senate Judiciary Committee Reports a Substitute Bill." March 19, 1898.; *New York Times*. "State Board of Charities: Annual Report Recommending New Legislation, Especially on 'Placing Out' and Dispensaries." January 25, 1898.

<sup>8</sup> Liebl, Janet. *Ties that Bind: The Orphan Train Story in Minnesota*. Marshall, Minnesota: Southwest State University History Department, 1994.

<sup>9</sup> Kidder, Clark. *Emily's Story: The Brave Journey of an Orphan Train Rider*. Centralia, Washington: Gorham Publishing, 2007.; Kidder, Clark. *Orphan Trains and their Precious Cargo: The Life's Work of Rev. H.D. Clarke*. Bowie, Maryland: Heritage Books, Ind., 2001.

<sup>10</sup> Kidder, *Orphan Trains and their Precious Cargo*.; Vogt, Martha Nelson, and Christina Vogt. *Searching for Home*. USA: Triumph Press, 1995.

<sup>11</sup> Nixon, Joan Lowery. *A Family Apart*. New York: Bantam Books, 1987.

Some later found one another while others never would.<sup>12</sup> Occasionally, if the child were not a true orphan, he or she might maintain or regain contact with a parent. Each child had a different story.

The stories of the children who rode the orphan trains have been preserved through family lore, interviews, and written accounts. Stories from their children and grandchildren, from placing out agents and volunteers supplement these stories. They tell about riding the trains, being chosen or passed over, the treatment they received at the hands of their new families, and the contact or lack thereof of their separated siblings and parents.<sup>13</sup> From these stories, authors have written fictional accounts of orphan train riders.<sup>14</sup> These fictional stories allow the public to learn about the history of the orphan trains and examples of what has happened.

There have been several books written about the orphan trains. They describe the causing factors, rationales, and achievements of the placing out system. Many contain the true stories of the children who rode the trains. Through the fictional accounts more people have

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<sup>12</sup> Aviles, Donna. *Beyond the Orphan Trains; A True Adventure*. Louisville, Kentucky: Wasteland Press, 2004.; Aviles, Donna. *Fly Little Bird Fly!: The True Story of Oliver Nordmark and America's Orphan Trains*. Louisville, Kentucky: Wasteland Press, 2004.; Warren, Andrea. *Orphan Train Rider: One Boy's True Story*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1996.

<sup>13</sup> Aviles, *Beyond the Orphan Trains*. Aviles, *Fly Little Bird Fly!;*; Fry, *American Events;*; Johnson, Mary Ellen. *Journeys of Hope*. Fayetteville, Arkansas: OTHSA, Inc., 1999.; Johnson, Mary Ellen. *Orphan Train Riders: Their Own Stories: Volume 1*. Baltimore: Gateway Press, Inc., 1992.; Johnson, Mary Ellen. *Orphan Train Riders: Their Own Stories: Volume 2*. Baltimore: Gateway Press, Inc., 1993.; Johnson, Mary Ellen. *Orphan Train Riders: Their Own Stories: Volume 3*. Baltimore: Gateway Press, Inc., 1993.; Johnson, Mary Ellen. *Orphan Train Riders: Their Own Stories: Volume 4*. Baltimore: Gateway Press, Inc., 1997.; Johnson, Mary Ellen. *Orphan Train Riders: Their Own Stories: Volume 5-6*. Fayetteville, Arkansas: OTHSA, Inc., 1999.; Kidder, *Emily's Story;*; O'Connor, Stephen. *Orphan Trains: The Story of Charles Loring Brace and the Children He Saved and Failed*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2001. Patrick, Michael D, and Evelyn Goodrich Trickel. *Orphan Trains to Missouri*. Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1997. Patrick, Sheets, and Trickel, *We Are A Part of History*. Rothman, David J. *Annual Reports of the Children's Aid Society: Feb 1854-Feb 1863*. New York: Arno Press and the New York Times, 1971.; Vogt and Vogt, *Searching for Home;*; Warren, *Orphan Train Rider;*; Warren, Andrea. *We Rode the Orphan Trains*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2001.; Young Patricia J., and Frances E. Marks. *Tears on Paper: Orphan Train History*. USA: Patricia J. Young and Frances E. Marks, 1990.

<sup>14</sup> Nixon, Joan Lowery. *A Dangerous Promise*. New York: Bantam Books, 1994.; Nixon, *A Family Apart;*; Nixon, Joan Lowery. *A Place to Belong*. New York: Bantam Books, 1989.; Nixon, *Caught in the Act;*; Nixon, Joan Lowery. *Circle of Love*. New York: Laurel Leaf, 1998.; Nixon, Joan Lowery. *In the Face of Danger*. New York: Bantam Books, 1988.; Nixon, Joan Lowery. *Keeping Secrets*. New York: Bantam Books, 1995.

been able to learn about this time in American history. However little to no analysis exists on the historical accuracy of these stories. The people who read those fictional stories might be misinformed about what actually happened during the orphan train era. My project aims to examine a sample of these fictional accounts, namely Joan Lowery Nixon's *The Orphan Train Adventures*, to determine their historical accuracy. Nixon's works provide examples of a variety of fates that could await children riding the orphan trains through the stories of six siblings. The story of each sibling provides an opportunity for Nixon to portray an aspect of the orphan train era.

#### Annotated Bibliography

1. Askeland, Lori. *Children and Youth in Adoption, Orphanages, and Foster Care: A Historical Handbook and Guide*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2006.

This book includes an essay that provides a general history, justification, and mission for the Children's Aid Society and the orphan trains as well as letters written from parents and children. The essay discusses the different placement options for children, the effects of the new field of social work by the early 1900s on the orphan trains, and a summary of criticisms of the placing out system.

2. Aviles, Donna. *Beyond the Orphan Train: A True Adventure*. Louisville, Kentucky: Wasteland Press, 2004.

*Beyond the Orphan Train* is the true story of two boys who were sent west on the orphan trains and were separated. When he turns fifteen, the elder of the two boys, Oliver, sets out from the family that took him in to find his younger brother. This is the story of the journey to find the little brother that he lost when they rode the orphan trains. It is written by the granddaughter of the boy, Oliver, and is the sequel to *Fly Little Bird Fly!*.

3. —. *Fly Little Bird Fly!: The True Story of Oliver Nordmark and America's Orphan Trains*. Louisville, Kentucky: Wasteland Press, 2004.

*Fly Little Bird Fly!* tells the true story of two boys, ages seven and three, who end up in a New York City orphanage after the death of their mother. They travel west on the orphan trains to Kansas but end up being separate when they get there. This is the prequel to *Beyond the Orphan Train* and is told by the granddaughter of the older boy.

4. Brace, Charles Loring. *The Best Method of Disposing of our Pauper and Vagrant Children*. New York: Wynkoop, Hallenbeck, and Thomas Printers, 1859.

Charles Loring Brace, the secretary of the Children's Aid Society and proposer of the placing-out system, discusses the problem of the pauper and vagrant children of New York. This book gives rationale for the placing out season by the man whose idea it was to place out children.

5. —. *The Dangerous Classes of New York, and Twenty Years Work Among Them*. New York: Wynkoop and Hallenbeck, 1872.

This book is by the founder of the orphan trains and describes what he has learned about the poor in New York as well as his theories for solving the problems of poverty and crime. The author discusses the problems caused by poverty in New York and the influences on the crime rate of the poor before making a claim about what to him is the most needed solution. He argues against the asylums that were used at the time to deal with the poor children and instead proposes sending the children to live with farm families where they can learn to be useful members of society rather than criminals.

6. Fry, Annette R. *American Events: The Orphan Trains*. New York: New Discovery Books, 1994.

This is a children's book that tells the history of the Children's Aid Society and the orphan trains largely through pictures and biographical stories. It details the social causes that lead to the need for orphan trains, stories of children who traveled on the trains, and stories of riders and descendents in their search for lost family members. It does not give accurate representation to the children who were mistreated in their foster homes, focusing instead on those who went to good homes. Specifically it mentions some prominent adults who were children on the orphan trains.

7. Holt, Marilyn Irvin. *The Orphan Trains: Placing Out in America*. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1992.

*The Orphan Trains: Placing Out in America* is another analysis of the placing out system. It includes discussion of the changing views of child rearing in America at this time. The author uses oral histories, institutional records, and newspaper accounts in her research. There is a section that provides an analysis of a fictional account of the orphan trains and describes its deviations from the reality of the children's stories.

8. Inskip, Carolee R. *The Children's Aid Society of New York: An Index to the Federal, State, and Local Census Records of Its Lodging Houses (1855-1925)*. Baltimore: Clearfield Company, Inc., 1996.

This book starts with a short general overview of the Children's Aid Society, Charles Loring Brace, and the placing out system. Most of the book is made up of the records of the lodging houses which provide information on the names, ages, occupations, and residence of the people in the various lodging houses at a particular time. The lists include boarders, lodgers, servants, matrons, and other staff.

9. Johnson, Mary Ellen. *Journeys of Hope*. Fayetteville, Arkansas: OTHSA, Inc., 1999.

*Journeys of Hope* is much like Johnson's Orphan Train Riders. It has short stories written by the children who rode the orphan trains or about them by their children or grandchildren.

10. —. *Orphan Train Riders: Their Own Stories: Volume 1*. Baltimore: Gateway Press, Inc., 1992.

This book contains more than fifty short stories written by children and descendants of children who rode on the orphan trains. The stories cover children who were orphans, abandoned, or whose parents could not support them. They include children who ended up in good homes and children who were abused and mistreated. The children rode the trains throughout the duration of the orphan trains, from 1859-1929.

11. —. *Orphan Train Riders: Their Own Stories: Volume 2*. Baltimore: Gateway Press, Inc., 1993.

This book contains more than thirty short stories written by children and descendants of children who rode on the orphan trains. The stories cover children who were orphans, abandoned, or whose parents could not support them. They include children who ended up in good homes and children who were abused and mistreated. The children rode the trains throughout the duration of the orphan trains, from 1860-1929.

12. —. *Orphan Train Riders: Their Own Stories: Volume 3*. Baltimore: Gateway Press, Inc., 1995.

This book contains almost fifty short stories written by children and descendants of children who rode on the orphan trains. The stories cover children who were orphans, abandoned, or whose parents could not support them. They include children who ended up in

good homes and children who were abused and mistreated. The children rode the trains throughout the duration of the orphan trains, from 1854-1929.

13. —. *Orphan Train Riders: Their Own Stories: Volume 4*. Baltimore: Gateway Press, Inc., 1997.

This book contains more than fifty short stories written by children and descendants of children who rode on the orphan trains. The stories cover children who were orphans, abandoned, or whose parents could not support them. They include children who ended up in good homes and children who were abused and mistreated. The children rode the trains throughout the duration of the orphan trains, from 1867-1930.

14. —. *Orphan Train Riders: Their Own Stories: Volume 5-6*. Fayetteville, Arkansas: OTHSA, Inc., 1999.

This book contains more than fifty short stories in two volumes written by children and descendants of children who rode on the orphan trains. The stories cover children who were orphans, abandoned, or whose parents could not support them. They include children who ended up in good homes and children who were abused and mistreated. The children rode the trains throughout the duration of the orphan trains, from 1859-1928.

15. Kidder, Clark. *Emily's Story: The Brave Journey of an Orphan Train Rider*. Centralia, Washington: Gorham Printing, 2007.

In *Emily's Story*, the author tells the story of his paternal grandmother who rode the orphan trains when she was fourteen and ended up in Iowa. She ended up staying with several different families before she turned eighteen. The story is told through primary material, oral history, interviews, and historical photographs.

16. —. *Orphan Trains and their Precious Cargo: The Life's Work of Rev. H.D. Clarke*. Bowie, Maryland: Heritage Books, Inc., 2001.

Rev. H.D. Clarke was an agent for the Children's Aid Society. He placed children in homes, checked up on them periodically, and received letters from them telling how they were doing. This book is based on the scrapbooks that he made describing his work with the children of the orphan trains. Most of the book is told in the words of Rev. Clarke or the orphans who wrote to him. The author's grandmother traveled west on the orphan trains accompanied by Rev. Clarke. The book includes distribution histories, which provide information on when and how often children were removed from homes and placed in other homes.

17. Langsam, Miriam Z. *Children West*. Madison, Wisconsin: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1964.

*Children West* is an analysis of the 'placing out system' in which children were sent west on the orphan trains. It covers the changes in American society in the early and mid nineteenth century, the philosophy behind the Children's Aid Society, the efforts of raising money to fund its projects, and a section covering the criticisms of the system voiced by its contemporaries.

18. Liebl, Janet. *Ties that Bind: The Orphan Train Story in Minnesota*. Marshall, Minnesota: Southwest State University History Department, 1994.

*Ties that Bind* is a short book that covers the history of the placing out system in Minnesota. It specifically focuses on the requirements made by the State of Minnesota on the quality of homes and families in which the children were placed. Also included, in the appendices, are a letter of indenture and an ad for families to take in children.

19. Miller, Randall M, and Paul A Cimbala. *American Reform and Reformers: A Biographical Dictionary*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1996.

This book describes many reforms and reformers throughout American history. One chapter is on “Charles Loring Brace and Children’s Uplift”. It provides a short history of Brace and describes problems, motives, and justifications for the placing out system. It also describes some of his other efforts and the philosophy behind his actions.

20. *New York Times*. "Children's Aid Society: More Good Work Done During Past Year Than Previously. Success of the Brace Farm School: Over 100 Boys Trained There and Sent to Homes -- A Total of 2,059 Persons Provided for by the Society." November 27, 1895.

This *New York Times* article is about the successes of the Children’s Aid Society in the past year. In particular, it mentions the benefits of having a farm school for the older boys where they can learn to farm before being sent west in order to give them skills that would be more likely to get them placed, as it had heretofore been difficult to place older boys with no skills.

21. *New York Times*. "Helping Poor Children; A Year's Good Work by the Aid Society. Successful Efforts to Lift them Above Vice and Make Them Self-Supporting and Useful." November 24, 1886.

This *New York Times* article discusses the activities of the Children’s Aid Society for the past year. In particular it mentions the difficulty in placing older boys in farm homes because they have no skills that would be useful there.

22. *New York Times*. "Placing Out of Children: The Senate Judiciary Committee Reports a Substitute Bill." March 19, 1898.

“Placing Out of Children” is an article about a proposed bill, a substitute for one that had not been passed, that would allow the state to revoke the licenses of child placement agents and agencies and require all persons placing children to have a licence. Certain criteria, such as

making sure the child was sent to a good home, keeping records of all of the children placed, and maintaining contact with the child, would have to be met in order for the licensee to retain the license.

23. *New York Times*. "State Board of Charities: Annual Report Recommending New Legislation, Especially on "Placing Out" and Dispensaries." January 25, 1898.

This article is about a proposed bill that would allow the state to revoke the licenses of child placement agents and agencies and require all persons placing children to have a licence. Certain criteria, such as making sure the child was sent to a good home, keeping records of all of the children placed, and maintaining contact with the child, would have to be met in order for the licensee to retain the license.

24. Nixon, Joan Lowery. *A Dangerous Promise*. New York: Bantam Books, 1994.

This is the fifth book of the fictional series that I will be evaluating. This book continues the story of Mike from *Caught in the Act* as he joins the Union Army to fight in the War Between the States.

25. —. *A Family Apart*. New York: Bantam Books, 1987.

*A Family Apart* is the first book of the fictional series that I will be evaluating. In this book, a woman who cannot support her family, sends her children west on the orphan trains. Thirteen-year-old Frances disguises herself as a boy and is able to stay with her youngest brother while the rest of the children are separated.

26. —. *A Place to Belong*. New York: Bantam Books, 1989.

This is the fourth book of the fictional series that I will be evaluating. In this book, Danny and Peg are adopted by a kind family, but quickly lose their new mother and worry about what will happen to them.

27. —. *Caught in the Act*. New York: Bantam Books, 1988.

This is the second book of the fictional series that I will be evaluating. In this book, twelve-year-old Mike lives with a family with a kind mother, a strict father, and a bully for a brother.

28. —. *Circle of Love*. New York: Laurel Leaf, 1998.

*Circle of Love* is the seventh book in the fictional series that I will be evaluating. In this book, now-nineteen-year-old Frances returns to New York to escort other orphans to new homes out west.

29. —. *In the Face of Danger*. New York: Bantam Books, 1988.

*In the Face of Danger* is the third book of the fictional series that I will be evaluating. In this book, Megan believes that she has been cursed by a gypsy and believes that she is cursing the kind family who took her in.

30. —. *Keeping Secrets*. New York: Bantam Books, 1995.

This is the sixth book of the fictional series that I will be evaluating. This book continues the story of Peg and Danny from *A Place to Belong* as they get involved with the War Between the States.

31. O'Connor, Stephen. *Orphan Trains: The Story of Charles Loring Brace and the Children He Saved and Failed*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2001.

This book tells stories of Charles Loring Brace, the orphan trains, and children who rode the trains. It is an analysis of the placing out system and its role as the beginning of the foster system in America. It tells of the stories with happy endings but also stories of children who turned out to be murderers or thieves and so is more fair than some others that only tell the stories with happy endings.

32. Patrick, Michael D, and Evelyn Goodrich Trickel. *Orphan Trains to Missouri*. Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1997.

In *Orphan Trains to Missouri*, the author tells the stories of the orphan trains and children specifically as related to Missouri. It uses documentary and oral history along with historical, folklore and informal literature to discuss these children. It includes stories from children as well as stories from volunteers who oversaw their placement.

33. Patrick, Michael, Evelyn Sheets, and Evelyn Trickel. *We Are A Part of History: The Story of the Orphan Trains*. Santa Fe: The Lightning Tree, 1990.

This book contains interviews from people who rode the orphan trains as children and letters that they wrote as children, discussing both positive and negative stories. The book starts with a description of the poor children of New York and Charles Loring Brace's plan to remedy the situation. Included are criticisms of the placing out system and stories of the children.

34. Rothman, David J. *Annual Reports of the Children's' Aid Society: Feb 1854-Feb 1863*. New York: Arno Press and The New York Times, 1971.

This book is a compilation of the annual reports of the Children's Aid Society for the years 1854-1863. It contains a general description of their activities for the year, including the treasurer's report. For each year, there are also short stories describing some of the children that they found and attempted to help. This volume covers the first ten years of the Children's Aid Society.

35. Vogt, Martha Nelson, and Christina Vogt. *Searching for Home*. USA: Triumph Press, 1995.

In *Searching for Home*, the authors tell the stories of three families of children, two sets of brother and sister, and one little girl, who traveled west on the orphan trains. They were

connected by the placing agent who took them all west and who maintained contact with them throughout their lives.

36. Warren, Andrea. *Orphan Train Rider: One Boy's True Story*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1996.

This book tells the true story of one boy who rode the orphan trains and of the Children's Aid Society. The boy rode the orphan trains to Texas and eventually was able to reconnect with his siblings later in life. The author wrote the story based on interviews with the subject and included pictures of his life.

37. —. *We Rode the Orphan Trains*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2001.

*We Rode the Orphan Trains* provides background information on the orphan trains, as well as stories of seven children who rode the trains with a variety of experiences, and traveled to Kansas, Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, Michigan, and Kentucky. Also included is a description of what happened to the children between being chosen from the orphanages and being placed on the trains to travel out west.

38. Young, Patricia J., and Frances E. Marks. *Tears on Paper: Orphan Train History*. USA: Patricia J. Young and Frances E. Marks, 1990.

*Tears on Paper* tells the story of the orphan trains, especially in Nebraska. The author includes new clippings, lists of orphans, and pictures. There are also stories written by people who rode the orphan trains to Nebraska.

#### Preliminary Reflections on Faith and Scholarship

I believe that my faith should influence everything that I do. My faith impacts the way that I see the world, how I think about people, and how I see right and wrong. Even when

working on a project that does not directly deal with my faith, I believe that it should still show through in the way I research and write.

Because of my faith, I am dedicated to integrity and honesty in all I do. While historians who are not Christians also attempt to deal honestly with the subjects of their study, my Christian faith gives me a greater respect for the importance of truth as well as an understanding of truth that impacts the way that I think. As the example has been set forth by the Hebrews in the writing of the Old Testament, I will need to look honestly at the subjects of my research, not glossing over or ignoring things that do not agree with what I want or with which I do not agree.

My faith also gives me a certain understanding of humanity, of human dignity and the human condition. I believe that human beings were created in God's image and are therefore good. Yet, we are also fallen and therefore capable of great evils toward one another. This understanding of humanity will affect the way I see the children who rode the orphan trains and the families who took them in.

Because my faith is important to me, I may be tempted to give faith, or Christianity, more importance in my research than is actually present. I will need to take special care to deal honestly with this aspect of my research, not giving it undue attention, but also not erring too far the other way and giving it less attention than it is warranted.

#### Evaluation Process

Dr. Mark Smith has agreed to be my mentor for the duration of this project. He has proposed, and I have accepted the following grading rubric.

For the semester of Spring 2010:

Thesis/Problem/Question Development	25%
Information Seeking/Selecting and Evaluating	35%
Outline of Paper	30%
Meetings on Progress	10%

For the semester of Fall 2010:

Thesis/Problem/Question	5%
Information Seeking/Selecting and Evaluating	25%
Analysis	25%
Synthesis	25%
Documentation	10%
Presentation (Celebration of Scholarship: Spring 2011)	10%