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WHOSE NEIGHBORHOOD IS IT ANYWAY?
A CLOSE LOOK AT SINGLE-MOTHERS LIVING IN CENTRAL HARLEM AND
THE POWER BROKERS CHANGING IT

BY

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Whose Neighborhood Is It Anyway?

A Close Look At Single-Mothers Living In Central Harlem and the Power Brokers

Changing It

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At the turn of the 21st Century, commercial, and residential development picked up speed and began to transform the physical, cultural, social, and economic landscape of Harlem in unprecedented ways. Today, the term gentrification is coupled with the mention of Harlem, and the community is relishing in resources, services, and facilities that were once inaccessible in this section of northern Manhattan. Along with these changes, the population has increased, and Central Harlem has seen its largest share of non-black and middle and upper-class residents in recent history. But, despite the heightened levels of transformation, Central Harlem is still a predominately black working-class community that continues to encounter socio-economic challenges. Consequently, this dissertation explores the dualism of this reality and focuses on the lived experiences of working-class single mothers who have lived in Harlem for at least ten years, and contrasts their perception of change with that of community leaders who have on the ground experience

with community and real estate development. Furthermore, to gain an understanding of the larger processes at play, I also include discussion regarding change as recorded in meeting minutes for the New York City Community Board 10 Housing Committee, Land Use and Landmarks Committee and Economic Development Committee in calendar years 2013 and 2014. Through interviews with research subjects and document analysis, I answer the following questions: what does neighborhood change mean to the working-class single mother, and what role do community leaders play in bringing about neighborhood change? I organize the findings into several key topics that speak to the theories presented in the literature review—poverty concentration, social mix, the meaning of place, affordable housing, place ownership, neighborhood effects, and personal efficacy—challenging some and supporting others. Implications of this research are profound and complex, and will help scholars and planners gain a stronger foothold on the unintended consequences of development and the human response to neighborhood change.

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The phrase, “less is more,” kept reminding me that this is only a molehill

when it felt like a mountain. Thank you.

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Thank you for allowing me to lean on you and for believing in me.

My Mother

I exist because you refused to give up. Thank you for your countless sacrifice.

To the Women Whose Voices You Hear

Thank you for sharing your story. Thank you for your bravery and transparency.

God

Most importantly, Your strength and grace have kept me.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to the millions of single mothers who have sacrificed much to ensure the success of their children, to those who have chosen to pursue higher education as a way to advance themselves and their families, to the many who have embarked upon graduate school despite their own struggles and difficulties, and to my mother who is the major motivation behind who I am today.

PREFACE

Harlem was my permanent residence until I moved to New Jersey in 2004. I was born at a local hospital and, my mom, along with my extended family lived on West 149th Street between Edgecombe and 8th Avenues. In my early years, my mom and I moved to East 126th Street between Lexington and Park Avenues. Although I now lived on the East Side, my world was still heavily influenced by Central Harlem. I attended pre-school and later kindergarten in the northern most section of Central Harlem. As early as I can remember, my friends and I walked throughout Harlem, frequenting neighborhood stores and hanging out on 125th Street. The stretch of stores held the same, if not more, symbolism as the mall does to suburban kids. I joined a Girls Scout troop on West 116th Street between Lenox and Seventh Avenues. I played tennis at the 369th Regiment Armory on West 142nd Street, near the Harlem River Drive. I attended the Dance Program at Harlem Hospital Center, frequented a dentist in Harlem, visited relatives and friends regularly, and went to church there also. My mother worked hard to afford me the opportunity to attend primary and secondary school outside of the neighborhood on the Upper East Side. I'll never forget my mom's rationale—if I were going to surpass the accomplishments of my neighbors, I needed to attend a school absent from inner-city pressures and influences.

The Harlem of today stands in stark contrast to the Harlem I knew growing up. The Harlem of yesteryear was known for rampant drug use, dirty streets, boarded up buildings, and low-quality stores; whereas renovated brownstones, new buildings, new businesses, restaurant row, and an increasingly diversified population characterize the Harlem of today. Based on who you ask, people view these changes as good, bad, indifferent or a combination of all three. Although there remain isolated sections with rundown buildings,

block by block transformation is occurring. I remember when there were no banks in Harlem other than Savings banks, nor were there any major supermarkets. We would journey to the Upper East Side to do our weekly grocery shopping and banking. As the head of household, my mom qualified to live in a Section 8 subsidized apartment building, and like many others in our neighborhood, my mother struggled financially. She was able to provide because of a support network of family and friends, overtime hours, and the relative affordability of Harlem.

After high school, I spent the next six years living upstate while attending college; this experience exposed me to something different—life apart from the inner city. I met classmates whose families were not poor, and students whose parents were married, held professional jobs, and owned their homes; this was new to me and entirely different. I came back home in 2003 now dissatisfied with what was once normal. I wanted more, and I was delighted to see the larger Harlem community gradually transform before my eyes. I wanted to be a part of that change. I wanted to participate in this new world.

After much contemplation, my mother and I attempted to purchase our first home through the city's homebuyer's program. I was thrilled by the increasing changes around me and I anticipated settling into this new neighborhood. But unfortunately, my mother and I could not afford the cost of purchasing a home in "Renaissance Harlem," and a year later, New Jersey became our home. Despite my relocation, my life was still heavily centered in Harlem and so were my interests. Many questions still weighed heavily in my mind, and as the population increasingly changed, my fascination also increased. More and more, conversations with friends focused on neighborhood ownership, cultural change, acceptance of the ghetto, the entrance of resources, and what this meant to us. What did it

mean to all of us who lived in Harlem before the rebirth? What will be the outcome? How will this end? These ponderings, coupled with my personal experience, led to the research topic at hand. I hope that this dissertation will continue the conversation.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In 1996, Paul Jargowsky and William Julius Wilson each wrote monumental works in which they described urban poverty and explored the various reasons for its existence and persistence. Reading their works for the first time in graduate school opened my eyes to understand that the reasons went far beyond race and socioeconomic status, but there were several factors at play that made for a perpetual ghetto. Both works (Jargowsky 1996 and Wilson 1996) sensationalized the debate about who and what was ultimately responsible for the condition of inner cities and re-energized the conversation on what can be done to improve ghetto communities.

Today, major cities across the nation are experiencing diversification and economic transformation (Young 2002; Lees, Slater and Wyly 2008; Sampson 2012). After decades of disinvestment, cities are revitalized, main streets are thriving, new residents have moved in, and the city is attracting new people. The process of renewal and rebuilding working-class residential areas, known as gentrification, includes the influx of middle-class or affluent people and an increase in commerce, businesses, and real estate speculation. The process is much broader than residential rehabilitation. It “is a shift in the control and use of space from lower-income to higher-income social groups” (Madanipour 2011:489). Gentrification is about class dimension. It is not just a matter of redeveloping housing; the nature of the phenomenon is the gross change in housing and neighborhood class (Slater et al. 2004). In practice, this might involve a rent-regulated tenement that becomes a private cooperative and a disinvested main street that now boasts of boutiques, big-box retailers, commercial banks, and high-end restaurants.

In Jane Jacobs' writings (1961) about her observations of a changing neighborhood, she was engrossed by the city's possibility and vivaciousness. Neil Smith's gentrification frontier (1996: xvii) posits gentrification as the return of capital to the city. The result is the Disneyfication of urban areas, a term used to describe the transformation of something to resemble the internationally-known Walt Disney Company's theme parks, where city dwellers are treated as theme park patrons (Michael Sorkin 1992). In many ways, culture of place is "Disneyfied," with exchange value triumphing over use value. With the reopening of the urban frontier (Neil Smith 1996), opportunities are meant to encourage urban resettlement by suburban dwellers. Hence, we witness growth in our large cities as the border even expands into the inner city which breeds speculation. What I have shared thus far is only meant to introduce the reader to the processes at play. Neighborhood change cannot be summarized in a few lines. As I move further along, the reader will gain a greater understanding of those processes and what gentrification means to the inner city.

GENTRIFICATION—ITS PAST AND PRESENT

According to Loretta Lees, Tom Slater and Elvin Wyly (2008), the first wave of gentrification began in the 1950s and ended in 1973. This period began with the 1949 and 1954 Housing Act and ended with an economic downturn caused by a global recession. Over the course of these twenty years, gentrification was state sponsored and resulted in the redevelopment of blighted areas. Such a reinvestment was too risky for private investors. The second wave of gentrification lasted from the 1970s to the 1980s and was marked by cultural, economic redevelopment and an altering of the city's image through public-private partnerships. It was referred to as *laissez-faire* gentrification because the private sector was the driver of change. During this wave, there was also an increased

emphasis on real estate and banking finance. "These changes led to developments such as Boston's Faneuil Hall, Baltimore's Inner Harbor, New York City's South Street Seaport, and the art-led gentrification of the Lower East Side" (Lees et al. 2008: 177). Third-wave gentrification (the 1990s) can be dubbed as post-recession gentrification and was characterized by "large scale capital." Corporations began playing a role in restoration, governments embraced this as a policy and became its chief driver, and gentrification became neighborhood specific (i.e. Central Harlem). This period also saw the birth of Enterprise and Empowerment Zones, and the alluring of big businesses into inner cities through government subsidies. The fourth wave of gentrification (present-day) has seen an unprecedented level of real estate development that has not only resulted in the return of capital to previously blighted areas, but it also led to a shift in the socioeconomic demographic of its residents. With a decrease in mortgage interest rates, billions of dollars in housing finance funneled through neighborhoods where there was once disinvestment. Additionally, a feature distinct to this wave is a "powerful national political shift favoring the interest of the wealthiest households" (Lees et al. 2008: 183). This focus has manifested itself in an increase in homeownership programs, privatization, and cuts to social welfare programs. I view the fourth wave as a revival of sorts and a gradual elimination of the social woes of the ghetto by a progressively strategic removal of the lower segments of the population and an increased presence of the upwardly mobile. This wave captures the attention of people and causes many to marvel at the realization that the ghetto is open once again. This is the wave where I walk around Harlem, finding much of it unrecognizable. With so many new developments and changes, at times I find myself unable to identify where certain old establishments once were. Conversely, the drastic restoration of the

physical environment is not easily reflected in an improvement in the social capital of the most vulnerable residents.

WHY NEW YORK CITY?

Loretta Lees (1994) suggests that experiences of gentrification vary substantially with location. It is important to examine the context: locality, city, and country. Gentrification is occurring all over the world with differences in each setting. New York City has encouraged gentrification in run-down areas primarily through subsidizing the private housing market and encouraging commercial development. William Sites (1994) points to the fiscal crisis of 1970 as a culprit as to why gentrification occurred. He argues that in New York City the Koch administration (1978-89) pursued a development strategy that favored large corporations and developers in a way that also furthered its political interests. In doing so, the government fueled market-driven development pressures that contributed directly and indirectly to gentrification in the Lower East Side. Overall, the Koch administration heightened the costs of economic change for less-affluent New Yorkers, even as it failed to establish the conditions for balanced growth and ensuring fiscal stability (Sites 1994: 190).

In the mid-1970s New York was faced with job loss, population loss, decreasing tax revenues, a decline in the construction industry, federal aid cuts, and a mounting municipal debt. Urban redevelopment began with the transformation of NYC as a global financial and corporate headquarters. This rebuilding created new low and high-income jobs and welcomed new residents and businesses into the city. With the revival of the corporate complex, service sector, and the real estate market in Manhattan, property values (including land) in central business districts increased as did demand for housing for the

employees. Peter Marcuse (1986) estimated that between 10,000 and 40,000 New York City households were displaced by gentrification each year during this period.

Ultimately, “New York City transformed itself by hewing closely to a ‘neoliberal’ program of pursuing private investment, imposing fiscal austerity, and cutting funding in social programs” (Martinez 2010: 7). Much of the research has focused on neighborhoods in Brooklyn, lower Manhattan, and more recently Northern Manhattan—Harlem specifically. New York City defines Central Harlem North as the area north of 125th Street, and Central Harlem South is the area south of 125th Street. Central Harlem has benefitted from an overwhelming amount of public investment, as approximately 31 percent of the housing stock between 1987 and 2000 was renovated or constructed through at least one NYC Capital Program (Roberts Center 2001:7). This investment came in the form of inclusionary zoning, tax abatements, new homeownership programs, and low-interest rate loans for developers (Bernt 2012 and others). In recent years, the population of Central Harlem has increased 9 percent from 109,095 in 2000 to 118,665 in 2010 (Center for Urban Research 2011). However, the Black population has decreased.

The largest loss of Blacks in Manhattan occurred in Central Harlem North (-5,453) and Central Harlem South (-4,091). The Black population also declined in Hamilton Heights (-5,366). At the same time, the White population grew in Central Harlem South by 5,600 and increased its share in those neighborhoods to 16% from 3.5% (Central Harlem So). Latinos also gained population share in this part of upper Manhattan. Latinos gained the most from 2000 to 2010 in Central Harlem North (6,350) and increased their population share in that neighborhood from 16% in 2000 to 23% in 2010. (Center for Urban Research 2011)

The comparatively low housing prices in Harlem make it an attractive residential and commercial destination for the burgeoning class of educated professionals who desire to live in Manhattan. Harlem, in particular, has not only been home to an upsurge in residential development, but also in commercial revitalization for the same reason as its

housing developers—cheaper land, tax abatements, and accessibility to midtown and lower Manhattan. The new and improved Harlem now resembles a consumption space where the needs of affluent residents and newcomers are satisfied and prioritized as evidenced in the building of new places and hangouts. These new sites stand in stark contrast to the older establishments which still cater to its existing client base, generally long-time residents. The simultaneous existence of the new and old buildings brings even greater attention to the dual existence of two separate neighborhoods. As stated by Zukin, Trujillo, Frase et al. (2009), these new stores are a visible image of commercial gentrification, just like new housing is a clear picture of neighborhood change.

Block by block, revitalization makes its entrance like an encroaching flood. While all the improvements sound promising, this reality can be problematic. Manhattan is “becoming Whiter and overwhelmingly affluent, while the outer boroughs are becoming more working class and nonwhite” (Martinez 2010). While the experience of all residents is noteworthy, this dissertation focuses specifically on that of women, single mothers in particular. Secondly, this dissertation takes a look at the role that community-based organizations, politicians, and real estate brokers play in bringing change to Harlem. These are the groups that can provide a first-hand account of the effects of neighborhood change (Allen 2008).

RESEARCH QUESTION

Gentrification’s impacts are multifaceted, affecting different people differently and even the same individuals in different ways Therefore, literature that not merely criticizes gentrification but offers a rationale for blunting its detrimental effects is needed as well. What appears to be more pressing is more rigorous empirical scholarship that would allow us to move closer to more definitive understanding how gentrification impacts residents (Freeman 2008: 187-189)

Supporters of gentrification seek to alleviate the societal consequences of poverty concentration by diversifying communities. However, not much evidence, if any, exists as to whether such policies of encouraging middle-class influx, improved services, business attraction, and residential rehabilitation improve poor working-class residents who live in poverty concentrated neighborhoods. What we have seen in much of gentrification research is a scholarly criticism of a process that espouses neoliberalism and a capitalist state (Allen 2008). Research implies that said groups are either displaced due to the unaffordability of areas experiencing higher levels of blight or they continue to reside in their existing neighborhoods perpetuating cycles of poverty. But, what about the experiences of the working class residents who remain? To explore this area of research, I asked the following questions: What does neighborhood change mean to the working class single mother, and what role do community leaders play in bringing about this change?

RESEARCH APPROACH

To answer these questions, I conducted a quality study, in which I interviewed ten single mothers and eight community leaders in Harlem. I also did a document analysis of 50 Community Board 10 Housing Committee, Land Use and Landmarks Committee, and the Economic Development Committee's meeting minutes for calendar years 2013 and 2014. I chose to do a qualitative study for one primary reason. A qualitative study allows me to understand the human experience in a way that I could not capture quantitatively. By coding the social world into operational variables, I would destroy valuable data by imposing my worldviews on the subjects. A qualitative study allows the subject's thoughts, feelings, beliefs, values, and assumptions to speak for themselves.

My research also included informal participation in the community. By attending community events, building openings and community board meetings, eating at local restaurants, visiting cafés, going to the movie theater, and walking the streets of Harlem, I developed a good knowledge of what it is like to live in a changing neighborhood. I was then able to compare my experience with that of the research subjects.

RESEARCHER'S PERSPECTIVE

Researchers (Kathryn Edin and Laura Lein 1962, Sheldon Danziger and Jeffrey Lehman 1996) have written extensively about the lived experiences of low-income single mothers and welfare. Damaris Rose (2004), Caitlin Cahill (2006 and 2007), and Vicky Muniz (1998) have written on the experiences of women in resisting gentrification. John Jackson (2001), Monique Taylor (2002), Neil Smith (1996), Kathe Newman, E. Wyly et. al (2010), David Maurasse (2006), Frank Braconi and Lance Freeman (2004) have conducted studies on gentrification in Central Harlem. However, little, if any research has explicitly connected the experience of low-income single women in Central Harlem to gentrification. The same holds true concerning the role that community leaders play.

While the study of neighborhood change has run the gamut of urban theory and has provided much research on the role of the gentrifier, forces driving and sustaining change, the role of the state, neighborhood change, displacement, politics and race/gender relations, continuous empirical research in this area will add to the body of work that examines the impact of gentrification on those residents who currently and previously lived in these communities during its pre-gentrification stage. A closer look at the residential impact must take place to thoroughly comprehend the processes of gentrification (Muniz 1998). This study aims to fill this gap.

OUTLINE OF DISSERTATION

This chapter provided a backdrop for my research and introduced the reader to what I hope will be an invigorating and fascinating dissertation. In the succeeding chapters, I share the literature review, research design and methodology, analysis, findings, and conclusions. The literature review found in Chapter 2, "Concentrated Poverty, the Neighborhood, Gentrification and Their Effects," is a concise, focused lead-in that precedes and sets the stage for my dissertation. I divide the chapter into three sections—Residential Segregation and the Creation of Ghettos, Combating Neighborhood Effects Through Social Mix, and Women and Their Experience with Neighborhood Change. In each section, I present the literature as is and then I conclude with a commentary where I critique the merits of the various arguments, focusing on those points most closely related to the research subject. Together, the literature tells a story of the development of the modern-day inner city and begins to uncover the residential perception of neighborhood change. In chapter 3, I share the research design and methodology; and in chapter 4, I discuss the approach to data analysis. In chapter 5, I arrange the interview narratives and meeting minutes in categorical headings, and I allow the data to speak for itself. Chapter 6 covers the major findings that surfaced from the data, and I answer the research questions. Lastly, I conclude in chapter 7 by summarizing each chapter and addressing the title of this dissertation, "Whose Neighborhood is It Anyway?" The dissertation ends with a final reflection on the study.

CHAPTER 2

CONCENTRATED POVERTY, THE NEIGHBORHOOD, GENTRIFICATION AND THE EFFECTS

2.1 RESIDENTIAL SEGREGATION AND THE CREATION OF GHETTOS

During my graduate coursework, I spent a considerable amount of time exploring the literature on the formation of the ghetto and residential segregation. Having an understanding of the creation of places such as Harlem and its social isolation, gave light to the circumstances under which present-day neighborhood change occurs. Painting this picture is central to understanding the environment in which gentrification takes place, and the impact neighborhood change has on existing residents. Who are the residents who historically populate the inner city? What was wrong with the inner city in its previous state? Why was change needed? In the following pages, I present the literature as is, and I conclude this section of the chapter with a discussion, “Is There Anything Good Left in the Hood?” There I challenge the literature and pose questions that need to be addressed.

A series of circumstances (economic downturns, discrimination in housing and lending policies, deindustrialization, and growing income disparity) worked together to encourage White suburbanization and Black urbanization, creating a situation of concentrated poverty in urban areas. The Federal Housing Authority (FHA) 1939 Underwriting Manual stated, “if a neighborhood is to retain stability, it is necessary that properties shall continue to be occupied by the same social and racial classes” (Carr and Kutty 2008: 8). Restrictive covenants (Massey 2008) maintained the color line as property owners signed contracts prohibiting African-Americans from residing in White neighborhoods. Banking policies of redlining made it impossible for residents, businesses,

and investors to get loans in Black neighborhoods, thereby starving communities of needed capital.

The availability of FHA and VA loans and transportation in the suburbs encouraged middle-class Whites to move to the suburbs. Slum clearance programs, also known as urban renewal, were implemented for the benefit of Whites who remained in the cities and ensured that minorities were kept in certain sections (Massey et al. 1993). Municipal authorities located housing developments for African-Americans in separate run-down areas of the city. Subprime lending aided in creating a landscape of foreclosed and abandoned homes (Carr and Kutty 2008), and block-busting strategies were implemented with the explicit aim of keeping Blacks and Whites in separate neighborhoods (Massey 2008). “Collectively, these programs had the impact of denying African-Americans access to quality housing in growing and vibrant communities with good access to quality public educational institutions and jobs” (Carr and Kutty 2008: 9).

With the passage of the Fair Housing Act of 1968 banning discrimination in housing and the Gautreaux and Shannon court decisions that prohibited public authorities from placing housing projects exclusively in Black neighborhoods, government-spurred residential segregation lessened (Wilson 1987). However, the government did not enforce legislation, and Black communities remained highly segregated due to a combination of racism and economic factors (Massey 2008). With the economic downturn in the 70s, Black poverty increased, and the income gap between Blacks and Whites widened. This disparity decreased the mobility of African-Americans who wanted to leave the ghetto. With the lack of affordable housing options in the suburbs, many Blacks continued to live in the city.

The environment described above created a situation of racial and social isolation as well. The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (the Kerner Commission), appointed by then President Lyndon B. Johnson, explored the links between racial discrimination and urban policy after the major racial riots of 1967. The report released in 1968 began with this warning: "Our nation is moving toward two societies, one Black, one White—separate and unequal) . . ." (Boger and Wegner, 1996). The Kerner Commission made several predictions. First among them was that residential segregation would impede upon minority access to equal employment. Second, they believed that this separation of societies would induce a concentration of poverty, as under- or unemployed racial minorities predominately inhabited inner cities. Of which, some of the inevitable societal effects are high crime rates, inadequate health care, insufficient sanitation, poor housing, and limited education prospects (Campbell, Coleman, Hobson et al. 1966). The two societies that the Commission referenced was a reality where Whites and Blacks lived in separate communities, creating two polar worlds. President Johnson rejected the Commission's recommendations.

Douglas Massey (2008) states that before 1940 there never existed a racial or ethnic group that experienced an isolation index above 60 percent. But by 1970 this was a new reality—the average Black person lived in a racially homogenous neighborhood. Although immigrant communities existed, they were entirely different. Immigrant enclaves contained various ethnic groups, even if they were grouped separately by blocks, and these communities were temporary places where families started out. Conversely, the ghetto became a permanent reality for the Black American poor (Carr and Kutty 2008).

During the 1970s and 1980s, when urban economic restructuring and inflation drove up rates of Black and Hispanic poverty in many urban areas, underclass communities

were created only where increased minority poverty coincided with a high degree of segregation—principally in older metropolitan areas of the northeast and the midwest. (Massey and Denton 1993: 12)

In these regions, urban poverty was practically synonymous with isolated Black communities. The causal factor linking the two is the reality that “social and spatial mobility” are inevitably intertwined (Massey and Denton 1993: 14). “Access to quality schools, good jobs, healthy and safe environments, supportive social networks, and accumulation of housing wealth are all influenced by the ability to secure housing in neighborhoods of opportunity and choice” (Carr and Kutty 2008: 1). Where one lives is a great determinant of what resources and opportunities one have available to them.

The Black ghetto became a place of joblessness and concentrated poverty (Wilson 1996). Paul Jargowsky (1996) highlighted racial segregation as the culprit responsible for creating ghettos and economic segregation as the reason for their continued existence. Neighborhood sorting, spatial mismatch of jobs, structural changes in the urban economy, and the declining need for low-skilled labor exacerbated deteriorating trends and left inner cities in a typified persistent vegetative state. William Julius Wilson (1987, 1996), in his theory of new urban poverty, pointed to a shift in economic, demographic, and social structures of communities in which low-income families now lived as affecting the life chances of inner city youth. The upwardly mobile African-Americans who were able to take advantage of the change in America’s housing policy did so and inadvertently created a reality where the middle-class minority lived and worked outside of ghetto areas. Also, many working-class families exhibiting the strongest ideals moved to higher-income areas of the city and the suburbs, leaving behind the most destitute (Wilson 1987). The most destitute were now socially isolated. Compounded with the social isolation was

discrimination, fewer jobs for unskilled persons, the outmigration of working and middle-class families, the prominence of female-headed households, and a lack of marriageable males.

The underclass minority possessed a disproportionate amount of social ills. High levels of drug activity and joblessness affect social organization, with crime and gang violence among them. In interviews conducted by Wilson, the subjects pointed to their lived experience as children in ghettos as having a direct impact upon their lifestyles. Wilson includes the testimony of adults pointing to the pervasiveness of negative role modeling, poor schools, lack of reinforcing social structures, and joblessness as factors (Wilson, 1996). Wilson discusses these societal constraints as leading to “ghetto-related behavior and attitudes.” Principal among them being the lack of positive social networks. Overall, poverty and social isolation have deprived inner cities of social capital.

Oscar Lewis (1968) in his culture of poverty thesis viewed the traits mentioned by Wilson (1987) as a subculture, or rather a way of life that perpetuates with each generation (James 2008). Paul Jargowsky (1996) wrote a separate work describing urban poverty and pointing to a culture of poverty adopted by residents of impoverished areas. In particular, a culture distinctive to poor areas emerged symptomatic of governmental and systematic processes that have failed to provide opportunities for the less fortunate. Termed the “culture of poverty,” this theory purports that those living in such areas not only have to deal with their own economic and social struggles but also with those of their neighbors. Hence the effects of poverty are exacerbated in such conditions. While strong social ties among family and friends may exist, ghetto environments still have an unintended effect on its residents. Jargowsky (1996) points to a ghetto culture that stresses short-term goals,

a lack of community role models and stabilizing institutions, and underfunded schools as avenues through which the effects of poverty carry on intentionally and unintentionally.

William Julius Wilson points to the persistence of ghetto-related behavior produced by one's environment as having a myriad impact on the life chances of inner-city residents. The primary reason for these urban problems is the steady persistence of social isolation as a result of poverty concentration. Conversely, in neighborhoods exhibiting high levels of social organization, where adults have become enablers of obligations, expectations, and social networks, the activities and behavior of youth are supervised and controlled (Wilson 1996). It is not to say that deviant behaviors (i.e., idleness, teenage pregnancy, and drug use) go unscrutinized in such neighborhoods, but the lack of social organization does not confront and challenge these behaviors.

According to Iris M. Young (2002), one of the most obvious forms of social, economic, and political exclusion is residential segregation. This exclusion is fostered and maintained through structural processes. The deliberative form of democracy is based upon the normative ideals of political equality and inclusion, facilitated through discussion and decision-making. Residential segregation closes off the lines of communication, thereby making it difficult and nearly impossible for segregated groups to communicate. Residential segregation in the United States is cultivated politically by the formation of congressional districts and zoning ordinances. While people tend to choose to live amongst those within "their group," Young contends that this segregation is produced and maintained by landlords, homeowners, real estate agents, banks, and other individuals/institutions. Redlining and predatory lending in poor and minority

communities both perpetuate these facts. Ghetto neighborhoods are populated with socially and economically disadvantaged segments of urban areas.

Young (2002) asserts that group solidarity is not what is wrong with segregation, but that inequality is wrong. Firstly, segregation violates equal opportunity. For example, within our poor minority communities, there is a dearth of commercial banks and supermarkets. For the most part, school choice is limited to the ones in the locale; retail and food service are potential employers, and institutes of higher learning are located elsewhere. Black and Latino residential areas in America are viewed as less desirable places to live. This perception has led to prevalent disinvestments. These neighborhoods receive inferior services. Thus, landfills and bus and garbage truck depots are located there. Minorities must leave their communities to access high-quality services, including quality medical care. Despite the disparities between the two worlds: rich and poor, or White and Black, rich cultural institutions have risen in an attempt to bank on the positive elements, thus instilling pride in the people. Because of this richness, middle and upper-class minorities often chose to locate in their respective homogenous neighborhoods.

Roberto Fernandez and David Harris (1992) analyzed data on social networks of African-Americans living in Chicago where at least 20% of the residents were poor. Despite an individual's economic status, the influence of the poor on social contacts was still present. The women living amidst this concentration of poverty had a smaller percentage of well-educated, employed, mainstream friends. Because of continued residential segregation, poor minorities disproportionately bear the burden of social isolation—the effects of which are mainly seen in children. The studies show that children and young people from socially deprived areas perform worse regarding education, work,

and income. They are more involved in crime and drug abuse, and there is a higher probability of women becoming single mothers at an early age (see Case and Katz 1991; O'Regan and Quigley 1994; Haveman and Wolfe 1995). Collective efficacy (Sampson 2012) works both negatively and positively.

Robert Sampson (2012) argued that in America, neighborhood inequality has more of a deterministic effect than the individual. In fact, individual perceptions are greatly influenced by neighborhood characteristics. "Poverty and its correlates are persistent in terms of neighborhood concentration, especially for Black areas" (Sampson 2012: Kindle Locations 2110-2111). He also believes that an understanding of individual sorting and residential selection is important in understanding neighborhood effects. The proliferation of crime incites others to commit acts of crime thus feeding a cycle. In such a community, certain behaviors that are viewed negatively elsewhere are accepted as standard here and similarly, poverty begets poverty and creates a "poverty trap."

SO, IS THERE ANYTHING GOOD LEFT IN THE HOOD?

The literature combined brings to surface the reality that inner cities are comprised predominately of disadvantaged persons facing socio-economic disparities. Countless authors have detailed the role of the government in purposefully locating minorities to one area, which resulted in the purposeful blockade of access to the resources needed to rise above one's circumstances. If housing location is a determinant of success then residing in an area with exacerbated rates of disinvestment guarantees location-related setbacks. However, this depiction of the ghetto is unbalanced. While I cannot ignore or deny the external forces that created the ghetto, I take issue with the literature (Wilson 1987, Lewis

1968, and Jargowsky 1996) on the dearth of human and social capital within the inner city and the resulting formation of an inferior culture.

Culture is passed from generation to generation and consists of the attitudes, beliefs, customs, arts, and rituals of a particular group of people. I argue against the notion that an inferior way of life was created and perpetuated in the ghetto. Instead, an area and the people within that area were isolated. External factors reinforced that separation discussed above, and an inferior infrastructure, services, and school system was created, not an inferior people. The “culture of poverty” is made the scapegoat (James 2008) as to why ghettos persist instead of looking at the forces that have created this distinctive culture or perceived set of behavioral norms.

Instead of viewing Black urban poverty as a cultural issue, others (Massey and Denton 1993, Wilson 1987, Gephart 1997, and Brooks-Gunn 1993) view the impacts of poverty as an economic issue and utilize the term "urban underclass." The latter term describes those who are characterized by the six following traits: "intergenerational transmission of poverty; geographic concentration; social isolation from mainstream society; unemployment and underemployment; low skills and education; and membership in a minority group" (James 2008: 31). While I understand the concept, the term urban underclass introduces another set of problems. The word underclass is jarring. It depicts the lowest of the low and reminds me of India's caste system. Instead, why not refer to this group as the segment of the population who have not been able to overcome the impacts of residential segregation because they are the least prepared, ill-equipped and the most vulnerable.

I appreciate the efforts of (Massey and Denton 1993, Gephart 1997, Brooks-Gunn 1993, and Sampson 2012) who shift the focus away from arguments on individual efficacy to the structural forces that aid in the continued state of the ghetto. Any time we focus on either real or perceived culture, we run the risk of placing value judgments on something that cannot be understood by merely presenting data. The specific reasons as to why one may remain in poverty vary from person to person. But the structural forces that created the ghetto cannot be ignored.

I find fault with the broad stroke of generalizations that paint the inner city. The literature describes places that have been void of social, economic and human capital as a result of the absence of White persons and higher earning Blacks. This is not true. It seems as if there is absolutely no virtue left within the inner city and that positive traits correlate with middle and upper-income persons. What about the low-income that possess the same characteristics associated with higher income groups? High-income groups may also have some of the same negative patterns that the researchers attribute to the urban underclass. Neither income nor residence is a sole determinant of success. Blacks of all economic backgrounds have contributed to the social and economic infrastructure of inner cities. More emphasis should be given to the removal of financial capital from the city, rather than the absence of White persons. Also, the type of job a person has does not make them more of a contributing member of society than another. The fact that one earns less money, lives in public housing, or perhaps has a child out of wedlock, does not mean that they exhibit lower morals. There is no consideration as to why this may have occurred. They also ignore that there are residents within the community who manage to succeed beyond societal pressures.

Furthermore, the culture of poverty demonizes and categorizes all residents of such communities as having some social malady and completely ignores the diverse populations that dwell in these areas whether because of choice or circumstances. The theorists fail to give equal weight to the strength that comes from group cohesion and the inner-group disparities within said residential communities. There are differences within each economic grouping. No one blanket description can ever fully describe the complexities of each family and individual.

Moreover, equal consideration should be given to the role of higher-class non-White residents who choose to remain within the inner city and the stabilizing force that they play. Trotter (1993) agrees and discusses the Black middle-class that provide both stability and leadership. For many of those who choose to remain in the inner-city, they do so because of a sense of community and the feeling of pride they get from being a part of a place where they are at home. I am thankful for Young's (2002) recognition that some people choose to remain within inner cities because of cultural allegiance and wanting to live in a place where they are understood. She also states that their continued presence helps stabilize the community. From her viewpoint, we see that the inner city is not all bad and that there is a rich history of community.

I would be remiss not to mention that Wilson (1987) does discuss the different segments of the minority community that lived in the inner city from the 1940s to the 1960s. The problem, however, is that he describes middle-class involvement in the past tense. He shares that inner city communities once maintained strong social organization (i.e., sense of community, positive view of the neighborhood, and an intolerance for deviant conduct). Later in this dissertation when I present the stories of the women, I argue that

these things still exist. These same women also attest to the role of community-based organizations that were created in response to social isolation during times of residential segregation. These organizations were run by people of color and provided an avenue for role modeling and the proliferation of norms. Results shared by Muniz (1998), which I'll discuss later in this chapter, demonstrate that social organization does exist in urban enclaves and that low-income persons rely upon one another for support.

Young's (2002) discussion on how residential segregation impedes upon political participation bears weight. She mentions the role of Congressional districts in isolating communities. However, places like Harlem have a strong history of political involvement in years past because of group solidarity. From these environments, political representatives who can identify with the residents emerge and there is greater political cohesion. In an atmosphere where residential segregation decreases, the political weight of a cultural group weakens as there is no sole community representative. There are now multiple voices fighting for influence. Historically, in the case of minority groups, political blocs are proven most effective in electing minority candidates. There is always power in numbers, and there are some benefits to living in a homogenous community.

To answer the question, is there anything good left in the hood? Yes, there is plenty. There are hard-working members of society. The same quality of people who live in better off areas live in the hood as well—mothers, fathers, teachers, municipal employees, children, college students, and business owners. The inner-city is not comprised entirely of people who exhibit the worse social ills. There is a lot of good in the hood. However, what is needed is targeted economic, residential and social investment. And still, I wonder if this is adequate. Would the life chances of residents who have lived in impoverished

areas improve if you bring the resources to them? Would they make different choices; would their lives change? I discuss this next.

2.2 COMBATING NEIGHBORHOOD EFFECTS THROUGH SOCIAL MIX

Despite my criticisms of culturally based theories as an explanation of the perpetuation of the ghetto, I recognize that inner-city communities do not have the same resources as other communities. This reality has the potential to hamper the life opportunities of those who grow up in such an environment and produces residential inequality. In this section, I wonder if the inequities discussed can be addressed through the reversal of residential segregation, known as diversification or social mix. I also insert gentrification into the conversation and question whether this process of neighborhood change can make a difference for the community. Perhaps gentrification is what we have been waiting for all along. But, is it that simple? Now that the damage of disinvestment is done, can you, in fact, minimize the effects of years of poverty concentration by giving residents new neighbors, sprucing up the area, and bringing businesses and money back? I proceed here to discuss this phenomenon by exploring its claims. I then lend my voice to the literature by answering the question, “Is social mix and gentrification the answer to residential segregation?”

Social mixing has long been treated as a way to combat the adverse effects of concentrated poverty and social isolation. The impact of one’s neighborhood on an individual’s level of socialization is recognized greatly in Europe, especially in British housing policy (Atkinson and Kintrea 2002). Known as social-mix or tenure diversification (Wood 2002) in Europe and mixed income communities or poverty deconcentration in the US (Galster 2010), social-mix theory suggests that a socially diverse population is beneficial for a neighborhood and the individual (Musterd and Andersson 2005). Joseph, Chaskin and Webber (2007) posit that there are two primary reasons as to

why public policy makers pursue mixed-income development as a method to alleviate urban poverty and as a strategy for urban redevelopment. "In this (the second line of thinking) mixed-income development is less about poverty alleviation and much more about an approach to inner-city redevelopment that is economically lucrative and politically viable" (Joseph et. al 2007: 370). The first rationale, on which we will now focus, aims to counteract the adverse effects of concentrated poverty and promote upward mobility.

Social mix is thought to prevent or decrease societal problems such as poverty and unemployment, or at least their concentration, and to avoid the stigmatization of residents who live in a particular neighborhood. This theory is based on the premise that space and people have a deterministic effect on those who live in a particular area. Hence, the perspective of social mix was adopted in various government programs (Galster 2010).

Social mix appears even more positive when scholars, politicians, and journalists talk negatively about segregation—a mixed, socially diverse community is invariably pitched as the desegregating solution to lives that are lived in parallel or in isolation along income, class, ethnic and tenure fault lines. (Gary Bridge, et al. 2012)

Wood (2002: 5) summarizes the reasoning for tenure diversification in the United Kingdom, it “promotes more social interaction and social cohesion; encourages mainstream norms and values; creates social capital; opens up job opportunities; overcomes place-based stigma; attracts additional services to the neighbourhood; leads to sustainability of renewal/regeneration initiatives.” In their literature review, Joseph et. al (2007) gave four propositions on the goals of mixed-income development: social networks, social control, behavioral argument, and political economy of place. The social networks argument assumes that social interaction among people from more affluent backgrounds can connect the less fortunate to better opportunities (i.e., resources, information, and

employment). The behavioral argument, as the name implies, believes that higher-income residents will serve as role models and influence the behavior of the less fortunate. And lastly, political economy of place states that with the presence of higher-income residents come businesses, investments, improved services, residential development, and increased neighborhood marketability.

The Social Development Model (Adamson et. al. 2004) combines three of the abovementioned arguments, except for political economy of place, and explains why these types of interventions should work. A central theme of the model is that the development of pro- and anti-social behavior is impacted by our social interactions (Adamson et. al. 2004). From an ecological standpoint, it is not just the presence of affluent neighbors that makes a difference, but the relationships between them that make a difference in the lives of youth (Bronfenbrenner 1979). Without these relationships, the achievement of particular ends would not be possible. James Coleman (1988) illustrates three forms of social capital that result in trust, obligations and expectations, access to information, and the effective sanctioning of norms.

Swisher and Whitlock (2004) discuss two forms of neighborhood relationships that build upon the social capital model proposed by Coleman (1988)—bonding ties and bridging ties, and the importance of distinguishing the norms, expectations, and information embedded within them. Within relationships, actors bond ties that allow them to borrow resources and seek support in times of trouble. Bridging ties, making contacts with those you may not typically come in contact with, results in information exchange (i.e., networking). Additionally, research conducted by Sampson and colleagues (Swisher and Whitlock 2004: 225) shows that neighborhoods where adults were willing to watch out

for one another's kids and intervene when necessary were found to have lower levels of delinquency, crime, and violence than do other neighborhoods.

Research conducted by Elliott (1999) suggests that less educated workers who live in poor neighborhoods are twice as likely to find employment through neighbors because their social network is more local. This is opposite for those who live in wealthy areas because their social network is broader. Social networks of the low-income are more localized than higher-income groups (Joseph et al. 2007). Given this mindset, socioeconomic diversity at the neighborhood level would mean greater access to information for the one lacking the social networks.

The logic would be that the housing mix that is created will provide more social mix and subsequently also better conditions for positive socialization; it will also reduce the stigmatization and the risk for individual poor inhabitants to become excluded from the environment. (Musterd and Andersson 2005: 764)

Despite the claims of social mix and the benefits of social capital, several studies indicate that interactions among members of different economic groups are quite limited and in some instances non-existent. This is true even for those within the same neighborhood (Galster 2010). A key to social capital is relationship building (Joseph, et al. 2007). Hence a lack of interaction greatly hinders any personal benefit that can be derived from social mixing.

In a study (Kleit 2005) where there appeared to be interaction among neighbors in a HOPE VI redevelopment in Seattle with owner and renter units, public-housing tenants had fewer associations with homeowners than tax-credit tenants and other homeowners. From this, we can assume that increased interaction is correlated to similarities such as housing history and basic commonalities. Interaction must be promoted through planned activities if to be successful (Joseph, et al. 2007). Patillo (2007) and Tach (2009) found

that interactions among residents of differing economic backgrounds increased over time as the higher income residents felt more comfortable in the neighborhood and began participating in community events.

However, stronger evidence exists asserting that social mix leads to greater levels of social organization in a community. In a mixed-income community, there is an increase in higher income individuals, homeowners, and residential stability, which means that more residents will participate locally in organizations and exhibit greater or more organized efforts in curbing psycho-social issues (Joseph et al. 2007). This is not to say that lower-income groups do not police their neighborhoods, but that social control exists at a greater level in mixed-income developments. The evidence, however, is mixed as to whether such diversity leads to greater social control. In the Buron et. al (2002) study of the eight HOPE VI sites, they found no variance in the level of social control among public housing residents, housing choice voucher tenants, and unsubsidized apartments. As it relates to the property and its upkeep, the ability to deter activity such as graffiti was more of a function of management and not the residents.

Others (Michelson 1976 and Bandura 1977) assert that mixed-income developments have the potential to create environments where role modeling occurs and those from higher socio-economic backgrounds can have a positive influence on those from lower socio-economic backgrounds through observations and interactions. However, for this to happen, the person modeled must be perceived as successful educationally, occupationally, and socially (Bandura 1977).

As we conceive it, in some cases, a change of behavior from the influence of others may happen through what we call distal role modeling [a person is a role model based upon what the observer perceives, it is not based upon relationship]; that is, observing the actions of others over time, such as a neighbor going to work every day, or a neighbor's

kids attending school on a regular basis. The argument here is that simply being in an environment where others are acting a particular way may provide motivation to adapt one's behavior. (Joseph, et al. 2007: 390)

Today, the primary method whereby communities are diversified socially and economically is through gentrification (Young 2002; Lees, Slater and Wyly 2008; Sampson 2012). “Gentrification—the transformation of a working-class or vacant area of the central city into middle-class residential and/or commercial use—is without a doubt one of the more popular topics of urban inquiry” (Lees, Slater and Wyly 2008: xv). The gentrification of places in New York, such as the Lower East Side, Park Slope, Brooklyn, and more recently Harlem have helped the rebirth, in many respects, of communities such as those referenced by Wilson (1987/1996). Contemporary gentrification is marked by the racial and economic differences between new and current residents, and the simultaneous existence of the old and new neighborhood.

Young (2002) discusses mixed-income communities as a public policy response to exclusion. Its adoption recognizes income diversification as a way of leveraging market support for a secure, better quality, and a well-maintained living environment. When located near job centers, mixed-income neighborhoods are viewed as a way to promote smart growth, reducing sprawl and traffic congestion. But the effectiveness of such initiatives is controversial since new development and the influx of new groups often leads to displacement. Furthermore, as previously discussed, mixing does not often result in the creation of social and cultural links between individuals of different economic backgrounds, but it often results in the creation of community enclaves and the eventual displacement of those who are unable to afford the new neighborhood (Madanipour 2011).

A question that is asked by critics of gentrification is “does neighborhood economic development mean driving out the poor and encouraging the presence of a new population or does it mean improving the life circumstances of the residents” (Taub et al., 1984: 497)? Damaris Rose (2004) discusses gentrification in the guise of social mix. First, an increase of homeowners will result in an increase in property tax revenue. Simply put, the property tax received from an occupied unit far surpasses that which is received from a government subsidized or vacant property. Secondly, in the globally competitive era, cities seek to market themselves as places where there is a blend of cultures, incomes, and lifestyles. And third, socio-spatial inequalities are reduced with the promotion of infill development and similar programs. Municipalities feel safe promoting social diversification and neighborhood renewal and can refute the arguments of critics by stressing the positive results of such community transformation. Quoting Lees, Slater and Wyly (2008), “gentrification and social mixing is at the leading edge of neoliberal urban policy around the world.” Mixed-income neighborhoods are one viable solution to the state of crumbling inner cities and government officials see gentrifying neighborhoods as a way to deconcentrate poverty.

Gentrification, unlike theoretical social mixing, does not promise that the social capital of current residents will improve due to the new residents; it focuses instead on financial capital. The processes in place pave the way for the wholesale rebuilding of communities and eventual replacement of its residents (Neil Smith 1996: 27). Lupton (2003: 5) states that neighborhoods are “being constantly re-created as the people who live in them simultaneously consume and produce them,” and Davila (2004: 73) states that

“groups survive by controlling space and maintaining a viable and visible presence.” With places undergoing social diversification the question of ownership of place naturally arises.

SO, IS SOCIAL MIX AND GENTRIFICATION THE ANSWER?

By its name alone, the term social mix appears to be a solution to the woes of the inner city. Mixing a community socially and racially means that residents of different classes and races will now occupy the same area and live among one another. The poverty concentration that was once synonymous with the ghetto is now dispersed, and the socioeconomic demographics resemble that of the larger metropolitan area. From this perspective, socially mixed communities can be beneficial to both the neighborhood and individual level. Diversifying a community through gentrification decreases poverty concentration, removes the stigmatization of living in a poor area, attracts services and resources to the area, and may even promote social cohesion among differing racial and economic groups. I cover the components of these arguments in the following paragraphs.

The rationale for mixed-income strategies stems from the common-held view among policymakers and scholars that high concentrations of poverty in a neighborhood has the debilitating effect of perpetuating negative social behavior. By introducing new upper-income residents into a concentrated poverty area, the social mix theory suggests that interaction between the affluent and less affluent will result in the adoption of mainstream norms and behaviors. As shared in the discussion on the cultural determinants of poverty, the theory implies that there is something wrong with the low-income and that the higher-income residents have something better to offer. The thought that one group may have a positive impact on another group (the behavioral argument) is a very sensitive one. It is easy to see how such a viewpoint may be perceived as disparaging and

condescending (Rosenbaum, Stroh, and Flynn 1998). Such a concept positions one group against another—treating one as superior and the other as inferior. Role modeling also groups members of a socioeconomic class as one group, when in fact, there can be inner group disparity with members of lower income exhibiting some of the very same traits of those with higher incomes. Furthermore, those of high income also exhibit deviant social behaviors such as drug use and illegal behavior (Joseph, et al. 2007). There are additional factors in place other than hard work and determination that impact economic standing (i.e., parental background, disposable income, and school quality).

Atkinson and Kintrea (2000) found that the entrance of home-owners in social housing estates made little to no difference in the social network of renters. In mixed-income developments, some studies (Brophy and Smith 1997, Buron et. al, 2002, Hogan 1996, and Mason 1997) find there to be little interaction across income levels. Buron et. al (2002) also found that to be true across eight HOPE VI sites. While residents of varying economic backgrounds may have engaged in friendly greetings with one another, there was little to no reporting of interaction beyond formalities. In a scattered site public housing development, Hogan (1996) found that public and non-public housing residents did not socialize with one another. Ostendorf, Musterd and De Vos (2001) found that in Dutch policies of tenure mixing, there were little to no results on actually mixing the population; people continued to reside and interact amongst themselves. Other researchers (Katherine Newman 1999, Monique Taylor 2002, and John Jackson Jr. 2001) indicate that mixed-income strategies do not necessarily serve to improve the levels of social capital amongst its least advantaged residents. Low-income and middle-income residents within ghetto communities live together with minimal interaction. While both groups are aware of one

another's existence, symbolically they live on different plains. Status differences, rather than class distinctions, are highly evident in the African-American community even more so for that of their White counterparts (Jackson Jr. 2001: 63) with status being more subjective and individualized.

Black middle-class persons have lived in Harlem for decades but primarily in different sections of the city (i.e., Hamilton Heights). I agree with Brophy and Smith 1997, Buron et. al 2002, Hogan 1996, Mason 1997, Ostendorf, Musterd, and De Vos 2001, Katherine Newman 1999, Monique Taylor 2002, and John Jackson Jr. 2001 and their assessment that mixed-income neighborhoods do not improve the state of lower income groups, but instead create and reinforce cultural enclaves. Although the community appears diverse externally, groups solidify their neighborhood stake through homogenous associations. These cultural enclaves are the outcome of social mix and are the antithesis of its claim.

Also, I am not convinced that social mix advances job opportunities, generates social capital or encourages the adoption of mainstream values. If there is no increase in interaction among differing groups, I highly doubt that there can be an increase in job opportunities. How would the group with a history of social isolation benefit from the contacts of a higher income person without forming some semblance of relationship? Although Swisher and Whitlock (2004) discuss two types of neighborhood relationships that build upon the social capital model as proposed by Coleman (1988), I am not convinced that social mix creates social capital. The fact that social capital already exists in the inner city leads me to that conclusion. Social mix enhances social capital; it does not create it. Social capital, as seen in local schools, churches, civic organizations, local

government, and social clubs already exists. These institutions are located throughout and are the stabilizing element of the community. Where the racial diversification of a community may hold its merit is in social cohesion. By tearing down residential barriers, people of different backgrounds are forced to coexist. They may not develop relationships or join the same organizations, but they must learn to live alongside one another. Without this residential diversification, stereotypes continue and the opportunity for intragroup interactions diminish. This is particularly true for a person who does not have friendly or business relations with members of different races through school or the workplace. Tensions and differences may arise, but the opening up of the community can further the understanding of other races that a person may not otherwise encounter. The stigmatization associated with living in a poor neighborhood also decreases when public opinion changes and the area is no longer seen as impoverished, but as burgeoning.

It is also argued that through social mixing “the presence of higher income residents will create new market demand and effective political pressure that will lead to higher-quality goods and services for all residents” (Levy, McDade, and Dumlao 2010: 8). The reality that inner city communities experience improvements due to the presence of higher income groups poses its troubles. The community now receives quality services and amenities as a result of the added presence of newcomers, but not because the area is a product of disinvestment and the long-time residents needed it. It appears that the political economy of place is correct, but the implications are profound. Yes, change is needed, but should change arrive just because higher income people now live there? Are not the requests of lifelong residents for greater social control, policing, and access to shops and banks just as valuable as those of the new? Social mix “responds explicitly to the social

organizational and cultural explanations of poverty but does not address macrostructural factors such as changes in the U.S. economy and structural discrimination” (Joseph, et al. 2007: 376).

In the context of gentrification, the unfortunate result is the gradual unaffordability and eventual displacement of some residents as the neighborhood becomes more and more expensive. With this in mind, are the potential benefits of social mix worth the possibilities of gradual displacement of the poor? The impacts that higher income persons have on what was once known as an affordable place cannot be ignored. What is the consequence of recreating space? What does it mean to an existing resident when change comes to their community? What happens when the community that has always been one way, is now changed? How does that impact their sense of being and belonging? If the social networks of the low-income are more localized than higher-income groups (Joseph et al. 2007), then a change in neighbors has a greater impact on them. The diversifying of neighbors can potentially destroy vibrant social networks that were formed out of necessity. What happens then? How are these same residents affected when the racial and social composition of their neighborhood changes? Is their cultural expression hampered? Do they feel like this is still their neighborhood? The answers to these questions will unfold in the research.

In this manuscript, I have tried to focus on the human element that often goes overlooked in the discourse on residential segregation, culture of poverty, and social mix. In the next section, I go even further, and I review the literature on the meaning of place to low-income single mothers, and I frame the discussion on the impact of neighborhood change around their experience.

2.3 WOMEN AND THEIR EXPERIENCE WITH NEIGHBORHOOD CHANGE

Still less studied are the lived experiences of social mix by the various parties when middle-class settlement takes place in sudden and ‘in your face’ ways through infill or conversion of non-residential buildings within the existing fabric of low-income and working-class neighborhoods, rather than through incremental occupancy changes in the existing stock. (Rose 2004: 285)

This dissertation focuses primarily on women and single mothers in particular. The connection between the experience of single-mothers and the changing urban environment is worthy of exploration because the majority of female-headed households are impoverished (Joan Entmacher 2014). Single mothers are one of the most vulnerable groups as they have fewer economic resources, are more likely to be the head of single-parent households with only one income, and much of the poverty in inner city neighborhoods is correlated to the prevalence of female-headed households (Wilson 1996, Mason 2013). A large proportion of those residing in America’s gentrified cities is women and subordinate groups of various ethnic and racial backgrounds. These are the groups that can provide a first-hand account of the effects of gentrification (Allen 2008). For instance, in New York City, single mothers head one in five households with children under the age of 18. Of these single mothers, half earn less than \$25,000 annually, which is just one-third of the median family income of \$77,749 (Mason 2013: 25). In New York City where the cost of living is so high, they have to rely on family support and public assistance. Close to 40 percent of these households live in poverty (Mason 2013: 26).

Data from the US Department of Labor further substantiates the vulnerability of single mothers. Of the working poor households, 49 percent are headed by single women, and those living in such a family live at 150 percent below the federal poverty level (Mason 2013: 25). Despite high rates of labor participation, primarily in the retail and service

sectors which offer low wages, these women are twice as likely to experience unemployment (Mason 2013: 26). In New York City, Black and Latino women make up the largest proportion of women heading households with children under 18 years old (Mason 2013: 25), and these two groups have the highest unemployment rates. In this section, I begin to discuss how women in particular experience neighborhood change and I cover the rationale behind the need for a greater look at the residential experience. I review the literature that analyzes the meaning of neighborhood for women, and I conclude by addressing the complexities of “What Happens When Place Changes or Is Taken Away?”

“People create place and place gives meaning and direction to their lives” (Muniz 1998). In her participatory research project, “Makes Me Mad: Stereotypes of Young Urban Womyn of Color,” Caitlin Cahill (2005) engaged six working-class young women in investigating “the relationship between the disinvestment and gentrification of their community, public representations, and their self-understanding” (Cahill 2006: 334). Trained in social research methods as a part of the project, the women aged 16-22, uncovered how community disinvestment impacted their image of self, stereotyping, and well-being. Furthermore, Cahill’s research localized the problem of globalization by bringing the stories of the young women to light. The women referred to gentrification as something they had survived, pointing to the degree in which the process affected residents politically, economically, socially, and personally. They highlighted the block by block stark visibility of inequality and discussed gentrification as something that had betrayed them. It was as if the community that once provided for them was now against them. While

the community is improved for the newcomers, the presence of upper-class residents seemed to intensify the plight of those who have lived there most of their lives.

For some reason, I liked it better when no one knew our neighborhood. Now that people are trying to make a name for us we have to live up to the grittiness of the ghetto life on one side and the glamor of the club, café and boutique life on the other side. (Cahill 2007: 203)

It is evident in Cahill's research that gentrification is not just about increasing real estate values, but there is an emotional effect held by residents, an effect that should be considered seriously. This same loss of community is also seen in Miranda J. Martinez (2010) in Power at the Roots as she uncovers residential struggle with change on the Lower East Side. From a resident's perspective, the loss of place and the loss of social networks are damaging to a community. In her research, Puerto Ricans saw the arrival of more affluent Whites into their neighborhoods and their participation or lack thereof in community gardens as a sign that change was forced upon them. The gentrifiers are viewed as an alien group of sorts that had come to take over their land without giving consideration to the fact that they were there first. Also, the increase of newcomers was associated with a decrease in community gardens. What was once a public gathering space where residents could congregate with neighbors and have cultural celebrations was seen eventually as a nuisance, an eyesore in an emerging neighborhood.

Cahill's study also reveals a dualism in perspectives among residents. The young women enjoy the new establishments and trendy places in the Lower East Side, but they know that their enjoyment comes at an expense that will ultimately result in their inability to remain in the neighborhood that they love. "Resentment and alienation, rather than integration, may be the outcome" (Madanipour 2011: 491). These benefits are easily perceivable, but many resent that these advantages only came about because of the

existence of well-off Whites (Martinez 2010). Weren't these gentrifying neighborhoods in need of capital, real estate development, and main street revitalization previously? This delay in action on the part of the government and private developers emphasizes the lack of political and economic clout held by community residents.

In a unique way, Cahill's participatory action research project brings to light how one group of young women of color interprets neighborhood change. As explained by Michael Southworth and Deni Ruggeri (2011: 497), "what a place means to people is a deeper level of identity. Meaning or significance may result from personal experiences with a place: the market where we shop every Saturday, or the neighborhood where we grew up." In a gentrified neighborhood, community landmarks may not have any value to new residents, but for the old residents, every building and space are associated with memories of events and people. If place-identity holds any merit, then the removal of the buildings where these women grew up, the beauty salons that they frequented, and the places they ate have a significant impact on their identity and how they perceive the world around them and their role in it. Place-identity is therefore linked to social identity (Proshansky et al. 1983). "What exists is a dialectical relationship between people and space; people create place and place gives meaning and direction to their lives" (Muniz 1998: 5).

Vicky Muniz (1998) conducted a case study in which she researched the housing and neighborhood experiences of Puerto Rican women in New York City between 1984 and 1991. These women resided in the Sunset Park section of Brooklyn, a working-class multi-ethnic neighborhood where Puerto Ricans accounted for half of the population. In the wake of gentrification, her research uncovered the meaning that Sunset Park held for

these women. Neighborhood residents treated Sunset Park as a place that was created specifically for them in the wake of discrimination and oppression when they could not live in other neighborhoods. Sunset Park, in essence, became a place where they could express and preserve their cultural identity.

Logan and Molotch (1987: 3) hypothesize that places represent special use values and that there is a certain "preciousness" to their users (Molotch 1987: 17) which causes the development of sentimental attachment (Molotch 1987: 20). The concept of neighborhood is multifaceted and includes the place and people who live within it and the interaction that people have with the place (Lupton 2003). "Neighborhood is contrasted to community in that it is a 'spatial construction in which residents share proximity and the circumstances that come with it'" (Levy, McDade, and Dumlao 2010: 6). George C. Galster (2001) contends that neighborhoods are both physical and social spaces. He refers to a "bundle of spatially-based attributes" (Galster 2012) that includes "structural, infrastructural, demographic, class status, tax/public service package, environmental, proximity, political, social-interactive and sentimental characteristics" (Galster 2001). All of these attributes are spatially situated, and all are dependent upon the interaction of people and the place.

As Galster (2001) surmises, the type of neighborhood depends on the attributes that are present. Instead of viewing neighborhood as place and people, others like Doreen Massey (1994) see neighborhoods as a complexity of social networks and Glennerster et al. (1999) see them as layers of interaction. Because interaction varies with each person, so does one's interpretation of neighborhood (Lupton 2003). The perception of outside forces also has an impact on those who reside there (Lupton 2003). External perception of

an area reinforces groupings and consolidates reputations (Forrest and Kearns 2001). They attest that,

The neighbourhood in which we live can play an important part in socialisation, not only through its internal composition and dynamics but also according to how it is seen by residents in other neighbourhoods and by the institutions and agencies which play a key role in opportunity structures. Thus, the identity and contextual roles of the neighbourhood are closely linked to one another. (Forrest and Kearns 2001: 2134)

As it relates to women, social networks and familiar places are even more significant to women deprived of economic resources. For Puerto Rican households, the apartment is typically in the women's name (Muniz 1998) and the woman is responsible for everything that pertains to housing, regardless if a man is present. Furthermore, low-income women, especially those receiving public assistance, were charged higher rents because landlords viewed such individuals as risky. But because these women were not able to find apartments elsewhere, in some cases they were trapped into deplorable housing conditions. Many doubled up with extended families and friends to decrease housing costs and relied on one another for childcare. Both of these became means of income for some, as many would rent out rooms and worked off the books as childcare providers and launderers. Other low-income women relied on the neighborhood bodega to provide affordable groceries and would often purchase items on credit. The neighborhood supermarket, local businesses, and community salons also offered off-the-book labor. The gentrification of said places upsets these possibilities and changes the opportunities available to these low-income Puerto Rican women. Mark Davidson (2008) refers to these changes as neighborhood resource development. As such, a retelling of individual experiences with gentrification is important and necessary.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN PLACE CHANGES OR IS TAKEN AWAY?

The impacts of gentrification go beyond one's residence, but it touches upon matters of being, belonging, and meaning. What is uncovered by Cahill (2005, 2006, 2007), Muniz (1998), and Martinez (2010) lets me know that place is deeper than bricks and mortar, concrete, and steel. It consists of relationships, experiences, memories, and connections to one's area. As I wed this section to the ones discussed previously, additional questions arise. What about the human experience with neighborhood change?

From the literature presented, we see that the psychosocial effects of living in an area with rampant crime, dirty blocks, failing schools, crumbling buildings, vacant lots, drug abuse, second-rate stores, and high crime helped breed cynicism and skepticism toward the government and left residents feeling that the government did not care about them. The very government to whom they paid taxes sanctioned redlining and failed to invest resources in their backyard. I believe that the implications would be less if the residents did not know that there was a difference between their neighborhood and others, but they know. They experience it every time they leave their area to go to work or to shop and come home again.

The research on residential segregation should not just talk about the creation of the ghetto; it should include how people internally interpret public and private oversight. They knew that their schools, stores, and banks were inferior to neighboring communities. That coupled with the country's systemic racist and discriminatory practices made them well aware that their area was unequal. Companies did not want to be there, Whites did not want to live there, and their homes afflicted fear in the minds of those who lived elsewhere. And still, Blacks and Hispanics managed to create places where their culture was

welcomed, embraced, celebrated, and honored in a world where theirs is not dominant and not always accepted. Relationships among neighbors were forged, social networks developed, and communities were able to thrive despite such pressures. If the theory on women's greater connectedness to place is correct, then women have more to lose.

With this in mind, my views on the impact of gentrification reach beyond the physical displacement of people and include an interruption in the way of life and a radical incremental transformation. What does it mean to those who have placed down roots and those roots are being gradually uprooted without their input or without power to re-root? Development has come not because those who held on to the community asked for it but because the area is appealing to a new set of people and developers find it profitable to attract and retain new residents. The unfortunate reality is that although a break up in poverty was needed, the majority of people who benefit from the improvements are the new residents, not the old. This complex dichotomy makes it hard to give a blanket statement of approval or condemnation. The change is welcomed and warranted on one end and an intrusion on the next.

These contradictions led me on this research journey and prompted me to take a close look at Central Harlem and the experience of single mothers. Furthermore, the accounts retold in the literature make me wonder whether the agencies that promulgated economic and community development ever considered what would occur once the inner city was uncovered and its assets were explored. There is no signature voice that can answer those questions; everyone interprets change differently. The more that residential stories are told, the more we will know about the various effects of gentrification.

2.4 WHAT DOES IT ALL ADD UP TO?

In this chapter, “Concentrated Poverty, the Neighborhood, Gentrification, and Their Effects,” I weaved together the various sources of literature that helped shape my understanding of the present-day neighborhood change taking place in Central Harlem, New York City. I discussed the creation of the ghetto and the various forces that have shaped its existence. I detailed how residential segregation and poverty concentration contribute to intergroup disparities: diminishing human capital, inferior employment opportunities, and poor infrastructure that discouraged business and capital investment. I challenged the cultural arguments which blame the victim for the perpetuation of poverty, and I shifted the focus to the structural forces at play.

Next, I looked at battling the effects of residential segregation by breaking up poverty, introducing new residents, and bringing investments back into the community. The interactions of residents from different backgrounds is believed to have the impact of influencing members of the lower class for the better (Bronfenbrenner 1979, Coleman 1988, Swisher and Whitlock 2004, Musterd and Andersson 2005). I questioned whether any of those changes have an effect on the existing residents, if their lives are changed, and if they developed any relationships with the new residents. Next, I transitioned and introduced the very heart of this research, which is to explore gentrification on the ground. I included theories that discuss the meaning of neighborhood, the power of place, and the connectedness of women to their communities.

Significant to this discussion is not just the physical neighborhood change, population shift, and social mix, but what these changes mean to the ones who lived in the neighborhood before its redevelopment. Rose (2004) and Freeman (2008) mention the

importance of researching the lived experiences of such individuals. While the majority of research on single mothers and poverty is done in the guise of welfare and material hardship, I am interested in hearing this group's voice as it pertains to their experience in a changing metropolis. Additionally, the theory concerning economy of place and exchange vs. use value makes me wonder how the power brokers perceive the changes they are fostering. This study aims to contribute to the discourse.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to gain an on the ground understanding of how community change in Central Harlem, NYC is taking place, the factors behind that change, and how it has impacted one of its most vulnerable populations—working class single mothers. Supporters of gentrification seek to alleviate the societal consequences of poverty concentration by diversifying communities. However, not much evidence exists as to whether encouraging middle-class in flux, improved services, business attraction, and residential rehabilitation serve to improve the state of the in-place working-class residents of poverty concentrated neighborhoods. Research implies that said groups are either displaced due to the unaffordability of areas experiencing higher levels of blight or they continue to reside in their existing neighborhoods perpetuating cycles of poverty. But, what about the experiences of the working class residents that remain? What does neighborhood change mean to the working class single mother? What role do community leaders play in bringing about that neighborhood change?

In this chapter, I share how I conducted the research for this dissertation, and I discuss the approach to data analysis. Included is a discussion on why I selected certain methodologies versus others, my motivation, and how I selected my sample. I then proceed to discuss previously held assumptions and what information I hoped to glean from my sample. At the end of this chapter, I explore issues of trustworthiness, ethical consideration, and limitations of the study. Finally, I conclude with a chapter summary.

RATIONALE FOR RESEARCH APPROACH

A study that focuses on the lived experience of single mothers in Central Harlem, a community experiencing advanced gentrification, this dissertation employs qualitative methods. Inspired by the strategy used in Making Ends Meet (Edin and Lein 1997), this research includes interviews with single mothers and community leaders, along with document analysis. The rationale for doing a qualitative study is as follows: by coding the social world into operational variables, researchers in such a study destroy valuable data by imposing their worldviews on the subjects. A qualitative study, on the other hand, allows the researcher to understand the human experience by hearing the subject's thoughts, feelings, beliefs, values, and assumptions. A close look at the experiences of working-class single mothers will help us understand how "global processes take shape on the ground" (Cahill 2007: 203) and give us a better understanding of how it feels to experience cultural and physical change. I also interviewed community leaders who were able to provide a historical perspective of community change. According to Lewis Anthony Dexter (1970), elite interviews vary in that the focus is on the specialized knowledge that the interviewee possesses, rather than their personal experiences.

Monique Taylor (2002) conducted interviews for these very same reasons in her prolific research on Harlem, where she explored the inner workings of daily experiences with race among Harlem residents. Katherine S. Newman (1999) and her team of researchers interviewed and surveyed over 300 individuals lending to the literature on low-wage work and employment prospects for blue-collar workers in Harlem. Kathryn Edin (1997), mentioned above, interviewed 50 welfare recipients when studying material hardship and its connection to the changes in welfare legislation. Damaris Rose (2004)

conducted 50 semi-structured interviews with condominium owners as she explored residential experiences with neighborhood-scale social mix. And additionally, Richard E. Ocejo (2011) conducted 26 in-depth, semi-structured interviews with early gentrifiers and life-long residents of the Lower East Side in his quest to get at their lived experience with gentrification.

The purpose of the interviews is to have subjects reflect upon the demographic, social, economic, and physical changes that have taken place in Harlem. It also allows them to discuss in detail how those changes have impacted them both positively and negatively. With the continued renovation of buildings, the influx of new residents, and progressive neighborhood transformations, any such discussion is relevant and easy to stimulate thoughts and conversation. Interviews allowed me to trace the development of gentrification as perceived by community residents. I was particularly interested in hearing their accounts of events, how they interpret the changes around them and the ways in which they respond to those changes. In-depth interviews with multiple women residing in various neighborhoods within Central Harlem and community leaders allowed me to triangulate findings across sources, test issues of reliability and validity, and aided in convergence among theories and observations.

My research also included informal participation in the community. By attending community events, building openings and community board meetings, eating at local restaurants, visiting cafés, going to the movie theater and walking the streets of Harlem, I was able to get a feel for what it's like to live in a changing neighborhood. At these venues, I met some individuals whom I engaged in conversations around the topic of neighborhood change in Harlem. Through these encounters, I heard impromptu stories and was able to

see visual change occurring before me. Most of the people I met I would have never found had I relied solely on snow-ball sampling from the women who were introduced. The chats and impromptu conversations provided essential data that became part of my tacit knowledge, making "it easier for me to understand the codifiable, recorded data" from my interviews "and to prepare tools, such as a field notes sheet to facilitate more effective" sessions during formal interviewing (Kelder 2005).

I also conducted document analysis on Community Board 10 Housing Committee, Land Use and Landmarks Committee, and the Economic Development Committee meeting minutes for calendar years 2013 and 2014. The community boards of New York City are the appointed advisory groups from various districts in each of the five boroughs of New York City.

Manhattan Community Board 10 is the most local form of government representing Central Harlem. The purpose of the Community Board is to ensure that city services are accessible and responsive to residents, organizations, businesses, and institutions of Central Harlem. By hosting regular meetings open to the public, Community Board 10 acts as a conduit for communicating events, addressing local concerns, and processing municipal applications of various sorts. The Community Board also plays an important advisory role in planning, land use, zoning, and the City budget. (Idealist 2016)

The meeting minutes of the Housing Committee gave me an on the ground perspective of developments in Harlem as they were occurring, and helped me decide which questions to ask during the interviews.

POPULATION SELECTION

This dissertation explores neighborhood change in Central Harlem, one of three neighborhoods in Harlem. Sectioned into three areas, Harlem is known as East, Central, and West Harlem. East Harlem is also known as El Barrio, signifying its Hispanic influence and West Harlem is known for its middle-class dominance—much of it due to it

being the home of Columbia University. Central Harlem has a predominantly African-American population and stretches from 110th Street to the Harlem River and 5th Avenue to St. Nicholas Avenue, and it is in Manhattan Community District 10.

I selected Central Harlem as a target neighborhood primarily due to four reasons: 1) it is an area that I am personally interested in, 2) exhibits visible markers of gentrification, 3) has a high concentration of poverty, and 4) has a high rate of female householders. Any census tract with a poverty rate of over 40 percent has concentrated poverty (Jargowsky 1997). Lance Freeman (2005) characterizes neighborhoods that are likely to be gentrified as those that are central city neighborhoods, have a prevalence of low-income households and a history of disinvestment. Freeman also states that those clearly identified as gentrifying exhibit an influx of middle-class and an increase in investment. Furthermore, gentrifying neighborhoods have a high volume of mortgage financing, building permits, sales, and condo and co-op conversions. The criterion justifies areas that have experienced the most change.

Over the course of my research, I frequented establishments in Harlem to remain in touch with the research at hand and to ensure that I had a good understanding of sections of Harlem referenced by the research subjects. This immersion allowed me to remain in tune with the subject matter and helped to inform my research questions. As I walked through the streets, I began to draw conclusions, and my eyes and ears helped to tell a story of its own. Hopefully, that voice is apparent in the final chapter. This level of engagement allowed me to own the data, rather than just analyzing interviews and documents without having a contextual background. I walked into residential buildings both old and new, attended shows, frequented restaurants and cafes, shopped in stores, walked the streets,

attended church service, sat in community parks, and even went to community demonstrations.

SAMPLING

Research subjects are working single mothers who have lived in Central Harlem since 2002 or earlier, and community leaders who work in Central Harlem. A single mother is a woman who was/is the primary person responsible for raising dependent children and who is widowed, divorced, or unmarried. The year 2002 is chosen as a demarcation because individuals who have lived in the community for at least ten years are more likely to have experienced real change than someone who has only moved to the area recently. These individuals are also more likely to have a history of experiences that tell a story of how that change has affected them personally. A community leader is a person who works for or leads an organization that plays a key role in the economic, cultural or residential transformation of the community. The organization must be in existence since 2002. Key role means that the agency is responsible for leading or coordinating housing and business development.

Following the strategy used by Edin (1997), I used snowball sampling instead of interviewing respondents who have no reason to trust me. I asked contacts in Central Harlem to introduce me to single mothers who live in the neighborhood and to vouch for my trustworthiness. John L. Jackson, Jr. (2001) failed to take this approach as he walked the streets of Harlem looking for informants, and as a result, he had a rather difficult time soliciting respondents. After each interview, I asked the subject if they could recommend me to someone else. This tactic was less successful with the women but worked with the organizations. I also utilized convenience sampling—a few subjects I simply met because

we were at the same place at the same time and they volunteered to participate. Lastly, because I was only interested in interviewing subjects who met specific criteria, criterion sampling was employed in both groups.

At the onset, I was interested in working-class single mothers because residents from various socioeconomic groups are likely to have different experiences. For starters, research must start somewhere. Would it be a fair assessment to just interview residents randomly? It is likely that some residents, based upon socioeconomic status, may have different experiences than others, and given the limited scope of this study, it would be nearly impossible to draw some common themes.

Following the definition of low-income used by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, low-income refers to a household whose income does not exceed 80 percent of the median family income for the area. The statutory basis for HUD's income limit policies is Section 3 of the U.S. Housing Act of 1937 (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Policy Development and Research 2016). By this definition, a low-income person cannot exceed \$42,874, which is 80 percent of the estimated 2010 New York City median family income of \$53,593 (2010 American Community Survey). This classification was determined by asking the individual if her income is greater than \$27,000 and less than \$43,000. I chose the lower limit because HUD defines very low-income families as a family whose total family income does not exceed 50 percent of the median family income for the area, which is \$26,796.

OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY

Single Mothers

When Monique Taylor (2002) conducted her research, her interview sessions ran late into the night and occurred while touring the neighborhood on foot or by car. Her interviews ranged from thirty minutes to hours at length, and she asked them to talk about specific details of their work and residential lives, reasons for moving to Harlem and the extent of their community involvement. Her interviews were tape recorded, and she also collected “old news clippings, development reports, theater programs, menus, newsletters, photos, and flyers” (Taylor 2002: xix). The length of her interviews varied from respondent to respondent, and so did the depth of topics explored. John L. Jackson, Jr. (2001) research on Harlem included ten in-depth interviews with an average duration of six hours. Jackson mentioned that the longest was 11 hours and took several sessions to complete. He also conducted thirty-one shorter thematic interviews organized around issues of race and class. On average, these lasted two hours each.

Interviews allowed me to trace the development of neighborhood improvement as perceived by the respondents. Flexibility in deciding the number of interviews was necessary because the final number and quality of interviews were based on the cooperation and availability of subjects. “Because interviews are invented anew each time, they can be wonderfully unpredictable” (Rubin and Rubin 1995). “Our advice is that the writer be sensitive to the need for change and flexibility and not rush to closure too soon” (Marshall and Rossman 1999).

Similar to Taylor’s research, my interviews explored issue areas and attempted to garner the subjects’ perception of change in Harlem, their reason for residence, interaction

with people of other classes, change in housing affordability, and perception of gentrification. A list of partially-structured interview questions was on hand to help keep the interview on track. However, it is important to note that thematic interviews are more like conversations where I explored a few general topics to help uncover the participant's views and allow the participant to frame and shape the conversation. Based upon the responses, I added questions or modified them as deemed appropriate. Questions are open-ended, and responses were recorded verbatim using a tape recorder. Interviews took place during times and in settings that were most convenient for the one agreeing to the interview. Safety, of course, was an overarching guideline for selecting a location. Each interview lasted approximately one hour. Questions focused on individual and family demographics, views on neighborhood change, understanding of gentrification, and participation/involvement in the community. The questions, not in any particular order, are listed below.

Individual & Family Demographic Questions

- What is your name? May I have your phone number in case I need to contact you in the future? What is your ethnicity? How old are you? Have you ever been legally married before? Are you married now?
- In which industry do you work? What's the name of your employer? What is your job title? How many years have you worked in that occupation/profession? What's your highest level of education? Where do you work? How long is your commute? What is your approximate personal income?
- Do you live in Central Harlem? What is your address? How many years have you lived in Central Harlem? What brought you to this neighborhood?

- How many people live in your home? Do you have any children? If so, how many and what are their ages? Are you raising your children alone? Are there any other adults living in the home? Do any of the adults contribute to the expenses of the home? Is the father involved in the life of your children? If so, in what ways?

Experience with Neighborhood Change

- If you were to describe Central Harlem to someone who doesn't know or who hasn't been here before how would you describe it? (This question is asked to get a feel of how the participant related to the neighborhood, what their attitudes were toward the study area.)
- In what ways do you think Central Harlem is different than other neighborhoods, either in New York or elsewhere? (This is asked to get a notion of how the respondent feels about Central Harlem compared with other neighborhoods. This also gives insight into how much the respondent knows about the community.)
- What changes, if any, have you seen in the neighborhood? [i.e., new businesses, construction, population change, increased tourism, etc...]
- What has been the impact of the changes in the neighborhood? (I want to find out how the changes described in the previous question impact individual residents and stakeholders, whether they think of those changes as positive, negative or a combination of both.)
- What do you think has caused neighborhood change? (Another question directly addressing my research.)

- How have the changes in the neighborhood affect you personally? (This question goes to the heart of my theoretical framework.) How would you categorize those changes: mainly positive or negative?
- What conflicts, if any, have you seen in the neighborhood because of these changes? [i.e., new business owner versus the old, housing developer versus neighborhood groups, old residents versus new, etc.]
- Are there any businesses in your neighborhood that were here when you moved in and had since left? If so, did those closures have any impact on you?
- What type of new stores are in your neighborhood? Do you frequent any of them? Which ones? Are these stores accessible and affordable to you?
- What are your thoughts when you think of the new people who have moved into your neighborhood? What type of interaction do you have with them?
- Does the new neighborhood provide the same support systems that were available to you in times past? How so?
- Who owns Harlem?
- Have you or any other single mother that you know experience economic challenges due at all to any of the neighborhood changes that have occurred? How so?
- In what ways have your social networks changed? Are your friends still in this neighborhood?
- What about housing, has your rent increased at all in the past ten years? If so, how much? Do you know the reason why it increased? Is that increase affordable to you?

Understanding of Gentrification

- Have you ever heard the word gentrification before? If so, what does that term mean to you? In your opinion is Harlem gentrified? Becoming gentrified?
- What do you believe will be the ultimate impact of the gentrification of the neighborhood?
- Do you know of anyone who had to move out of the community because of rising costs?
- What exactly caused them to move? Where did they go?
- Are there any specific ways that gentrification has impacted you as a single mother?
- Do you have any other comments? Are there any other single-mothers that you recommend I interview? (This last question is very valuable in getting contact information for further research participants.)

Community Leaders (Elites)

In contacting community-based organizations that were able to put me in contact with research subjects, it became apparent that elite interviews can be an important component of this study. “The rise of African-American political power, a deregulation of credit markets, the emergence of a CDC model of urban renewal and entrepreneurial city politics all played a role in rechanneling capital to a formerly abandoned part of New York City” (Bernt 2012: 3057). As defined by Marshall and Rossman (1999: 113) “‘elite’ individuals are those considered to be influential, prominent, and well-informed people in an organization or community; they are selected for interviews on the basis of their expertise in areas relevant to the research.” The organizations have extensive and varied

histories in the economic development of Central Harlem and the furtherance of human capital. From their perspective, they will be able to report on the history and plans for Harlem, involvement with community residents, community resistance and acceptance, and the services provided to the low-income single mothers. The individuals interviewed are well-informed on the progression of gentrification in Central Harlem and the residential experience. For anonymity, I do not include the name of the organization, while giving a pseudonym to the staff member.

I interviewed two individuals from a community development organization, a housing developer and apartment manager, a real estate broker, two community association volunteers, two leaders in a community-based organization that provides community development services, and a local politician. Each interview was conducted at a place convenient for the research subject and last approximately one hour. Questions were tailored to meet the particular function of the individual and the organization. The below questions served as a guide. However, most interviews took a life of themselves and naturally progressed:

- What is your name? May I have your phone number in case I need to contact you in the future? What is your ethnicity?
- In which industry do you work? What's the name of your employer? What is your job title? How many years have you worked in your profession?
- How long has your organization been in this community? How many employees?
- How long have you worked here?
- How long have you been in this community? Do you live in Harlem? What's your address?

- What role has your organization played in the changes that have been taking place in Harlem over the course of the past two decades? Has the community been receptive of that role?
- Have new programs been created in response to gentrification? What is your organization's overall view on the changes taking place in Harlem?
- In research, we often read about displacement and the community becoming too expensive for its existing residents. Do you find this to be true? What has your experience taught you?
- Does your organization offer services that are specific to the needs of low-income single mothers? Have you had any interaction with a low-income single mother and trying to provide services to her and her family?
- In your opinion, have any of the economic challenges that these mothers face been due at all to any of the neighborhood changes that has occurred because of gentrification? How so?
- Are you aware of individuals that have moved out of Harlem because it became unaffordable for them to remain?
- What programs do you have to help the long-term working-class residents remain in Harlem?

Manhattan Community Board 10

The Community Board 10 committee meetings are a public venue that allows attendees to get a birds' eye view of developments occurring in the community. These include housing proposals (subsidized and market rate), housing renovations/upgrades, business proposals (liquor license, sidewalk café permits, and permit renewals), building

façade changes, resident and committee complaints or support for projects, business/development commitment to community outreach, workforce development, and housing preference. I initially began attending the Economic Development Committee; however, this committee focused primarily on business and permit issues and had a weaker tie to this subject matter than the Housing Committee. Nonetheless, reviewing the minutes from the Economic Development Committee gave insight into the amount of new businesses and commercial changes in Central Harlem, including applications for new sidewalk cafés, et al.

The Housing Committee of Manhattan Community Board 10 focuses on the preservation and maintenance of affordable housing options in Central Harlem by working with various intergovernmental agencies, housing developers, and community-based organizations. While private developers also appeared before the board, it was clear that the board was concerned with the definition of affordability and whether the new developments were beneficial to current residents. Less expected was the reality that non-profit developers relied on the profitability of market rate ventures to fund affordable housing. The irony of this is unavoidable. Additional discoveries made analyzing the minutes quite fascinating. The Land Use and Landmarks Committee was of particular interest due to its commitment to identifying and preserving historic resources in the District. I group the housing and land use and landmarks committee meeting minutes together because the two committees regularly held joint meetings (Table 4.3). To keep them separate would mean that the treatment of the minutes is inconsistent. A total of 50 meeting minutes were analyzed.

For the most part, the monthly meetings were lively and engaging as residents were able to comment on proposed projects and changes to neighborhood establishments. There were, of course, meetings that did not excite much conversation, but were standard report outs and included committee business and presentations from community organizations on community resources or upcoming events. I could not record committee meetings, as per board policy, but the Board posts meeting minutes on the public website. These minutes were downloaded and imported into Atlas for analysis.

METHODS AND PROCEDURES FOR DATA ANALYSIS AND SYNTHESIS

Recording Information

Interviews were recorded using a digital tape recorder. Participant consent was obtained using an IRB-approved consent form. Recording the interviews reduced the need for taking complete field notes. It was also useful in assembling exact quotes and gathering information about things such as tone of voice and gesture, providing a more comprehensive description of events. They also contributed to reliability as they are permanent products that contribute to the audit trail. However, the presence of a recorder in a couple of interviews made participants more sensitive about what they said or did. Therefore, when appropriate, notes were taken during interviews. This determination was made based upon whether taking notes would interfere, inhibit, or influence the participant. Each interview was transcribed. I reviewed recordings for accuracy by simultaneously reading the transcription and listening to the recordings.

Validity and Reliability

1. Researcher Bias

One potential threat to validity in qualitative studies is researcher bias resulting from selective observations, selective recording of information, selective reporting of information, and allowing personal views to affect data interpretation (Corben and Strauss 1998). I employed the following strategies to enhance bias-free research—reflexivity, framing, and reframing questions so that they are neutral. By reflexivity, I purposefully included my autobiography in my dissertation to clearly identify some of the perceived notions and biases that I may have (i.e., I was raised by a single mother, and I relocated to New Jersey from Harlem after not being able to participate in the real estate boom). Additionally, by framing and reframing questions to be neutral and non-leading, I reduced question bias.

2. Descriptive, Interpretive, Theoretical, Internal and External Validity

An audit trail of all documentation and maintenance of records allows others to verify the dissertation research and is useful for interpretive validity. To ensure that I accurately represented the participant's views, I shared interpretations with the participants, clearing up any misunderstandings. I repeated their statements when necessary and asked whether I understood them accurately. Additionally, after the subject knew my background, they were inclined to make remarks such as “you know” or “you understand.” This level of familiarity in many cases was due to my race and age. So as not to compromise the data, I then clarified their response to ensure that the understanding was not based upon researcher interpretation. I had to redress the conversation continually so that the research subject did not refer to me as a girl from Harlem, but as a researcher who was interested in exploring community change. Furthermore, verbatim reporting allowed

me to portray the participants' perspective accurately. The use of multiple theories and perspectives was also used to interpret and explain data.

With these considerations in mind, it was vital that I took measures to develop empathy with interviewees, win their confidence, and for the interview questions to remain as objective as possible. Also, direct quotes from subjects are included in the write-up to help remove bias. In interviewing subjects, I was as unobtrusive as possible, in order not to impose my influence on the interviewee. I checked on apparent contradictions and asked for explanations and clarification where necessary. Throughout the discussion, I summarized occasionally, asked hypothetical questions and engaged in active listening.

Given the topic of this study, this dissertation naturally employs the use of other disciplines (sociology and anthropology) to inform the research process and to understand the findings. Furthermore, I looked for a series of results in my research that formed a pattern, adding to theoretical validity. My choice of using more than one method of data collection (partially-structured interviews among single mothers and community leaders, and document analysis) allowed me to combine different methods that have their weaknesses and strengths. The fact that I also have multiple subjects adds to data triangulation. To aid in external validity, I provided detailed information on the demographics of those people in the study, including how they were selected, the nature of the relationship between the researcher and participants, and a description of the context.

Figure 3.1: Triangulation of Methodology



3. Ethical Considerations

There are several issues to consider in this dissertation methodology. Given my gender and my extensive knowledge and history of Harlem, along with my personal story, I had to keep in mind that my opinion of community change might bias the data. I tried as much as possible to allow the respondent to lead the interview and remain neutral. I also had to keep in mind that because this project is interested in personal experiences, people are not immediately forthcoming with someone that they do not know. Snowball sampling was helpful in this regard because being referred by someone served as a point of trustworthiness. Similarly, I also kept in mind that subjects may be dishonest in their answers, resulting in false reporting. To prevent this and to develop a level of trust, I ensured those interviewed that I will use pseudonyms instead of actual names in report writing.

DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

Organizing the Data

Each subject has a unique digital folder saved on my computer, containing interview recordings and transcripts.

Classifying/Coding Data

As mentioned earlier, I began the qualitative analysis by reviewing transcripts and documents, and identifying categories as they emerge. I then organized the categories into patterns. Patterns are links among categories that further integrate the data and used as the basis for reporting. I developed a coding system by using qualitative data analysis software that allowed me to store and organize data files and text, input data from Microsoft Word, create an index system for data, search for words and phrases, and organize data by categories.

In the first stage of coding, I identified more themes than I ended up using. As I went back to the text and checked the accuracy in coding, I re-coded, merged codes, and renamed codes as I saw fit. After careful reading, I noticed that some codes were not appropriate or that I incorrectly coded in some areas. At the onset, I chose codes based upon the theory which guided this research. As I moved further into the analysis, the descriptors emerged from the data, and I developed new codes. This process of deductive and inductive analysis worked together for what I believe to be a complete set of codes.

Generating Categories, Themes, and Patterns

Much of my strategy for analysis revolved around seeking patterns in the text of my interview transcripts and archived meeting minutes. The preliminary analysis of my qualitative data involved reading and re-reading interview transcripts, field notes, and archive data. As I read through the data, several primary themes emerged from this first level of analysis. Following field work and preliminary analysis, I created a spreadsheet in Excel where I listed all respondents, demographics, a summation of viewpoints, and any key findings.

Using ATLAS.ti, the second level of analysis involved a more rigorous development of themes identified in the preliminary analysis. Each of these patterns was placed into a family as necessitated by the findings. The salient themes found in the literature review influenced the name of the families, along with natural occurring groupings. For example, I grouped all single mother specific views in a family of said name. There is no unique mapping of codes. Codes may be in more than one family. In this categorizing, I looked for “salient themes, recurring ideas or languages, and patterns of belief that link people and settings together” (Marshall and Rossman 1999). While reviewing the data, segments of text were copied and pasted into the appropriate category with the corresponding participant identifier. These categories naturally emerged from the data, making it easier for me to piece all of the data together, and aided in internal convergence and external divergence. Through ATLAS.ti, I was also able to produce counts of words and phrases, construct data diagrams, and display information about aspects of the study. Coding the interviews not only enabled me to find themes and relationships among the interviews and subject matters but also permitted me to store and retrieve quotations on any number of subjects easily. The program, however, does not help with the interpretive process. I still needed to interpret and make decisions about both the data and what to write about the data.

In analyzing my data, I looked for two things: pattern matching and theoretical saturation. These categories tell a story of change. Pattern matching compares empirically-based patterns with predicted ones – if the patterns coincide, the results can help strengthen internal validity. Because you cannot take patterns in the data at face value, I was also careful to search for alternative explanations. A careful review must challenge what seems

to be apparent with other explanations found through scrutiny. For instance, although two subjects state the same opinion on gentrification, the inability to participate in the homeownership boom influences one person's response, and the other person's response is founded on their inability to succeed in life because of family circumstances and the adoption of a “victim” mentality. I challenge these patterns by comparing them with the information gathered from the respondent during the interview.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This research has limitations in that I conduct it over the course of a short period; there is only one wave of interviews with a set number of individuals, and another wave with another group may yield different responses. Gender, income, and marital status also impact the results. There is also the possibility that I would achieve different results using different methodology and with a different sample size. The results would also be different if I were to interview different community leaders or if I chose a different timeframe.

While conducting research, it became apparent that there were other groups of people that I should interview. For instance, one person mentioned a cooperative in Harlem whose board only made housing available to fellow African-Americans and resisted attempts to integrate their cooperative with non-Blacks. As intriguing as this finding was, this study focuses on single mothers. Interviewing coop boards is outside of the scope of this dissertation. A study such as this would make for excellent post-dissertation research.

The location also limits the applicability of this research. Readers can only apply the findings to similar cities with similar histories. Furthermore, the cultural significance of Harlem plays a key role in this research. Nonetheless, generalizations can be made about

the human experience and the impact that community change has on a long-standing residential area.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, I discussed the rationale behind my research approach, population selection, and how I chose my sample. In the overview of the methodology, I shared the methods and procedures used for data analysis and synthesis, and briefly discussed some of the limitations of this study. The insight gleaned from the interviews and document analysis was rather mixed and did not fall within my initial assumptions. In some respects, the views of those individuals entrenched in the community challenge much of the present-day criticisms of gentrification, while other views support the criticism. The results will shed light on on-the-ground views of present-day neighborhood change in Harlem.

CHAPTER 4:

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH SUBJECTS

The previous chapter presented the methodology used to conduct my dissertation research. In this section, I detail how I performed the analysis. Included are two tables providing a glance at the research subjects. I then insert a list of the Community Board 10 committee meetings and its content. I provide a description of the women and leaders. I also detail the coding strategy, along with the networks that were created to reflect categorical relationships.

DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

As mentioned in Chapter 3, I conducted interviews with ten (10) single women who met the following criteria: an adult woman who has raised or is currently raising her children in Harlem as a single mother, lives presently in Central Harlem (anywhere between 110th Street and the Harlem River, and between Fifth and St. Nicholas Avenues) since 2002 or earlier, and has an income between \$27,000 and \$43,000. A single woman is unmarried, separated, divorced or widowed. Income is any form of money received on an annual basis for work. There is no formal income verification. Each woman signed a consent stating that they met the criteria. Table 4.1 summarizes the women. They are provided with a pseudonym to honor their anonymity, and a participant code is assigned to help keep track of the research subject. All of the women are of African descent and identify themselves as either African-American, West Indian American or other, range between the ages of 23 and 51, have no more than three kids, and have lived in Harlem anywhere between 11 and 51 years, totaling nearly 300 residential years. Also listed in the table is education, place of birth, type of residence, and the number of codes yielded from

the interview. The number of codes represents the degree to which their interview contributed to the findings presented in the dissertation. The higher the number, the better. The women are listed in alphabetical order, and not in order of interview date. Following the table, I provide a brief introduction to each woman.

Table 4.1: Participant Demographics Matrix (Single Mothers)

Participant Code	Pseudonym	Education	Place Born	Type of Housing	Codes Yielded
P1	Cindy	Attending Graduate School	Central Harlem	Rent stabilized Tenement	77
P2	Joy	High School	West Harlem	Rent stabilized Tenement	103
P3	Jennifer	Classes towards a Master's Degree	Harlem	Public Housing	135
P4	Mary	High School	Harlem	Public Housing	111
P5	Monefa	Bachelors	Village	Public Housing	72
P6	Nicole	High School	Washington Heights	Rent Subsidy Building	77
P7	Roxanne	Bachelors	Washington Heights	Rent Subsidy Building	62
P8	Tamara	Bachelors	Harlem	Co-op	76
P9	Wanda	Attending Graduate School	Brooklyn	Rent Subsidy Building	126
P10	Veronica	Master's Degree	Harlem	Rent stabilized Tenement	64

Cindy raised two children in Central Harlem and has lived in Central Harlem her entire life. Upon hearing about my research, she was immediately interested and agreed to participate. Having lived on the same block her whole life, she is well-informed on the changes that have occurred around her, and because of her job she's well aware of resources available to tenants, such as housing rights and the education system. My encounter with Cindy meant exposure to ways of survival in Harlem that I heard about in anecdotal stories, but forgot ever existed.

Joy is raising her son with little to no involvement from the child's father. She lives at home with her mom and points to this reality as the reason why she can afford to live in Harlem. Her neighborhood means a great deal to her. In her interview, she expressed her opinion regarding the cost of housing and difficulties with housing experienced by family and friends. Interestingly, she draws a dichotomy of two separate schools existing in the same building—much like the working-class and upper-class living in the same neighborhood, but having a different residential experience.

Jennifer has lived in the same building most of her life. To Jennifer, her neighborhood is just the place where she resides, sleeps, and where her son attends school and participates in extracurricular activities. Much of her interview focused on the effects that her neighborhood has on her and her son. Due to the adverse elements in the community, she sacrifices to put her son in private school. She rarely frequents establishments in Harlem but points to the personal impact that her changing community has on her. Because she is not involved in her community, Jennifer feels like she cannot complain much about the changes occurring.

Mary was born and raised in Harlem and has lived in the same apartment her entire life, along with her parents who assist with childcare. Although she does not participate in any community organizations other than the school her children attends, she does frequent several establishments in Harlem and can comment on what a changed neighborhood means to her.

Born and raised in other parts of the city, Monefa can easily compare the changes occurring in Harlem with that of other areas. She is an active member of the tenant

association. She points to the changes in Harlem as a motivator that has caused residents to come together to hold their place in the community.

Nicole is not involved in her community, and her present residence is just that—a residence. In addition to living in several neighborhoods in the Bronx, she has also lived in Harlem. She maintains friendships with individuals from her previous neighborhood in Harlem and has a closer tie to that area. Nicole does enjoy the convenience of new establishments in Harlem and comments on the difference in the number of community programs available to children now versus years ago.

Roxanne is raising her children alone. The desire to leave her mother's house and find something affordable led Roxanne to Harlem. She does not participate in any community organizations or community events, nor does she frequent any community establishments. Her neighborhood does not hold any value to her. Her only involvement in the community is via her children's participation in sports and after school activities. She is mainly disconnected from her neighborhood because she fears the environment.

Tamara has lived in the same apartment her entire life. Living with her parents allows her to afford to remain in Harlem. Tamara is very much involved in her community, and volunteers with several organizations. Harlem means everything to her, and she wants to ensure that she always stays connected to Harlem. Tamara is very knowledgeable of Harlem's history and cultural significance. She is committed to its cultural survival. She shares anecdotal stories of preservation, community resistance to change, and ways to keep Harlem alive.

Wanda lives with her father, who helps her with childcare. Because of her job, she is very much aware of resources within the community, and is known as a “resource

queen.” She lives, works, volunteers, and socializes in the Harlem community. In her interview, she spends a lot of time discussing the importance of community.

Veronica was born and raised in Harlem. At the time of our interview, Veronica is making plans to relocate out of state. Most of those whom Veronica grew up with have either passed away or moved to other areas. Her involvement in Harlem stems from her childhood, while her present-day connection to Harlem is purely residential. In our interview, she talked about how Harlem once was and how she misses the feeling of community.

In addition to the single-mothers, I also interviewed eight community leaders. These leaders work within community-based organizations located in Central Harlem that have been in existence since 2002 or earlier. The organizations are directly engaged in plans and programs concerning the economic, residential, social, and commercial development of the neighborhood and its residents. Table 4.2 summarizes each of those leaders. The subjects are provided with a pseudonym to honor their anonymity, and a participant code is assigned to help keep track of the research subject. Each community leader is of African descent and has worked at the organization anywhere from 2-30 years, for a collective 74 years. Listed are participant code, pseudonym, whether or not they're from Harlem, along with current residence. The number of codes represents the degree to which the interview contributed to the findings presented in the dissertation. The higher the number, the better. Following the table, I provide a brief introduction to each leader.

Table 4.2: Participant Demographics Matrix (Community Leaders)

Participant Code	Pseudonym	From Harlem?	Live in Harlem?	Codes Yielded
P11	Williams	Yes	No	65
P11a	Ms. Garnett	Yes	Yes	65
P12	Roberts	Yes	Yes	36
P13	Brown	No	No	37
P14	Miles	No	Yes	64
P15	Davis	No	Yes	39
P16	Ms. Thomas	No	Yes	14
P17	Putman	Yes	Yes	61

My interview with Williams and Ms. Garnett took place during lunch on a warm spring afternoon. Williams was born in Harlem, but raised in the Bronx and currently resides there. Ms. Garnett is a Harlem resident, who left temporarily to attend college but returned after graduation. She discusses the bundle of organization services offered to clients. Williams explains the work being done around preparing young people for careers, and the case management services available to the homeless and senior populations. The conversation included the role that their CBO plays in Harlem and gave insight in how the programs offered by the organization are meant to work together to allow residents to stay in place.

One of my most fascinating interviews took place with a local politician. Harlem is well known for its political prowess and its ability to maintain a Black political presence. Roberts spent a lot of time discussing Harlem's history, present racial diversity, the political power block, and the role politics plays in maintaining Harlem's cultural legacy. He explained how he became involved in politics and what role he and others played in bringing development to Harlem.

Brown has held multiple positions with his non-profit organization. Brown was the first one interviewed that mentioned the variance in the median income formula and in

what is considered affordable. He also discussed joint ventures with private developers and how projects are funded. This reality gave insight into the role that for-profit developers play in maintaining affordable housing.

Miles operates a property management, housing development, and brokerage firm. His company primarily provides affordable housing, and his perspective is also influenced by his experience as a resident in Harlem. He shared some of the implications and challenges of neighborhood change, as well as its opportunities. He discussed the various affordability options and how he financed projects by partnering with private developers and examines the challenge in deciding what is affordable and to whom.

Davis volunteers with a community association and is a real estate broker. His organization's mission is dedicated to preserving the neighborhood. He is very much engaged in Central Harlem. The interview took place at a small boutique café that opened in the last few years. The interview lasted nearly three hours and began with Davis talking about the history of Harlem and the cycles of change that took place since Blacks first came to Harlem. He discussed the conflicts he has experienced in the changing community and highlights the reality of two Harlems existing side by side.

My interview with Ms. Thomas, another member of a neighborhood association, focused mainly on how the entrance of charter schools in Harlem has increased educational opportunities for community children, and how there is a Black Harlem and a White Harlem with the two having little to no interaction.

Lastly, Putman works for a non-profit developer and manages the real estate development, as well some of the social services that are attached to housing. In our

conversation, he discussed the unintended consequences of gentrification processes and the evolving definition of affordable which changes as community residents change.

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10 COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Over the course of approximately two years, I attended Community Board 10 meetings when possible and reviewed minutes of meetings whether or not I attended. The Economic Development Committee meetings tell a story of community change as reflected by applications for sidewalk café permits (new and renewal). Less important are requests for liquor licenses (new and renewals), as well as alterations or conversions to full liquor licenses. Only on one occasion was an application for liquor license denied, and on three other occasions, the application for liquor license received approval pending the business' ability to garner community support. While these requests might tell a story of a growing restaurant and bar corridor, its significance was not as clear. I would have to do separate research on the establishment of each restaurant that presented before the Board and explore their history in Harlem. Doing so is outside of the purview of the research study. However, sidewalk cafés are a visible indication of business development and neighborhood change. Over the two years, eight companies appeared before the Board to obtain a renewal for their sidewalk café. Each application was approved. Similarly, eleven businesses applied for a new sidewalk café permit, nine of which were approved, one was forwarded to the Executive Committee for a vote, and another business did not appear. I arrived at these conclusions using the query tool in ATLAS.ti.

More significant were the findings from the Housing Committee and the Land Use and Landmark Committee. As seen in Table 4.3, these two committees met as joint committees more often than separate. The committee told a story of tactics used by the

committee to keep the developer accountable to the community, the complexities of project funding, the relocation of residents to redevelop existing properties, affordable housing and mixed developments, joint ventures, community support, and community concern. A total of twenty-one housing proposals were presented to the committee, in addition to nine landmark projects. Also, other less significant proposals were submitted to the Board. They are included nonetheless in the coding matrix and the network view. I examined those codes having the greatest degree of groundedness.

Table 4.3: Manhattan Community Board 10 Committee Meetings

Committee Name	Committee Description	Meeting Schedule	Meeting Minutes Analyzed	
Economic Development	The Committee works with developers, business improvement districts, merchant associations and government agencies to foster the creation and retention of small, locally based businesses by creating a business friendly environment in Central Harlem that increases the commercial and retail opportunities for our residents.	Meets the 2 nd Thursday of every month at 6:30 pm	November 2012 December 2012 January 2013 February 2013 March 2013 April 2013 May 2013 June 2013 July 2013 August 2013 September 2013 November 2013 December 2013	January 2014 February 2014 March 2014 April 2014 May 2014 June 2014 July 2014 September 2014 October 2014 November 2014
Housing	The Committee focuses on the preservation and maintenance of all types of affordable housing options in Central Harlem by working closely with government agencies, elected officials, tenant organizations, developers, and landlords.	Meets the 4 th Monday of every month at 6:30 pm	January 2013 March 2013 April 2013 May 2013	October 2014 November 2014 December 2014
Land Use and Landmarks	The Committee reviews and provides feedback on as-of-right projects to optimize community benefits, when possible. As it relates to historic preservation, the Committee is committed to identifying and preserving historic resources in the District. This entails the solicitation of historic resource candidates from the community, support of historic designation applications, investigation of historic resource violations by developers and owners, and the demand for enforcement of preservation policy from relevant agencies.	Meets the 3 rd Thursday of every month at 6:30 pm	January 2013 March 2013 April 2013 May 2013 June 2013	
Joint Land Use, Landmarks and Housing Committee	Combined meeting of the Land Use and Landmarks and Housing Committees		November 2012 December 2012 January 2013 February 2013 September 2013 October 2013 November 2013 December 2013	February 2014 March 2014 April 2014 May 2014 June 2014 September 2014 October 2014

Committee descriptions are taken from Community Board No. 10 website, <http://www.nyc.gov/html/mancb10/html/home/home.shtml>

CODING SCHEME

The table below displays a complete list of the codes that developed from theory, as well as open coding. Appendix A lists each code, along with its definition, the level of groundedness (the number of times I used the particular code) and the degree of density (the number of times I linked the code to other codes). The strength of groundedness is not interpreted solely by the frequency in using the code. For instance, business name and development frequently appears because many companies presented before Community Board 10. Hence groundedness cannot be interpreted on face value but must be scrutinized carefully, along with its meaning and significance. Density, on the other hand, has a more straightforward interpretive value. The greater its connectedness to other codes, the greater the likelihood that there is a relevant story behind the code.

ANALYTIC CATEGORIES

After coding each interview and document, I created categorical families, called networks, based upon relationships as reflected in the research and the primary data. Each network shows a complex view of relationships among codes. Table 4.4 lists the families, along with an explanation of each one, the number of associated codes, and the number of quotes related to those codes.

Table 4.4: Families and Associated Codes

Family	Explanation for Categorization	Number of Associated Codes	Quotes
History of Harlem	Discussion regarding Harlem's past, cultural significance, social issues, and challenges	10	139
Harlem and Neighborhood Change	Codes address any mention of change in Harlem from the past to the present, including mention of change in the future	37	553
Affordability of Harlem	Any code related to affording to live, socialize, or do business in Harlem	12	183
Affordable Housing	Codes that specifically address cost related to housing	30	299
Single Mother Specific Views	Views specific to single mothers	28	333
Elite Specific Views	Views specific to community leaders	19	137
Place Ownership	Codes centered around discussion of who Harlem belongs to—which racial group	8	76
Community Resources/Organizations/Services	Resident resources available in Harlem	15	163

Naturally, the analysis began by looking at the History of Harlem as expressed by the research subjects. This thorough look at Harlem's past gives a greater appreciation for the level of change occurring today. Although there are only ten codes grouped in this family, it yields a total of 139 quotes. The next family speaks to the heart of this research, Harlem and Neighborhood Change. Together, thirty-seven codes tell a story of community transformation—economically and socially. The largest number of codes belong to this family, and 553 quotes speak to its development. Much of the conversation in the succeeding pages will focus on this subject matter.

Perhaps the most addressed theme in neighborhood change literature is the affordability of a community that is undergoing a residential and commercial revival. This commonality was echoed in the interviews with the single mothers and the community leaders, as well as within the concerns expressed by residents and board members about

the affordability of Harlem to the long-standing residents of Harlem—traditionally thought to be African-American and working class. Twelve codes, resulting in 183 quotes, discuss the changing Affordability of Harlem and how that change impacts what is affordable and to whom is it affordable. The next network, Affordable Housing, takes a specific look at housing and the cost to live in Harlem in both the rental and buyer's market. The topic of affordable housing dominates gentrification research, as it did much of my research. This network is different from the preceding one in that I focus entirely on the issue of affordable housing. I group thirty codes in this family, and there are 229 associated quotes.

Because I spoke to two different groups of people, I created a network that specifically organizes the views expressed by them. There is one family for single-mothers and another for community leaders, which I initially referred to as elite interviews. As the second largest family, Single Mother Specific Views has 28 codes and 333 quotes that explicitly express the views expressed by single mothers. Elite Specific Views has a total of 19 codes and 137 quotes. Analyzing it this way allowed me to pull out responses for the specific group. Please note, I do not include a separate write up for the views expressed by the community leaders. Instead, you will hear their voices throughout.

To gain an understanding of the subjects' perception of the ownership of Harlem and the right to place, I created the Ownership of Harlem family, with just eight codes and 76 quotes. This family was one of the most exciting areas of discovery for me. Who owns Harlem? Does it belong to any particular culture? The corresponding codes answer that question. Lastly, another area uncovered is that of the availability of Community Resources, Organizations, and Services to residents, such as any mention of programs meant to assist Harlem residents whether educational, residential, financial, or the like.

Respondents viewed the availability of these resources as a healthy part of community life. A total of 15 codes, reflecting 163 quotes are included.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, I introduced each research subject and provided a description of the various Community Board 10 meetings. I then explained the coding scheme, discussing groundedness, as well as the analytic categories. I summarized each family, providing the rationale behind each one. In the next chapter, I organize the voices of the women and community leaders. The insight gleaned from the interviews and document analysis was rather mixed and did not fall within my initial assumptions. In some respects, the views of those individuals entrenched in the community challenge much of the present-day criticisms of gentrification, while other views support the criticism. The results will shed light on on-the-ground views of present-day neighborhood change in Harlem.

CHAPTER 5:

SINGLE MOM'S VOICES, COMMUNITY LEADERS' PERSPECTIVES, AND COMMUNITY BOARD 10 MEETINGS

Finally, within this chapter, the heart of the dissertation, I share the women's stories, the community leaders' insight, and developments from the Community Board 10 meetings. I organize the data by themes following the analytical categories presented in chapter 4. I review excerpts from the data in that order. The texts, weaved together, cover the history of Harlem, Harlem and neighborhood change, affordability of Harlem, affordable housing, single mother specific views, elite specific views, place ownership, and community resources. I conclude this chapter with a summary discussion.

HISTORY OF HARLEM

To begin answering the research question—what does neighborhood change mean to the working class single mother, and what role do community leaders play in bringing about that neighborhood change—an initial question requires answering. When interviewing both the single mothers and the community leaders, the conversation naturally lent itself to discussing how Harlem once was and the process of change it has undergone to become what it is today. History is not a list of facts or dates, but as you'll see below, history is retold through nostalgia and a recollection of experiences. It explores historical relevance, cultural significance, social issues, and challenges as shared by those interviewed. It encompasses stories of childhood and residential experiences.

Define East, West and Central Harlem

My research specifically wanted to gain an understanding of neighborhood change in Central Harlem as defined as the areas between 110th Street and the Harlem River, and 5th Avenue to the Fordham Cliffs. To ensure that the interviewees had an accurate understanding of the area I referred to, I asked them to describe East, West, and Central Harlem. But, there was a problem with that level of thinking—most did not differentiate between the areas of Harlem and view Harlem as Harlem. Excerpts are below.

Cindy divides Harlem between the West and East side.

It should begin like on 110th Street, and it ends I don't know, they say Washington Heights, but 157th Street in that area. It covers from Lenox Avenue, which is Malcolm X all the way up through Adam Clayton Powell, Frederick Douglass Boulevard, some St. Nicholas, Amsterdam, Broadway, Edgecomb. The exchange is once you cross 5th Avenue. That's the east side. (Excerpt from interview with Cindy)

Joy is aware of the three areas of Harlem but is unclear on the borders.

East Harlem would start at 116th and Park Avenue in my opinion. My father is from East Harlem; my mother is from West Harlem, so I grew up on both sides. East Harlem to me is what we call El Barrio, so that's a whole different culture and feeling than it is from Broadway, which is West Harlem and Amsterdam then it is from here Central Harlem, difference in all three Yeah, to me growing up it was like the Spanish people were over there and they ran everything. (Excerpt from interview with Joy)

Jennifer never heard of Central Harlem before.

I've never really heard of Central Harlem, but if I had to choose a place I would say Central Harlem would probably be 125th street I was there for six years, and in the area, I was in, it was up and coming, and so a lot of people started calling it SoHa which means South Harlem. So if that's South Harlem, then maybe 125th is Central Harlem. Well, West Harlem is anything past 5th Avenue, that's West Harlem. West Harlem as long as it is between 116th and 155th, that's West Harlem. East Harlem is about 116th, 110th, Pleasant Avenue, 1st, 2nd, 3rd Avenue; that's East Harlem. (Excerpt from interview with Jennifer)

Mary grew up only knowing East and West Harlem.

East Harlem was where all the Puerto Ricans lived. That's just what I knew when I was a kid. Growing up there wasn't west, central, and east. I just knew there was west and

east. I didn't go to East Harlem that much . . . I consider it West Harlem. To me, 125th street is Central Harlem because that's the center of it all. I live in West Harlem. (Excerpt from interview with Mary)

Nicole offers the clearest understanding of the three neighborhoods.

I know it begins on 110th and ends on 155th. I guess you would say East Harlem is more cultural, Hispanic. West side is more Black and now the Whites, some White people are starting to come in. (Excerpt from interview with Nicole)

Tamara differentiates between Harlem and Spanish Harlem.

I think anyone who is from Harlem. I think it depends on what generation you grow up in as well, no I don't. I do differentiate between East Harlem and Harlem. Everyone I know calls East Harlem, Spanish Harlem . . . I mean I differentiate it in that way. I don't think of them much differently. My friends and I do make jokes like East Harlem is kind of stuck in the 90s because it's not as gentrified. Even before the gentrification of West Harlem . . . But at the end of the day if you call me, and I'm on 116th street and Lexington, and you ask me "where I'm at?" Nine times out of ten I'm just going to say I'm in Harlem, but I do differentiate between Spanish Harlem and Harlem, but not what realtors are doing. I feel that realtors over gentrification and the diverse group of people it's bringing they're trying to break it up. Now it's like North Harlem and South Harlem and Central Harlem, no one is doing that, it's too much. It's a very small neighborhood, so it really doesn't make any sense to try to break it up. (Excerpt from interview with Tamara)

Because of her work in Harlem, Wanda demonstrates an understanding of the three neighborhoods, but Harlem is Harlem to her.

. . . But past 125th street area is Spanish Harlem on the East Side. You'll never hear me say Central Harlem or West Harlem. If people say, 'where you from in Harlem?' You say the West side, but they really mean which street and avenue you live on? I just say which street and avenue now. When you're talking about the East Side, I'll say the East Side, but it's still Harlem to me. (Excerpt from interview with Wanda)

Veronica reflected on her understanding of the various neighborhoods and concluded that

I never knew how far Central Harlem extended, but East Harlem started on 116th street. You was in East Harlem when you went cross 116th street or 125th Street, 2nd Avenue down that side. I didn't find out that from 110th street up to 155th Street was considered Central Harlem because it was always Harlem to me . . . west side was Broadway. Cross St. Nicholas Avenue was considered the west side of Harlem going up, but they got they own territory. Listen, it was all Harlem. (Excerpt from interview with Veronica)

As the research subjects discuss their thoughts on Harlem, it is clear that they do not view it as I do. Instead, Harlem is one large community, with differentiating areas recognized by its racial composition and not by artificial borders.

Harlem of the Past

Harlem, as indicated by the subjects, has a history full of pride, achievement, and cultural contributions. Wanda states, “When I think about Harlem, I think about the Harlem Renaissance, fashion, creativity, music, I mean anybody you meet from Harlem they have their hands dabbed in their somewhere” (excerpt from interview with Wanda).

Well, the people would tell you the heyday was the 30s. When the parents, my mother would talk about walking out on the streets of 7th Ave on a Sunday, and the men and women push their carriages and all dressed up. It was a big thing that was the story of Harlem at that time. (Excerpt from interview with Roberts)

If I could describe it from the early years, the early years, very nice neighborhood. Children were children back then. It’s pretty much different now. It was a lot of ownership. African-Americans owned their own businesses and stores and buildings and stuff like that opposed to now. (Excerpt from interview with Cindy)

Jennifer states, “We had a lot more small businesses here. We had a little candy store, and it was Black-owned. The small businesses here were Black-owned” (excerpt from interview with Jennifer). The desire to hold on to old Harlem is expressed with much emotion. Cindy states,

They used to have a laundry mat; they used to have a cleaners; they used to have a grocery store. We’re sitting on top of a Chinese laundry and a car tire place. We had a barber shop; we had a liquor store right there on the corner where the Beauty parlor was at; we had a lot of stuff here. (Excerpt from interview with Cindy)

Joy brings up the memory of a famous restaurant, a former Harlem staple.

Copeland’s is gone. Copeland’s been moved. I think that’s where Duane Reade is if I’m not mistaken. There’s a lot of stuff gone, and I’m pretty sure there’s more to come. I even heard rumors of them trying to close the Apollo down. Yup, tryna take the Apollo away. Once they do that, there is no more Harlem for real. It really will be the Upper West Side. (Excerpt from interview with Joy)

Joy continues, "But at the same time, I'm a little sad because it took away my history, a lot of the things I grew up on is not here anymore because these establishments are here" (excerpt from interview with Joy). Tamara attests to the level of community once enjoyed,

I miss the mom and pop feel. I'm like that everywhere I go because I'm not big on change. I'd rather go to J&J's pizza than Dominos. That's something I miss. A lot of the mom and pop stores and restaurants that used to exist on 125th or on the in-between block don't exist anymore. Even like this really famous candy stand, it was on 122nd and Lenox Avenue, and it was built like this makeshift shack right on the side of a brownstone. (Excerpt from interview with Tamara)

Jennifer's connection with Harlem goes beyond her experiences as she discusses a history that predates her.

It does, it does because it saddens me to see where it is today, you know with the history of Harlem. I'm sitting on a landmark where we live in the Polo Grounds. This was the Polo Grounds baseball field. They have a plaque of third base which is one of the buildings in the front. This building was built about 1968, and I want to say the stadium was built in the 1940s. This was a baseball field, and they moved this which became Yankee Stadium. (Excerpt from interview with Jennifer)

I later learned that the Polo Grounds is sitting on land formerly used for professional baseball and American football from 1880-1963 (Ballparks of Baseball). While those interviewed expressed a level of sentimentality as they share memories of establishments that no longer exist, they also discuss the impact that living in a blighted community had on them in their childhood and present-day. Cindy, who is well-informed on housing issues due to her advocacy work shares background information on why Harlem digressed from its heyday and experienced many of the challenges shared across inner-city communities.

During the early seventies, we had a lot of landlords who didn't pay taxes on their buildings and so maybe in the mid-seventies, they lost a lot of their properties and stuff like that. The buildings became distressed and dilapidated. A lot of the abandoned buildings had a high-rate of drugs, dope which was always around. But in the 1980s the crack epidemic came through here and messed up a lot of families. Women, men, crack babies, you know, seen a lot of stuff here. (Excerpt from interview with Cindy)

Joy reflects on her environment growing up in Harlem—a story of rampant drug usage and a dangerous, secluded area.

Not safe at all! I remember playing hopscotch with crack vials. It was crack vials everywhere, everywhere. All in my staircase, my elevator, in the lobby of my building, in the front of my building, in the park where we played at, it was everywhere, right next to a sign that said, “Say No to Drugs.” That’s what it was. It was abandoned buildings everywhere; it was just dirty, especially this block. 140th between Lenox and 7th was known to be one of the dirtiest, dangerous blocks ever. You were not allowed to walk this block if you weren’t from this block, like how a Caucasian can just walk through the block now, walk their dog. They wouldn’t be able to do that when I was growing up. There was no way that would happen. A lot of the people just wanted to stay in the neighborhood and just pray that it would get better. My mother was one of the people that wanted to move; she did not like our environment where(as) my best friend’s father, he never wants to move. (Excerpt from interview with Joy)

When asked what she missed about Harlem in the past, Wanda shares positive and negative elements,

I miss my old block, all my friends, block parties. When I was younger growing up, a lot of the store owners was African-American. Harlem’s changed a lot—the infrastructure. When I was growing up, I remember even the structure with the parks we used to have all these metals and wood. We used to have a lot of wood growing up. I remember the tire swings. The parks used to be dirty. Glass would be everywhere. Crack caps on the ground. I remember all of that. (Excerpt from interview with Wanda)

Mary shares a similar tale of blight.

For years I would walk down Bradhurst Avenue in elementary school. We used to go to Harlem School for the Arts up on 145th and St. Nicholas, and we would walk. A lot of Bradhurst would be vacant lots, and I remember this one particular place, it was called “My Place.” I remember I would see the clip on Sesame Street, and I knew it used to be a candy store at one point, but when I would pass it, it was just old and vacant and boarded up. I could still see it said “My Place,” on it. So this was for like at least ten years. (Excerpt from interview with Mary)

Joy, a single mother of one, has a different viewpoint on Harlem in the past.

When I was growing up, there was never really no real nice places of Harlem until now. Like you have Strivers Row on 138th between 7th and 8th and the brownstone blocks. They’re pretty quiet; they’re a gated community if you ask me. I remember when I was walking down the streets making noise, they would come out they buildings to say, “Come off this block, you can’t do that over here. We’re calling the cops.” They don’t play that. And that’s just two blocks away from this block, and that’s like a gated community. So I can’t really say that there’s bad areas of Harlem and good areas of

Harlem. What I could say is there's good areas in Manhattan, and there's bad areas of Manhattan, and the bad areas of Manhattan would've been Harlem. (Excerpt from interview with Joy)

Developer Putman gives credence to the views expressed by the single mothers.

According to Putman, Harlem was not the only blighted area, but the entire City of New York was experiencing a depression of sorts.

The Bradhurst section or neighborhood which is in Harlem, 10, 15 years ago was one of the most blighted and dilapidated communities in the country. About 30 years ago, you know, the studies began to, people began to focus on the neighborhood, New York City in general. Because I always preface my statement about Harlem and its community and its condition 15 years ago with the fact that New York City was blighted 15, 30 years ago. So Harlem was much like what the city looked like, you know, three decades ago. But because Harlem was traditionally the least economic and advantaged neighborhood in Manhattan, it was more or appeared more so blighted and in bad condition; but, it is true that this neighborhood was poorly conditioned. (Excerpt from interview with Putman)

Mary asserts, "as far as those brownstones that you see that are now fixed up, for a long time a lot of them were left abandoned" (excerpt from interview with Mary).

Neighborhood Effects

In my interviews with the single mothers, in particular, they discussed how living in a community impacted them personally and influenced their decisions. Some of them expressed the reality of neighborhood effects in their personal lives. One mother talks about its impact on her son and another mother shares what she witnesses in the community when she volunteers to work with female high school students. Joy admits that her environment has influenced her negatively.

I told you I was always infatuated with rowdy people . . . And I was always infatuated with that. I'm not like that now; now I'm a mother of course. I calmed down, but when I was younger, I was just rough. When I was a young girl, I was always fighting and stuff. I was one of those girls, and my mother couldn't understand that because she didn't raise me to be that way. But it was just the people I hung out with. I was infatuated

with hanging out with certain crowds and always being outside, where my little brother is completely different from me. (Excerpt from interview with Joy)

Jennifer relates to the experience of raising her son in Harlem and her attempts to shield him from negative pressures.

He's always with me, and at the same time, he's a witness to, you know just the regular ghetto mentality as far as people standing outside, people standing on the corner, people standing in the lobby, people urinating in the elevators. You know, it affects me, and it affects my son. It's more of a sacrifice because you have to know that for me as a single parent my son is in private school, so I have to pay for that. But if he wasn't in a private school I would probably be able to save more in the efforts to probably put him in a better neighborhood. (Excerpt from interview with Jennifer)

Monefa, who lives in the same community as Jennifer, does not talk about the effect that her neighborhood has on her because she believes that she can rise above her present circumstance. However, she is more concerned about the residents that may not have a chance to see themselves outside of the projects. "So those are the ones that I really am concerned for, as well as the children who don't really have the motivation from any other influence other than the streets. So I'm concerned about them" (excerpt from interview with Monefa).

Tamara, a single mom who volunteers with young girls and had her son at an early age, cannot understand why anyone would want to make that choice. "They don't want to have a baby after the age of 25 because they don't want to be old mothers, or they want to be able to have lives after their children have grown up; it's really weird. That definitely wasn't my perspective" (excerpt from interview with Tamara). Although her son is a blessing, she did not plan her pregnancy and would have chosen to do things differently if she knew what she knew now.

There are girls planning these things, or they look up to these things. And they see them in the media and think that it's the way to go. So I like to have conversations like that. Because I also have these little girls when I go volunteer at my old school town meetings,

they're like 'oh, but you're doing it, and you went to college, you graduated high school, and you're doing fine.' It's really hard to have a comeback from that. The first time I ever heard that it's shocking. (Excerpt from interview with Tamara)

Tamara is surprised of the influence that the media and community have on these girls. Realtor and community advocate Davis states, "It's generational, people who living in the projects. The folks in the developments aren't going anywhere. Projects or developments like they called them today are a crime against humanity, they are really like a correctional facilities" (excerpt from interview with Davis). If projects are like prisons, then the impact it has on its residents is similar to that of the incarcerated.

In challenging the connectedness that people have to Harlem and their nostalgia, Davis comments,

Yes and no. What is it that we want? To go back 40 years ago when we had so many undesirables or should we better ourselves so that we are not what the media portrays us to be? Many people still view Harlem as a stereotypical Black place and the Harlem today lets you know that Blacks are educated, affluent, and doing well. Bill Cosby is viewed as an elitist, but he was telling the truth. We have to be better. One day a guy spat in front of me as I was walking on 125th street saying, "You think you're better than me." (Excerpt from interview with Davis)

Recognizing the worsening state of Harlem, he adds,

In the late 80s, the Abyssinian Development Corporation and Rev. Dr. Calvin Butts, as well as other concerned groups and faithful institutions, advocated for Black professionals to move back to Harlem. The professionals originally moved out because they couldn't take it any longer because of the magnitude of negative elements throughout Harlem. They took the position that the Black middle class had to come from the suburbs in order to fix Harlem. Keep in mind at one point in the seventies to eighties, New York City owned about 67% of Harlem. (Excerpt from interview with Davis)

Community Leader Brown talks about some of the vandalism and property damage in Harlem. He explains it as an outlet for those who are struggling. "There's nowhere to go to express you know, why I can't afford to pay the rent, why I can't help that unruly son, can't get my medication, all of these things" (excerpt from interview with Brown).

Community Board 10 also talks about environmental influences in their committee meetings. In one particular Land Use and Landmarks Committee meeting on April 18, 2013, Edwin Gould Services for Children and Families notified the community board of its intent to open a residence for five adults with developmental disabilities.

There is a general agreement that these types of facilities are necessary but that they can also impose burdens on nearby residents, and that Harlem already has a higher share of services for people with special needs than other districts and is, therefore, exceeding its fair share. (Excerpt from April 18, 2013, Meeting Minutes Land Use and Landmarks Committee)

Realtor and property developer Miles talks about the saturation of methadone clinics in parts of Harlem that hampers development. He mentions the Lee Building, which is a renovated office building. The Lee Building has a methadone clinic inside, and there is another clinic in the area, making it difficult for the owner to rent office space to businesses.

Meaning of Community

Despite the challenges expressed earlier, one commonality existed among the single women—the desire for a community, defined as a shared experience among neighbors who are connected by residence and relationship and have common goals toward a way of life. Each woman mentioned a feeling of community during their childhood and a desire for that community to return. Cindy, who is now attending law school shares that,

The community back then was more together. They were more supportive. They helped each other. Somebody went through a crisis with rent, and they would have rent parties and stuff like that. You charge people to get in. They frying chicken, fry fish, stuff like that. They charge you a certain price to get in, put it in an envelope and save it up for the tenant's rent, so they won't be evicted. (Excerpt from interview with Cindy)

Veronica, who is of a similar age, continues, "They was either selling food to pay for rent, and now we need money because we got to pay tuition, they need books for something. If that would just come back, that spirit like that it would just make the place nicer. People

are scared” (excerpt from interview with Veronica). In addition to the sense of community, the women mention that the community felt safer back then because everyone knew each other.

Back then it was safe. I mean even with the stuff that was going on it was safe for us growing up because it was truly community watching over us. Everybody on the block from one end to the other knew who you belong to, knew who you was, and back then you do what they said. You know what I mean? We were safe. I always say that. We didn’t have to worry about half the stuff some of the people worry about today. They worry about the kids being hurt now, being disrespectful. We weren’t raised like that. It didn’t have to be your mother; you needed to respect them. They told you to do something; you did it. And if you was wrong, they whipped you until your mother came. I missed those days. People being more of a community watching over everybody versus watching over themselves. I miss more of that than anything. (Excerpt from interview with Veronica)

Jennifer talked about the annual celebration of Harlem Week that is still in existence today but took on a life of its own during her youth.

Harlem Week would go from 135th all the way up here to 155th. They would block the highway because the cars would come off the highway and they come on to the local street. But when Harlem Week was going on, the highway traffic had to be rerouted to the back roads and then catch the local streets a little bit more off. They would come up here, this far, and they would close off the streets, and that was, and that was for kids to enjoy, you know? (Excerpt from interview with Jennifer)

Prompted by the discussion on community and what the women missed from yesteryear, I asked them whether or not their neighborhood was safer then or now. Jennifer believes that it was safer in the past. “It felt like it was less violent. Yeah. Yeah, in a weird way. The violence was more spread out” (excerpt from interview with Jennifer). She continues,

When I say it was less violent, it was a lot less violent. And I think we didn’t seem to be as fearful . . . I honestly feel my neighborhood means it’s just a place to reside that’s how I honestly feel, and I feel that way because I have technically seen a decrease in police presence, an increase in violence, an increase in vandalism, loitering, looting, no loitering. Loitering and littering. It is really dirty in this upper part of Manhattan; I mean Harlem . . . (Excerpt from interview with Jennifer)

That's a good question. Well, you know, my neighborhood, in my opinion, I knew there was always crime, but growing up it was never dirty. I never saw it as dirty. It wasn't the way it is now. As far as my development, I didn't see what I see now as far as people using the elevator as the bathroom. I didn't see that that much. I, maybe once in a blue moon. (Excerpt from interview with Mary)

Miles gives reasoning why some areas of Harlem may appear more violent today. He talks about how the presence of new residents and their demand for safety pushes crime to areas where there isn't such a strong presence of new residents.

I think it's a factor of maybe not the people, but the concentration of resources below 125th street. The kind of crimes that may have been down there move up. I'll give a perfect example. There's a playground where I take my son that's on 117th and Morningside Drive. He's a little toddler; he's five now. It's a playground for little kids and last summer or last spring there was a shooting. The shooting happened late at night, on a Saturday night, 9:00 or 10:00 in the evening and it was dark out. No kids were out or anything like that, but there were a couple of blogger groups of parents that got together and went to the precinct, and they went ballistic at the community council or whatever they call those meetings. I've gone to a couple of them, but they went ballistic. These are new people to the community, and they were like this cannot happen over here, this better not happen again over here, my children play in that playground. But that's the kind of thing that happens down here so when you talk to the police department like that they do something about it . . . maybe they're concentrating folks down where they're like, "You know, we better not hang down here because they might push us down the street? Let's move up to 145th street, or let's move to 155th street and do what we want to do." That could be a cause and effect or something like that. (Excerpt from interview with Miles)

Not everyone shared the opinion that Harlem was safer in the past. Joy mentions,

Yeah, it's still violent. I mean it's still violent, but it's safe. I don't know how to explain it like I said, when I was younger a White person, anybody, you can be Black, White, Spanish, if you was not from this block you could not walk through here. There's no way you could walk through this block and make it to the end of the corner without someone harassing you, throwing something at you, trying to rob you or put they hands on you or sexually assaulting you or anything. That was not possible. Now you can do that because now they have foot workers/police on every corner. We didn't have that before, so these people that are involved in these not necessarily gang violence, but these people that are involved in that lifestyle, they're not going to do stuff like that the way they would've done years ago. They have to be more cautious, but it's still there, it still exists. (Excerpt from interview with Joy)

Wanda also feels that Harlem is safer today than ten years ago,

Yes, because when I first moved on this block, there was gun shots every single night. When I lived on Edgecombe, gunshots almost every day. I don't hear gunshots every day. I don't see helicopters around every night. What I experienced when I was my kids age it's not like what they experiencing now. (Excerpt from interview with Wanda)

Similarly, not everyone shared the sentiment that Harlem was more of a community in the past. Opinions vary according to personal experiences. Monefa, who grew up in Brooklyn, compared her experience living in Harlem with Brooklyn. For Monefa, the sense of community in Harlem is stronger today than in the past.

Well, I do. I love the community feel. I feel like the community is close-knit, people are for the most part friendly, which I did not feel a few years ago. Harlem felt very, I guess maybe because I'm from Brooklyn and the attitudes are different I guess, now it's a lot more, there's more of a family-community kind of feel. (Excerpt from interview with Monefa)

Perhaps if Monefa grew up in Harlem, her perspective might be different. To her the reality of gentrification and fears of displacement, have caused residents to come together in alliance and advocacy, helping to generate a sense of community or commonality. Whereas, the other women viewed community through the lens of their childhood and neighborhood familiarity.

As mentioned earlier, writing about Harlem's history is not merely a listing of facts. But as shared in the stories of the women and a few of the community leaders, Harlem's history has a complex irony. For the majority, there is a desire for the "community feeling and small businesses" to return, but the visual blight and old streets are nothing that any of the research subjects miss. The next section looks at the codes and associated quotes that tell a story of neighborhood change in Harlem. As an introduction to the next family, local politician Roberts states,

It's changing. I was listening to something last night, where, no, yesterday afternoon, where somebody talked about African-American, Blacks in New York. We started off in Greenwich Village, and we as a block have been moving up north. We were there,

and we were right where the rail, Penn Station is, where the old one use to be, then they were there, then they went to San Juan Hill, which was on 67th Street. These are large blocks of Blacks together. And then Adam Powell father, the original Adam Powell, said we're going to go up to 132, 137th street, and he built a church, did his thing there, and that was part of it. The area was Italian, cause horses were kept So this area, and I said that because this area was Italian and everything. The area is constantly changing, and its nice romantic name, and you could tell stories, but thing change. (Excerpt from interview with Roberts)

The way the women define community gives an explanation as to why they responded in certain ways to other questions. Cindy describes the community as people, organizations, family, and friends existing together within an area. Jennifer states that community is about a ten block radius, and it includes where people live, work and stick together. Different people are advocating for one another. Given this criteria, she does not consider Harlem to be a community. "It's not because we don't really share the same views as one another. We don't really have the same interest as one another. And some people probably look at it as though it's not an equal plateau for everyone. You know" (excerpt from interview with Jennifer)? Mary's definition includes,

People who live in proximity to one another that all call it home, and they all feel like its home. They all work together to keep it clean. Not just the people who live there, but the people who actually care, like let's make sure this garbage is taken out, let's make sure the sidewalk has no snow. (Excerpt from interview with Mary)

Despite the fact that Mary's definition has the most restrictions, she still believes that Harlem is a community for the most part. For Wanda, community is

A sense of belonging, a sense of people helping each other out, being friendly with each other, working together. I remember my first time moving back . . . and the sense of community, everybody saying Good Morning and smiling. So the area looked messed up, but the people was just so nice It's something about Black people that you could just feel that sense of love. (Excerpt from interview with Wanda)

HARLEM AND NEIGHBORHOOD CHANGE

Looking at neighborhood change and the responses provided by the single mothers and community leaders gives an inside view of what change looks like at the local level and how members of the community interpret change. In the next chapter, I will tie the responses back to theory, but in this section, I graft the responses together to tell a story of change and what that means to a community and the individual.

Community Change

Monefa commented that she noticed the change immediately. “Really almost immediately, but I kind of noticed it like I would say around after the year 2000, maybe 2002, 2003” (excerpt from interview with Monefa). Joy, who resides with her mother, reflected on what Harlem is today and shares, “this is not Harlem anymore. To me, it’s a lot of things that’s here that wasn’t here when I was younger” (excerpt from interview with Joy). For Joy, the change in establishments has also changed the history of her community because she can no longer see her childhood in the stores and façade. Along with the change in physical place is a change in the type of people living in the community and not just the entrance of new residents, but the exit of old residents. This shift has multiple implications. Joy continues, “I don’t see the same faces anymore I see a lot of new faces, a lot of people coming from different places moving here. It used to be a point where I used to walk down the street, and I would say ‘Hi’ like 50 times, now I probably say ‘Hi’ twice” (excerpt from interview with Joy). The lack of familiarity has stripped away at her feeling of community. Life-long resident Tamara shared, “I know Harlem is much different from when I was growing up and when my parents were growing up, but I didn’t think it would change this drastically to the point where I’m not at home in my own

neighborhood” (excerpt from interview with Tamara). Wanda shares some of the personal connectedness she felt to her community in the past.

Now, they either Arabs or Dominican or something like that. Yeah, I have this one memory in particular of this store on corner of Edgecombe and 155th Street. The lady used to give me a free fruit every morning going to school because I used to go to 123, that lady is gone. The store is owned by Arabs now. (Excerpt from interview with Wanda)

Change in Harlem also has certain physical attributes. Nicole shares, “They have built new buildings, like did a lot of buildings over, but it’s a lot of White folks that could afford those buildings” (excerpt from interview with Nicole). Community leader Davis adds, “One bedroom condominiums are going for \$550-650,000 depending on the building and the location. Brownstones are going for 3 million plus, and a shell goes from 1.6 million and up, and to fix the shell you have to spend another 1.5 million” (excerpt from interview with Davis).

New Harlem Characteristics

The conversations shared in this section are aimed at capturing the sentiments that the interviewees have toward a changing metropolis. Shock and disbelief are some of the common emotions expressed. For the first time in many of their lives, they can take advantage of the same services and amenities offered in downtown neighborhoods. Now they have restaurants, bars, and lounges. Harlem now provides services which were once unfathomable such as several fitness clubs, coffee shops, market rate apartment buildings, new residences, new supermarkets, major department stores, and residents of other races.

Mary, one of the single mothers who was born and raised in Harlem states,

It’s really convenient, and you don’t have to go far for anything. You really have everything that you need in Central Harlem. If you need clothes, they’re right here. There’s a lot of places now that we didn’t have before. There are a lot of bars popping

up. They're not rowdy; you can feel safe and comfortable to just go chill. (Excerpt from interview with Mary)

Roxanne, who has lived in Harlem for the last eleven years adds, "But I guess now it's becoming like a new hangout spot. A lot of restaurants further down on 8th Avenue" (excerpt from interview with Roxanne). Jennifer, who has lived in the same neighborhood her entire life shares her views.

Let's see, property values have rose, we have a lot more charter schools now I mean down to the potholes that are repaired more often. The neighborhood has gotten facilities, places that would have never been here before. Like, we have a New York Sports Club on 145th Street. We have a Starbucks on 145th street and the same thing. (Excerpt from interview with Roxanne)

Monefa has watched Harlem change since her childhood when she would travel from the West Village to Harlem to visit her grandmother, "so now most of those buildings (are) residential and it looks better, it feels better" (excerpt from interview with Monefa). Mary's comments of amazement and wonder sum up what is felt by the women as they experience change around them.

It's so much more here now than I've ever seen. It's a lot of options. I live a little further uptown. But now in my development, we have a bodega which we never had before. The bodega is new. Now, even our supermarket looks different. It's cleaner looking. And then if you want to eat something, there's lots of food here. And not just the Red Lobster; I mean this is nice. We didn't have stuff like this at all, where you can actually sit down in a restaurant and have a nice meal. We have this, and if you travel a little further down, they have these beautiful bakeries now. (Excerpt from interview with Mary)

Tamara, whose family has lived in Harlem for three generations says,

There's supposed to be a Burlington Coat Factory coming and a Macy's, which I still can't wrap my head around. We'll see if they bring Macy's to Harlem. Yeah, they say they're bringing Macy's to Harlem. If you google it, they claim it's supposed to be Burlington Coat Factory, Victoria's Secret, and Macy's. (Excerpt from interview with Tamara)

Wanda shares, “Instead of a lot of abandoned buildings and blocks there’s a lot of condos and co-ops. Most of the apartment buildings they’re renovating them and turning them into co-ops and condos. What other changes have I noticed? Gentrification. Growing up it was no White people” (excerpt from interview with Wanda).

Interviews with the other women revealed changes that are not so apparent from observations. For instance, the biggest thing that stood out for Joy was that there are not as many block parties anymore.

I know on 141st between 8th and 7th they had a block party two weeks ago. I don’t know why this block doesn’t have block parties anymore or the one down the street. I don’t know. I don’t really see block parties like that around, in general. They’re about to be non-existent. (Excerpt from interview with Joy)

Mary compares and contrasts the opportunities available to her children to those that were available to her during her childhood. “I feel like there’s some things now that I didn’t have while I was growing up. Just the different opportunities. Now they have an ice skating camp for girls in Harlem. I don’t remember that growing up” (excerpt from interview with Mary). From the vantage point of a mother who knew what it was like to play in Harlem’s parks during her childhood, Wanda states, “The parks are safer. It looks friendlier; it looks more kid-friendly” (excerpt from interview with Wanda). Within the interview, Monefa discussed the reality that Harlem was once closed off due to social isolation and demographic similarity. She says Harlem is,

Probably more opened to like change or like or more opened to progress in some kind of way, if you know what I’m saying? There’s more in store if someone wanted to move here A lot of places were very very afraid to deliver to certain areas. Now I noticed that they’re a little more opened, so that’s good too. (Excerpt from interview with Monefa)

Lastly, Veronica introduces diversity as a visible marker of change and highlights the trepidation that people once had towards her community.

You got every gender of every nationality living in Harlem today that wouldn't come up there years ago. The thing about it is when they came, they came with dogs. I watched the transformation. You would see people walking through the community with these big, look; the dogs was walking them. There wasn't people walking dogs back in the day. (Excerpt from interview with Veronica)

Speaking of unintended consequences, Mary who enjoys the additions to the neighborhood she grew up in and continues to reside in till this day, also feels like everything has gotten more expensive. This change in cost is not limited to Harlem but seen across the city. She discusses her challenges in finding affordable housing.

... What used to be low-income is no longer low-income. What used to be mixed and middle-income is now the new low-income. So when you apply, it's like, "Oh, this is not what I was expecting!" I guess it's the side of this Harlem, where you get more with the neighborhood, so you have to pay for the convenience. (Excerpt from interview with Mary)

Community association leader Ms. Thomas, referred to Harlem of today as the "Harlem of the Black haves and haves not. And a Harlem of the White haves, and the have-nots" (excerpt from interview with Ms. Thomas). Davis also stated, "Today, we have two communities: Harlem of the haves and Harlem of the have-nots, and it is changing at rapid pace. At times, I would go to meetings or social events in Harlem and would be the only Black" (excerpt from interview with Davis).

Diversity in Harlem

To look further at the changing face of Harlem, I spoke to the single moms about diversity. Best stated by Roxanne, "Harlem is like a melting pot now. Will it change later? Maybe, but not right now. It's a big melting pot right now" (excerpt from interview with Roxanne). As indicated in Roxanne's comment, the diversity is not just Black and White, but so much more. I was surprised to hear from the women about the level of diversity occurring. Tamara was keen in her insight when she shared the following,

But there's a lot of animosity, and I think a lot of it comes from the Black and Hispanic people that live in Harlem that just see gentrification as a White face. That's all they see it as. Never mind the Asian people that moved in. There's a lot of Middle Eastern people that have moved in. There's a lot of North African people that have moved in. I kind of feel like a lot of people in the neighborhood who were originally there before gentrification see a White face to it and it's not. It's not. (Excerpt from interview with Tamara)

The other women also confirm this observation. Mary speaks of a gradual change and recalls how when she was a child everyone spoke English and as she got older, there was a change with the entrance of Hispanics. Now, "there's more Asians. Some of them are Chinese and Korean, some of them are Indian. Also, there's a lot of African immigrants that are coming in (excerpt from interview with Mary)."

Veronica states, "It's a lot different now. At one time, if you wasn't of African-American descent you wasn't seen in Harlem. Now they got everybody of every nationality living in Harlem" (excerpt from interview with Veronica). Monefa has primarily seen an influx of Whites, but she also has "seen a few of the I guess you would say the Middle Eastern population, not only for owning stores you know they're actually building communities. I see a lot of Africans, not too many Asians, but I do see them. They're scattered here and there" (excerpt from interview with Monefa). Cindy comments, "the Africans taking over the community" (excerpt from interview with Cindy). Community leader Miles says, "I live in a three-family home, so the owner of the house to the left of me is Israeli and then the family two doors over they're European" (excerpt from interview with Miles).

Speaking of a change in demographics, Wanda does not just talk about racial groups, but she mentions an increase in the number of lesbians and gays seen in the visibility of same-sex relationships in the community. "Another thing I would say that I

noticed with Harlem is there's a lot more homosexual people. I'm not saying it's good or bad. I'm just saying it's a noticeable change" (excerpt from interview with Wanda).

The community leaders expressed similar views on diversity. In my candid and at times humorous conversation with elected official Roberts, he made the following statement concerning a changing population.

So it's, we're in transition now. Right now, the Valley, this area isn't heavily Latino, even though they are here. We're beginning to get Mexicans. We're also getting Africans. I think a block over here is all heavy group of Africans. I don't know which country, but they're tall and thin, so they're not from, well, they're not from where the slaves came from. (Excerpt from interview with Roberts)

Speaking of the continued rate of community transformation, he mentions that this change is here to stay and that it will only increase as the unprecedented level of development continues. This transformation will ultimately lead to a change in the political power bloc. "And they're going to be like me; there's going to be some White kids sitting here one day and saying, 'Yeah, I was born in Harlem Hospital, and I came up here.' Ya know that's the cycle" (excerpt from interview with Roberts). Community leader Davis speaks of another element not mentioned previously, where are the new residents coming from? "Educated, affluent folks are living here now, individuals with money," he states. "A large portion of them are coming from elsewhere or states like Ohio, Detroit, Chicago, Boston, California, besides the other boroughs in New York City. There are people like me, who will complain until they get the same thing that other neighborhoods have" (excerpt from interview with Davis).

Thoughts of new residents

We have covered the growing diversity in Harlem, but we have not discussed what it means. How do the women interpret diversity? What are their thoughts? How do they

feel? Monefa expressed a mixture of emotions, ranging from shock to amazement and joy.

To see them around is incredible. Like they're going to the Rucker game. I saw a couple of them hanging in the chicken spots. Like you come to the store, and they're in the store, and you're like, okay! They're in the laundry mat, they're actually co-existing instead of just living at a certain place and getting on the train and going to another place, they're actually bonding I love it. I love it, and I do believe that the community loves it too. We need that, we do. We need you know the influx, especially from Caucasians. I know that some people may feel, I think it's the, maybe the younger generation that probably doesn't, they really don't mind, but I noticed the older generations are the ones that are kind of skeptical about what's happening, what's going on. The younger generation, they don't care you know. But I don't mind it at all; I don't. You would never see a White person walk up 155th and 8th, like that would never happen. They're walking through the projects, they're walking around, they're going to the supermarket, they're right there, and you would never see that a few years ago. Definitely not like 20 years ago, but not even like five years ago. (Excerpt from interview with Monefa)

Joy speaks to an acceptance of the growing diversity and how she loves the fact that, "We're mixing, and everybody's here The White people love us like it's so funny, in my head. They're thinking, 'Why haven't I moved up here sooner'" (excerpt from interview with Joy)? Another element that was uncovered was that for some this was perhaps the first time that they have resided in the same community as a White person.

I mean . . . I never experienced, besides maybe I've seen teachers. I had one White teacher in my life, and she was from New Orleans, and that was my 6th grade English teacher. Other than that all of my teachers have been African-American. I never really had experiences around White people until I was in my summer business program when I was maybe in 10th grade, and it was at Columbia University. Then after that, I hadn't experienced White people until college, and that was very short lived. That was maybe like a week at Columbia, and then we would go back to our own schools and still continue the business program. So maybe like a week dealing with White people and it wasn't directly. So I had no idea of what they were like or any other culture. I was only used to dealing with Blacks and Hispanics. (Excerpt from interview with Tamara)

Wanda, who lived in Harlem for 20 years at the time of the interview, had mixed feelings. While she is not racist, nor does she discriminate against others, Wanda feels disheartened by the presence of Caucasians because she feels like they have more of a

chance at getting an apartment than she does. Jennifer expresses the same sentiment but adds greater detail which demonstrates the complex nature of this topic.

I mean I, well I feel like they'll have, you know, this opportunity to live better than I, better than me in my own neighborhood. Because of the jobs they have, you know. Because of the maybe of . . . because of the color of their skin. Yet I can't say it's not because they don't work. We, I don't work hard. But, I just think it's that, I think I have to work a little bit harder than the next person, and it's in my neighborhood that they do this. But I couldn't afford their lifestyle more or less their living status. I couldn't afford that because the apartments they have on 145th Street to buy are \$200 some odd thousand dollars. (Excerpt from interview with Jennifer)

Community leader Davis who believes in community integration, and lives and works in Harlem, mentions how new residents are participating in the community:

They go to meetings, and they volunteer, and they want their voices heard. Each of the concerned residents whom I know has the phone number of the two local precincts in the area. There's not too much barbecuing going in both the parks and on the sidewalks or the police would remind you of the law. The police, sanitation, and other entities have become more responsive; and why not? (Excerpt from interview with Davis)

Interaction with New Residents

A question that arises in this research is the following, do the women interact with the new residents and if so, what is the level of interaction? Joy comments that she sees new people in her building every year. She only interacts with residents who relocated to her current building from the old one when it underwent rehabilitation. Her reluctance to form meaningful connections is related to her view that there's no unity in Harlem. "I feel there's no unity in general in Harlem. But with this building, there's really no unity. It's all about gossip and being nosey pretty much" (excerpt from interview with Joy). Mary does not interact with any new residents. "I haven't had any interactions with them. Actually, when I'm off, I go in my house, and I stay there" (excerpt from interview with Mary). Wanda's involvement with residents new and old are similar, "I more so say, 'hey,' to everybody and keep it moving. Or I have a little small talk with everybody and keep it

moving” (excerpt from interview with Wanda). Veronica recalls times in her neighborhood when they would invite all those who lived on the block to community events. “We didn’t just wait until the block party to do an association, whenever we had stuff we always extended it to the people on the block, so we always reached out, which was a good thing” (excerpt from interview with Veronica).

Tamara’s experience is rather different as her son’s desire to play in the park and interact with neighborhood kids causes her to step outside of her world of acquaintances and make new ones.

My son is like that so when we go to the park he’s not trying to play with me, he’s trying to play with the other kids. And playing with other kids comes their mothers and fathers talking to me. So that’s how I typically interact with people and the newer people in my community So just going to the park with him and even having a nice and pleasant conversation with these mothers that I would probably never cross paths with or talk to a day in my life, it’s like “Oh, hey you’re just like me.” You know what I mean? It changes your perspective of things. (Excerpt from interview with Tamara)

Realtor Miles lives on a block where there are homeowners from various cultural backgrounds, yet he has not formed a relationship with any of them. “To answer am I friends with them? I know them, I’m not friendly with them, I don’t go to their homes and have a drink with them or anything like that. We’re cordial; we talk to each other on the street” (excerpt from interview with Miles). Davis, another realtor and community leader, gives further understanding, “many of the newcomers formed their own community and they socialize amongst themselves” (excerpt from interview with Davis). And Ms. Thomas states, “There’s a segregation of the haves. Very little cross-racial mixing” (excerpt from interview with Ms. Thomas).

Conflict

Another element discussed during the interviews is the conflict that arises when the entrance of new residents causes a change in what is socially acceptable. With the change in residents, I asked the women and community leaders if they have experienced or witnessed any conflict among residents. Issues of place ownership are mentioned here and discussed briefly. Greater analysis of place ownership occurs later in this paper. A conflict is any disagreement or tension between old and new residents related to the use of space, their understanding of who should live there, or interpretation of community. As an example, Cindy discusses how new residents may interpret what is the correct usage of space differently. She mentions how new residents complain of noise from children which is acceptable to those who resided in the neighborhood previously.

You shouldn't come here and try to change the way things are. I believe in change too, but just to come here and call the cops on somebody every five minutes saying, "Oh, they're making too much noise, they're moving chairs in their apartment, oh they had a house warming." It's just absurd. (Excerpt from interview with Cindy)

Tamara helps bring some understanding as to why this might be the case. "Someone who maybe wants to live on Columbus Avenue on the Upper West Side, cannot afford that kind of money will settle for Harlem and then try to invoke as much change as possible" (excerpt from interview with Tamara). Wanda adds, "they coming in scoping out the place, taking they pictures and everything like that, see them on their little tours. They scoping the place out. They putting in they bids. That's what's happening right now" (excerpt from interview with Wanda).

Realtor Miles shares an interesting story about how an organization ended public playing of music for community kids in the spring. His comments on how the intrusion of

new residents and their demands to “quiet the neighborhood” are unfair and unrealistic expectations.

I don't know how true it is, but my cousin told me that her friend, they lived on 118th street, and every year in the springtime they would pull out music, and they will play music for the kids and what have you I didn't hear all of the details, but I have a problem with stuff like that. This is still the Harlem community, and if you move into the Harlem community, you deal with some of what you have to deal within the Harlem community. If it's, we're going to play music for our kids on a Saturday afternoon once a year for Memorial Day weekend, or whenever he was doing it, this is what you deal with. (Excerpt from interview with K. Miles)

The issue of complaints from new residents was furthered by Putman as he discussed a similar situation which occurred near a building owned by his company. Located on the same block are newly built condominiums where the condo owners complained about the use of the community room next to their home. “They said there was, people were making noise. They go outside of the community room. So, which is reasonable, but it was really a conflict, but that's an example of some tension, right” (excerpt from interview with Putman). Leader Putman adds, “Conflict . . . , which is really noise complaints, nuisances. But it wasn't along the line I was a native Harlemiter, and you're not. It was just typical residence issues. And then I haven't had any instances of . . . you know racially motivated issues, not at this point” (excerpt from interview with Putman).

Tamara shares that conflict may not be as overt as people believe, rather it is subtle and based upon perceived notions and assumptions regarding intentions. To her, a lot of the time conflict is a result of African-Americans lashing out at non-Black residents whom they believe have a hidden agenda.

For example, at my son's school, there are a few White families. There aren't enough to say that the school is diverse. It's diverse in the sense that it's a lot of different people there, but there are more Blacks and Hispanics than anything But there's a lot of animosity, and I think a lot of it comes from the Black and Hispanic people that live in

Harlem that just see gentrification as a White face. That's all they see it as. (Excerpt from interview with Tamara)

According to Tamara, that's where the tension lies—in the perception of motives. “There's a lot of hostility, and it's weird because I think it's from the older generation, the people born in the 60s and the 50s The younger generation . . . see it as, ‘Oh, I been here when the neighborhood wasn't so great, this is fine for me’” (excerpt from interview with Tamara). She says that Blacks believe that there is a hidden agenda to take over Harlem.

Going back to what I was saying at my son's school, a lot of the moms are so upset with these White moms for no reason. Like, “Why are they here? Why won't their kids go to a school closer to home? Why are they sending their kids to our schools?” My boss, her son, just recently graduated from Democracy Prep, which is also in Harlem and she was saying how a lot of the Black moms at her son's school are upset that the White kids are there. It's just like, “Oh, can't you send your kid closer to home?” and some of the mothers are like, “Well, I live in Harlem too, and this is closer to home.” I think the race issue that a lot of people are bringing up is sort of created in people's minds. Maybe not fully, but a majority of it is created in people's minds because of the history of our country and our community as a whole. So they just think of gentrification as a wash-out of Black people, and I don't think it's just that. I don't think it's just that. This country is about money and capitalism and anyway that people can get that, they'll take it. Any place you can raise rent and make more money off of it as a realtor that would be the smart thing to do and I think people fail to see that. (Excerpt from interview with Tamara)

According to community leader Davis, the perceived notion of a takeover is not just experienced by Blacks against Whites, but Blacks against Blacks of different socioeconomic status. He shares his experience of being treated negatively because he is perceived as an “outsider wanting to take over” (excerpt from interview with Davis).

Branding of Harlem

Throughout the course of my field work, research subjects commented on how Harlem has been renamed. Joy mentions how the Upper West Side now includes Harlem. “To me growing up, the Upper West Side used to be 96th Street and Broadway on down,

now up here it's the Upper West Side" (excerpt from interview with Joy). Jennifer tells me how the name South Harlem became popular. "Came up around; I would say maybe two – four years ago. I would say as the condos were being built on 116th street and 8th Avenue which is recognized probably for many now as Fredrick Douglas Boulevard" (excerpt from interview with Jennifer). Speaking of the realtors, Tamara disapproves of the trend in breaking Harlem up into sections.

Now it's like North Harlem and South Harlem and Central Harlem; no one is doing that; it's too much. It's a very small neighborhood, so it really doesn't make any sense to try to break it up When they were first advertising a lot of them said about this being NoHa as in North Harlem, which doesn't make any sense to me because Harlem starts on 110th street and ends on 155th. (Excerpt from interview with Tamara)

The branding of Harlem is connected to the intensity of development occurring at different stages. Community leader Miles comments,

To me, there are two things that are happening in Harlem. I go by two locations. There's an area from 110th Street up to say 125th where you see the majority of development; the majority of gentrification, the majority of changes. There's Restaurant Row on Frederick Douglass Boulevard; there's also another Restaurant Row on Lenox Avenue on 125th—126th down to the one-teens. So what's happening there is there were more vacant lots and more vacant buildings over there, so that's why you see that drastic change down from 110th through 125th Street. 125th and up, that change is happening slower, but that's because of the nature of the kind of properties that were up here. There were more tenements up here and obviously the pockets of brownstones in the 130s and Strivers Row and what have you. But for the most part, even though there were a lot of vacant buildings, they were always maintained. Families lived in those pockets of vacant buildings and what have you, but there was such a dramatic number of units below 125th, and that's why I'm talking about in two different phases. When I think about I actually live in that area, I live on 121st Street and Frederick Douglass Boulevard. So I'm living right in that area they call SoHa, I don't particularly care for the real estate brokers changing the name to SoHa. (Excerpt from interview with Miles)

Miles' lack of comfortability with the term SoHa is related to his deep connectedness to Harlem and his familial ties. His thoughts concerning why the branding of Harlem impacts him in a way that it does not affect his neighbors is due to their distance from Harlem's meaning and cultural significance.

impressive amount of development. Of the nineteen restaurants, eleven are new, and eight are renewed, meaning that the owner is nearing his or her two-year permit expiration date. From the single mother's perspective, in particular, I wanted to know if the women frequented any of these restaurants and other new neighborhood venues. Additionally, I ascertained whether they felt comfortable or welcomed, or if they believed that the establishment was accessible to them financially or culturally. In short, the women were glad to have access to venues within their proximity and accessible by public transportation. Joy, who has lived in Central Harlem for her entire life shares her experience.

I'm also glad I'm able to experience some of these things in my neighborhood that I never thought I would be able to experience before. Like, we have a Joe's Crab Shack. I would have to go to New Jersey. I don't have a car, and I don't know anybody with a car to get me there, so that seems so far-fetched, but now I could just walk to Joe's Crab Shack. (Excerpt from interview with Joy)

When I asked Joy whether she frequents the smaller establishments such as the sidewalk restaurants or non-chain restaurants, she adds, "I feel like personally, to be honest, I can't afford to do that. I'm guessing that the meals are pricey, and my mind frame in thinking is I could just buy this food and make it at home. Save money" (excerpt from interview with Joy). Jennifer, who has also lived in Harlem her entire life, does not shop in Harlem or hang out there, but she is willing.

I mean, but those lounges or those little bistros I've heard of . . . I would try it if someone said, "oh let's go there!" Or maybe if someone would invite me out to some place nice that they've heard of. I would rather go to a place that's Black owned, you know to support businesses. (Excerpt from interview with Jennifer)

Mary adds to this conversation,

Yeah, I do, not exclusively. I still go to other places, but now we have more options. Yes, it's nice to see. I haven't patronized all of them. For me, I'm used to going downtown to try a pastry period, a fresh-baked pastry. Now, I'm like oh, it's just right

here. It's an actual bakery. It makes nice things. I appreciate being able to go out and eat and not having to travel very far for it. And not just the big Red Lobster chains, but I've gone to Harlem Tavern. You can have a lamb burger. Where you get that at? You can have a beer. I like being able to shop and not feel like it's just the same clothes. I can definitely appreciate it. You know what I do like? Over in East Harlem, there's a mall over there, and they have a store called Aldi, a supermarket. (Excerpt from interview with Mary)

Monefa enjoys frequenting the new establishments. "Anytime I see a small business I always try to go in and look and see what they have, speak to the owner if I can, if they're there. Absolutely, absolutely. I love the Red Rooster, I've been into the little French spot right next door" (excerpt from interview with Monefa). Wanda likes to go to lounges in Harlem. "The Cove, Social Corner . . . It's a lot of little lounges and cafes popping up" (excerpt from interview with Wanda). On the other hand, Nicole has not been to any of the new restaurants that recently opened up and likes to wait to see what happens before trying them out. Roxanne is disheartened by her negative experiences in her neighborhood and is not interested. Rather she feels like the people in the area would have to change for her to change her mind. She opts to socialize in New Jersey. Lastly, Veronica says, "I'm not impressed. I'm alright with eating at Mannas. I go in, and I get something from the buffet, and I go home. I don't hang out in there; I don't sit out to none of them restaurants up and down Lenox Avenue to eat" (excerpt from interview with Veronica). Community leader Ms. Thomas gives some insight as to why some may not go to the new venues. "Façade makes people feel uncomfortable, but if they went in they would know that they were welcome. Class is self-perceived" (excerpt from interview with Ms. Thomas).

Zoning Change Proposal

Another indicator for a changing community is the submission of zoning change proposals before Community Board 10. Ms. Thomas Lunke from Harlem Community

Development Corporation (HCDC) presented a proposal to overlay a C1-4 commercial zoning district to sections of Saint Nicholas Avenue. According to the NYC Department of Planning, “a commercial overlay is a C1 or C2 district mapped within residential districts to serve local retail needs (grocery stores, dry cleaners, restaurants, for example).” The proposal was initially presented to CB10 in 2008, and again in 2014, HCDC approached the board requesting to partner with CB10 to study the proposal further and petition the City Planning Commission to add the commercial zoning overlay. In that same meeting, members of the Lenox Terrace Association of Concerned Tenants informed the board of a recent meeting with the Olnick Organization, the owner of Lenox Terrace—a complex of six apartment buildings connected by landscaping and private parks located between Lenox and Fifth Avenues and 134-35th Streets. According to the tenant association, Olnick met with them to ask for their support in rezoning the development from R7-2 to C6-2 to build more retail along Lenox Avenue between 132nd and 135th Streets and several new residential towers. Current zoning is R7-A, and developers have applied for rezoning to R8-A with the Department of City Planning, as current R7-A height restrictions do not make the proposed project feasible. An R8-A zoning would allow a building height of 120ft or 12 stories, four additional stories than under the current R7-A zoning.

Charter Schools

When describing what is new about Harlem, Jennifer’s comments include two components—an increase in property values and an increase in charter schools. Much to my surprise, this was not an anomaly, but a topic that came up rather frequently. Interestingly the literature review on neighborhood change does not include this component. Jennifer shares, “let’s see, property values have rose; we have a lot more

charter schools now, next to public schools; we have a lot more charter schools in Harlem now" (excerpt from interview with Jennifer). Community leader Ms. Thomas views charter schools as an education equalizer urging that the new schools give children in Harlem access to a quality education. Williams, from a non-profit community development organization, attests to the "proliferation of charter schools in Harlem so there's that competition all the time," but says that "there are a lot of charter schools that don't do very well because they're governed by individual" and believes that traditional public schools would fare much better if they had the same liberty as charter schools in designing curriculum and programs (excerpts from interview with Williams). Even single mother Nicole shares that her son's charter school is the reason why she is still in Harlem. "If I didn't have my son in a charter school, I would've been gone" (excerpt from interview with Nicole). Of the nine mothers with school-aged children, five of them have enrolled their children in charter schools, three of the moms have their kids in public schools and one in private school.

The idea of increased opportunity is described best in my dialogue with Joy. She shares a compelling story of how her son attends a public school located in a building that also houses a charter school. On one particular day, Joy mistakenly goes to the wrong floor of the school and encounters an environment that is entirely different from that of the one her son experiences daily while at school.

When I go to pick him up one day, I went to the wrong floor. So throughout the whole school, it was hot, and it was like a different feeling like how you describe up the block. When I got to the 4th floor it's air conditioner, and it's a calmer setting, and I'm like how come this floor is like this, and it has an A/C. But all the other kids they're running wild through the hallways, and it's hot, and it's muggy and the kids are aggravated and they acting out. The monitor that works in there she's like, "Oh, this is a charter school in this school." So I'm like, "there's a separate school inside the school?" It's a charter school, so these kids are privileged to a different education; they get to sit in A/C and

beyond hot weather where they don't have to act out because they're comfortable and focused. Where my son, he's sweating; he gets a different level of education and kids are running up and down the hallways where he can't even focus because he's looking in the hallway at the kids making noise and the security guards are chasing them to get back in class. I feel like all children should be, like Harlem Children Zone is specified for a lottery, and if I had an ideal choice of a neighborhood all these public schools would be charter schools. All the children in Harlem can get the same education and sit comfortably and have the best learning experience. It would be equal. (Excerpt from interview with Joy)

Joy was the only single mother to express this dichotomy, and Williams and Ms. Garnett are the only community leaders who discussed the prevalence of charter schools and their negative impact on the public education system. Community Leader Ms. Thomas sees the increase in the number of charter schools as an indicator that the education system has improved and welcomes their arrival in the community. Joy's criticism of charter schools focuses on the lottery admission system. All students do not have access to charter schools because charter schools cannot accommodate all school-aged children. This issue, in particular, is close to thoughts concerning the unequal access to developments occurring throughout the community.

Definition of Gentrification

In the course of our conversations, the word gentrification arose numerous times. To gain an understanding of what the word means, I asked the respondents to define the term in the context of our conversation. Cindy says, "I haven't really defined it yet. I really haven't. I can see the change; education wise the schools are overcrowded. That's another thing three or four schools in one, that's ridiculous" (excerpt from interview with Cindy). Joy, who only has a high school education, replies "No" when I ask her if she was able to define gentrification. College graduate Jennifer, whose son attends public school explains it further.

The same thing as the change that's going on in Harlem, especially ah 116th Street and I would choose 116 because it had a whole... There's a whole change and the thing that was done down there. Like to change the neighborhood and bring it up and that has happened there They have bistros; now they have lounges. I mean in Harlem, ah . . . little things like that. The change of neighborhood, the upbringing of a neighborhood. That's what happened. It happened on 145th as well. It's just that it not as big as a stretch as it is on 116th Street. (Excerpt from interview with Jennifer)

Mary comments, "I believe I know what it means. It means when an influx of a different race comes into a different community What I'm saying is White people moving into Harlem and they're trying to diversify it. So I'm not sure, is that what it means" (excerpt from interview with Mary)? Monefa believes there is more to it,

I mean as far as what I understand about gentrification; basically it's going to, it can start from a block, it can start from a community, it can start from a borough. It basically happens, as far as I understand, every 20 years or so. There's like a one set community of people and then slowly it starts to develop and expand and build and elevate to where another set of people find it comfortable and affordable and they're not so afraid to live in that area so now the influx comes in and slowly certain other folks dwindle away or move away or die or God forbid whatever happens. But I saw it happening in Bed-Stuy. I mean I can kind of see it happening here in a lot of ways because like I said, you would never see a White person walk up 155th and 8th, like that would never happen. (Excerpt from interview with Monefa)

College graduate Roxanne who is raising her children in Harlem says, "I'll say, a little ignorant, but a lot of White people coming in and taking over. It doesn't have to be White people, but for this area? Yeah, a lot of White people are taking over. Oh, it's gentrified already, not becoming" (excerpt from interview with Roxanne). To her, gentrification in Harlem is a White face. Wanda, who is starting a Master's program, also views it as "Caucasian people moving into the neighborhood" (excerpt from interview with Wanda). Community leader Putnam shares that "gentrification in our context really actually means higher income people moving into a neighborhood that is traditionally moderate or low income" (excerpt from interview with Putnam). Tamara, who is also a college graduate, explains it like this:

Gentrification is sort of like a makeover of a neighborhood. It's like a rapid influx of people of a higher income moving into a neighborhood. Along with those people come all sorts of things. Along with those people come different venues, higher prices to market these. There are more people in that neighborhood with a higher income, so it comes with it, and all these stores start to come in, and things start to change to fit the new look of the neighborhood. I also feel like gentrification displaces the former residents of the neighborhood; the people who maybe don't have the same income as the newer people coming in. (Excerpt from interview with Tamara)

As seen in the interviews, there is not one clear understanding of gentrification. For some it's as simple as "White people taking over," and for others, it's a complicated process of residential influx, residential development, increasing prices, and neighborhood revitalization. We also discussed how they felt about gentrifying Harlem.

Views on Gentrification

When coding the interviews I created separate codes to express positive and negative views, however in this section I group them together. There is no clear-cut separation between whether someone agrees or disagrees with the changes occurring around them. For such a complex issue, the emotions surrounding them are quite multifarious. I begin by sharing the positive views, and then I share their conflicting thoughts.

Yeah, South Harlem right? I don't particularly care for that aspect of it. However, I think it's great for the community because service is coming, there's vibrancy. The negative connotations for some people are still there because they don't know, but for the folks who live there, it's totally changed. (Excerpt from interview with Miles)

Positive would be that we do have these businesses here. You know, and it's a little bit more diverse. But now today, they'll deliver to the projects, you know. Or they'll come up this far. You know to make a delivery. Fresh Direct is the food place. You can call, and it's an online supermarket. They wouldn't deliver at least three, four years ago. You know. (Excerpt from interview with Jennifer)

I definitely see it as a combination because those who do still live here from before the boom happened, they benefitted from it. You have all these things you don't have to travel downtown or upstate or wherever to get it. It definitely brings more opportunity. And everything around you, if where you're living is still a good price for you,

everything around you is improving. So your overall look is nice. (Excerpt from interview with Mary)

. . . I remember just being in the area when I was younger and feeling the despair. So, to see us benefitting in some kind of way And it's in all areas, like the parks, just with the community in general, you know things for the kids and even the schools. Certain schools have changed, there's more charter schools, which I love. There's more areas of development that had been actually designed for us, so I noticed that most of all. (Excerpt from interview with Monefa)

I like it. I don't have to spend car fare to go downtown. Positive. It's definitely a positive. The positive thing is there's more police presence, so it's not a lot of the hanging out with the kids at all times of night. Usually, the area is quiet and stuff. I mean you hear gun shots every once in a while, but it's not like it used to be. (Excerpt from interview with Nicole)

I think it's great for the community because service is coming. There's vibrancy. The negative connotations for some people are still there because they don't know, but for the folks who live there, it's totally changed As a homeowner, I'm happy to see it happening. As a parent, I'm glad to see the community change where it's not so much the thought there's all this crime happening on the avenues and what have you. I love to see jobs as long as it's going to some people in our community. I don't care what the jobs are; if they're service positions, that's fine. (Excerpt from interview with Miles)

In summation, the positive views speak of opportunity—services, businesses, jobs, shopping, convenience, cleaner streets, safer neighborhoods, and more education choices. As Tamara states, “I think gentrification comes with pros and cons. It's always nice to see a neighborhood expand and be built for the better, but I think it's horrible that it's sort of like a washout” (excerpt from interview with Tamara). She continues,

They're like, “Okay, we're going to bring in a higher income, higher priced living, but we've got to get rid of the other people here because they're now, they're sort of I guess, crowding the new site of what things should be or are going to be.” That's what I think of gentrification. I think that sometimes also gentrification can be a washout of culture. So along with the higher income sometimes comes a different culture of people and with that getting rid of people that were there before because they don't fit the new scene. And I think a lot of times people try to hide behind gentrification and hide behind finances, but I don't think it's always that. I don't think it's always just who can afford to live in this neighborhood. I think it's a lot of times affordability and the type of people that they want to live in that neighborhood. (Excerpt from interview with Tamara)

When speaking with Joy, she shares similar thoughts of irony and uses the word bittersweet as a description. The bitter part is that Joy is sad to see her neighborhood change before her—the way she grew up, the people she knew all her life and the stores she frequented. To Joy, it is a good thing to experience a different lifestyle, but she knows that the “newness” is not for her. It’s for the people who are moving in. She also witnesses low-income families around her struggling, knowing that displacement is inevitable. “Somewhere where we lived all our lives, we’re being forced to move out because we’re trying to catch the attention of other people. That’s how I feel” (excerpt from interview with Joy). Because people of higher income are moving to Harlem, rents are increasing, and affordable housing is not even affordable. “When you look at the income requirements, where it starts from and finish, I’m nowhere in there” (excerpt from interview with Joy).

Jennifer, who lives further north than Joy, offers a different insight. For her, the negative part is that her area is only experiencing bits and pieces of what’s left. “It’s not happening right here in front of me. It’s ten blocks away, and it stops there. We got the crumbs of it” (excerpt from interview with Jennifer). Mary, who lives near Jennifer agrees. She shares how some areas of Harlem are still underdeveloped. Overall, she feels like things in Harlem and the city, in general, are more expensive now.

When I applied for housing what used to be low-income is no longer low-income. What used to be mixed and middle-income is now the new low-income. So when you apply, it’s like, “Oh, this is not what I was expecting!” I guess it’s the side of this Harlem, where you get more with the neighborhood, so you have to pay for the convenience. (Excerpt from interview with Mary)

To Tamara, the ability to live in Harlem on her \$40,000 salary is a matter of a “lottery system and just luck and hope and prayer and all that other good stuff. Risk too, a lot of

risk, and cutting back instead of just living It's hard and upsetting" (excerpt from interview with Tamara).

I feel like I'm being plotted on, and I feel like I have to protect myself. I don't know. I mean I don't look at it in terms of right or wrong. I think I'm really going back to that survival of the fittest. All throughout the animal kingdom it's going to be like that with us too. We're supposed to be civilized, but we still animals. And resources are always going to be scarce so economics you have to step your game up. You can't complain if the other person is winning. Step your game up. That's my philosophy. (Excerpt from interview with Wanda)

Community leader and developer Miles says that it is especially unfortunate for African-American families that live in this community because many cannot necessarily afford the new housing. Because of this reality, he aims to keep developing affordable housing. On the opposite end, he states,

So developers, not necessarily from this community, are speculating because they see what's happening in this community, and some of the rents that people are getting up in this area are incredible to me. I'm in the business, and I'm shocked at some of the rents that people get. (Excerpt from interview with Miles)

Putman, a leader in an organization that is entrenched deeply in developing affordable housing in Harlem, expanded on the unintended consequences of speculation and residential development.

So with that influx and change of demographics, there's always change in goods and services, change in jobs and opportunities, other equal opportunities, change of more educated or so-called more educated people and the neighborhood begins to change some—some of its characteristics. You know, I don't take value judgment. But I know that people that live here, who've lived here, feel certain . . . Certainly, they feel like they're being forcibly displaced. (Excerpt from interview with Putman)

Prompt for Gentrification

Perhaps one of the most interesting topics that all interviewees discussed was the forces which led to unprecedented development in their community. All could recognize the positive changes occurring, yet the irony of its timing is profound. I start exploring this

topic by sharing the comments made by Tamara who wonders why it took so long for these changes to occur. Conspiracy theories frame the context of this discussion.

I just kind of feel like home is being stolen and the essence of Harlem is being taken away because there are a lot of things that exist now that didn't exist before. And I just feel like why did it take gentrification for us to have things that people that I've known. Adults fought for years, could never get the government, the Parks Department to budge and now it's happening. It's like why weren't we worthy of this ten years ago I remember town hall meetings. I even remember faculty at the schools I was attending, going to these neighborhood town hall meetings and district meetings to fight for things in the neighborhood—to revitalize the neighborhood and not getting a response back or them not getting necessary funding. And now all of a sudden because the income level has risen and now that all these new buildings are up, these new types of people are coming. Now things such as parks and schools are worthy of these do-overs or make-overs that they needed a long time ago. Maybe even before I was born, like a long time ago. It's upsetting. (Excerpt from interview with Tamara)

Other single mothers express a similar emotion.

Meaning, if they took time to build things around us that benefitted us instead of building things to benefit the market because that's what I feel like. I feel like all these stores on 125th Street is there to attract certain people. (Excerpt from interview with Joy)

I like diversity. I do. I feel that the change that has happened, it shouldn't have taken so long. I don't feel like it should've come with the sudden influx of different people, different cultures It's unfortunate. No one came in to develop the buildings before, but now you want to attract a different crowd so now the community gets cleaned up. I feel two ways about it They chose an appropriate time to do it. As far as those brownstones that you see that are now fixed up, for a long time, a lot of them were left abandoned. Then for a while people were buying them from the owners for real cheap. Stuff like that, when you think back about it, you're like wait, so you guys really chopped those people legs from up under them and you already knew what you were going to do, and then you fixed it up? Stuff like that makes you think like, "You wanted this neighborhood." But it's the way that it's done. I feel like there was always a plan for Harlem. We just didn't know it. I feel like the community was broken down and it was allowed to stay down until it was like, "Okay, let's just come in and sweep this all up." (Excerpt from interview with Mary)

Women also recognize the reality that Harlem has an available real-estate stock that is more affordable than neighborhoods in southern Manhattan.

I think that the realtors are stealing it. I think that the government is stealing it; it's a whole slew of people. I think that the people who are coming in and moving to Harlem, because it's actually cheaper rather than actually wanting to live there, are trying to

change it and make it a place where they can actually afford to live, but make it where they want to live. (Excerpt from interview with Tamara)

I feel like, see Manhattan is where all the money is, right? So all of the people who live downtown . . . would you rather live close to where you work or far from where you work? The answer is closer to where you work. So what's in the way? Minorities in Harlem. I feel like the war on drugs was like the gateway to open up the doors to pretty much get the process going of getting the people out because everything is a process. The 80s, the war was declared; the 90s, you lock everybody up; 2000s, you fix up the infrastructure and 2020, we in there. And that's what's happening, they in there. They coming in scoping out the place, taking they pictures and everything like that, see them on their little tours. They scoping the place out. They putting in they bids. That's what's happening right now. (Excerpt from interview with Wanda)

Culturally, yeah because they trying to move everybody of color out That was they plan, to move people out. I can't say that people spoke of the change. Like if I had a conversation with my neighbors, we would just talk of all the new people coming in the community They started getting stuff we couldn't get. We wanted new supermarkets, better supermarkets, better pick of choices like they would have on Broadway. Then all of a sudden we started getting supermarkets where it seemed like a better quality of food, a better pick of stuff. And you was kind of upset. They wasn't doing that until these people came. And it was like, are you serious? That's what they did. The community kind of didn't get better until they came. It literally almost wanted to make you angry. You know? We wasn't good enough to get it for ourselves. We had to wait until y'all blow us up, and the White people and the Asian people and the European people moved up here? And that's when we got it. They started building nicer buildings. (Excerpt from interview with Veronica)

I don't know Probably, I don't think Harlem was ready. I don't think the streets were ready at that time because there was still a lot of drugs and violence, not saying that it's still not here, but it was more so at that time. Like that was, you know, moving from the crack era, the eighties into slowly trying to change. A lot of buildings were still condemned, like there was still a lot of work to be done. And I don't think the businesses or even like the new buildings, the new apartment buildings that they're building, I don't think they were ready for it because it was still a pretty scary time. It's hard to see a condemned building and then a business. They're like, "I don't know." So you know . . . (Excerpt from interview with Monefa)

Although the women's views are based upon their emotional ties to their neighborhood and their perception of neglect and oversight, developer and property manager Miles states that there has always been a plan for Harlem starting with former Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields.

They called it the 8th Avenue corridor. She had a master plan 20 years ago. When I first got in the business, there was a master plan. I remember seeing the 184-C Plan 4 to Central Harlem, and that was already planned. Eight Avenue was already planned. I think on top of that there was layers of concentration of ideas right there also. So I think that had a lot to do with it. (Excerpt from interview with Miles)

Community association member Davis asks the same question of why it took Harlem so long to get where it is today. Why did it take Harlem 30 years to get where it is today? “We all pay the same taxes, and when it comes to quality of life, Harlem had to beg, so in a sense, you felt there is a division as compared when you in certain areas in the Upper East Side” (excerpt from interview with Davis). Putman continues,

The studies that were done, not particularly for the people that were living in the neighborhood but in general, for the city of New York and Manhattan, in particular. You know strategically from a transportation standpoint, this neighborhood was targeted for future redevelopment. (Excerpt from interview with Putman)

Davis also shares how new residents place a greater demand on the city.

New residents come in and push There are people like me, who will complain until they get the same thing that other neighborhoods have. Why don't Black neighborhoods deserve the best? For example, better quality produce Because of our advocacy as a community and now the area is ready for it based on analysis and demographics. (Excerpt from interview with Davis)

Overall, the common sentiment held by those interviewed is that the changes occurring around them did not begin because of the existence of long-time Harlem residents, but in response to or as a part of a plan to redevelop the area for new residents and new commerce. The way one interprets that reality is different from person to person, yet it is through this lens that the respondents deduce how they feel. And still, each can quickly identify why Harlem was targeted since it is an area that most have valued for the majority of their lives.

Appeal of Harlem

Veronica can see the appeal of Harlem as rather obvious saying that Harlem offers a level of protection from terrorist acts such as 9/11.

They putting this stuff to draw them into the community. I don't think it had anything to do with them asking. 9/11 they blew up downtown, and they wanted to go somewhere, and they put it up there, and some of them said, "I'm going up there with the Black people. Let them come up there, we gonna be protected." That's how I thought. (Excerpt from interview with Veronica)

Ms. Garnett talks about Harlem's high elevation and how its geography is a natural barrier to floods. "I think Sandy just hit everyone in a way that has never been experienced before, but you are elevated" (excerpt from interview with Ms. Garnett). Brown has the same thought,

After the storm, and I'm not talking about this storm, but the prior storm people start moving out from by Asbury Park and although areas where this uh, Sandy, you're going to see a lot more people moving to higher ground. So, they coming and living within the community. (Excerpt from interview with Brown)

Davis adds, "For instance, Harlem did not experience much damage at all because of Hurricane Sandy, and now people who had been affected by the storm are coming to reside in Harlem" (excerpt from interview with Davis).

Additionally, Harlem is appealing because of the vast amount of space that is available in comparison to the rest of Manhattan. Second to vacant lots is the availability of housing stock. Single mom Wanda says, "In Manhattan we have brownstones. There's no brownstones anywhere else on the island" (excerpt from interview with Wanda).

I think one of the factors that caused the change was the availability of space to build here. Like I remember growing up they had brownstones. I remember hearing that the brownstones that they had were for sale for a dollar, but you probably would have to spend maybe about \$100,000 to repair it. And at that time you look at what the prices are today, and you say that should have been bought by someone who lives in Harlem, you know Because it was a lot of space. It wasn't anything being done. (Excerpt from interview with Jennifer)

Not only does Harlem have available housing, but the type of homes is appealing. The old brownstones and 19th-century tenements have large apartments—an amenity prized in a borough known for matchbox sized apartments. According to Joy who has lived in the same two-block radius her entire life, “my friend’s apartment is huge. She has like six bedrooms. It’s bigger than this apartment” (excerpt from interview with Joy). I interviewed Joy in her apartment and can attest to its big size. The apartment reminded me of a World War II tenement.

Because of all the amenities shared thus far, Tamara believes that “someone who maybe wants to live on Columbus Avenue on the Upper West Side, cannot afford that kind of money will settle for Harlem and then try to invoke as much change as possible” (excerpt from interview with Tamara). Harlem allows people the option of residing in a more affordable area of Manhattan. Several train lines run through Harlem, including MTA Metro-North Railroad, and Laguardia Airport is a short ride across the Robert F. Kennedy Bridge. These factors combined make Harlem very accessible to other central business areas such as Midtown and the financial district. As Veronica states, Harlem is even more desirable, “especially if you work over here, and you want your commute to be decent” (excerpt from interview with Veronica).

Almost everything runs through 125th Street. You have the 1 Train, A, B, C, D. The 2 and the 3, 4, 5, 6. You have the bus that goes to LaGuardia Airport; you have the 101, 102, the 100. Just everything here, so wherever you work at in the city, and you live here, you’re going to get there very quickly. (Excerpt from interview with Mary)

Jennifer continues, “Because of the location 1, of the highways, 2, and the fact that we are next to Yankee Stadium” (excerpt from interview with Jennifer). “Transportation is nearby. Columbia is in walking distance; there’s all those shops on 125th Street. Not only

can you get to MTA, but you can also get to Metro-North, and there are highways nearby, things like that” (excerpt from interview with Tamara). “Those moving in are professionals, and have young families, and are moving here because we have good social facilities, good parks, and excellent transportation, and the schools are improving” (excerpt from interview with Davis).

Resistance to Change

This particular code yields some of the richest discussion on the meaning of community to those who live in this neighborhood of Manhattan—both long-time residents, as well as newcomers. The stories you will hear talk about a desire to keep Harlem either as a place where Black culture and residents thrive or as a place where new residents affect change and keep it from reverting to its former use. Starting with the latter, I begin with sharing some of the women’s anecdotal experiences and then I share from the perspective of the community leaders. The stories balance one another and help tell a complete story. First, we hear stories of residents wanting to remain and them turning down offers to sell one’s apartment. I start with Joy’s story.

My best friend’s father, he never wants to move. They offered him \$40,000 for his apartment, and he turned it down. He wants to remain there. He wants to change the neighborhood and make it a better place on his own; where my mother is like if I got an opportunity to get out, I’m out. There’s a lot of Caucasians that live in that building, so I’m guessing that what her father pays for rent they want to charge more to other people, and he’s saying, “No,” so they try to buy him out. That’s why my friend’s father he won’t be bought out because he like, “We’re not going nowhere, we’re staying here.” And he knows how important that apartment is to them, but it’s also important to him. All his kids were raised in there, and he’s Southern, and he believes in settling. You know the people in the South they want to be able to say my grandmother’s grandmother, grandmother, grandmother lived here, so that’s how he is, so he wants to keep that. (Excerpt from interview with Joy)

In the previous story, I'm told about a resident who desires to hold onto his apartment because he recognizes its value and wants to be able to pass it on to his children. There's some similarity in the next stories shared by Tamara. She begins by talking about those who own in Harlem and their desire to keep their property. Her father has no interest in selling his co-op and intends to pass it on to his children. In fact, he's quite surprised at the current value of his apartment—unable to make the connection between the Harlem he knows and the Harlem of today. I then include an excerpt of our interview where she talks about the co-op association of her residence that has purposed only to sell to people of color to preserve Harlem's Black majority. She equates this to the practice of Jewish residents in Washington Heights that may only sell to other Jews to keep the Jewish presence in that area. I shortened it as much as possible without risking the chance of losing valuable information.

. . . . Oh yeah, he's not playing with that. I remember when we were like little kids, and he would say, "Do not sell." We would never. If you even googled my address online. . . . Two years ago one of the apartments went on the market and was a little over \$600,000. It's crazy because my dad had no clue how much it goes for and I showed it to him about six months ago, and I was like, "Daddy, you know how much it would go for if you sell this apartment?" And he's like "No." I'm like, "Take a guess, take a guess." He's like "\$50,000? Are you kidding me?" So I started laughing, and I showed it to him, and he was like "That's crazy." Yeah, it is. "Why would someone want to pay that much to live here?" I told him transportation is nearby My dad is 56, so he doesn't think about things like that. He's not even paying attention to his neighborhood because he's so used to it. I was trying to paint the picture for him and he's like, "that's crazy." He's like, "If anyone is paying a million dollars to live over here, they got the wrong idea." (Excerpt from interview with Tamara)

Actually, in my building it is pretty clear, they do not sell to White people. They feel like selling to White people is selling out in a sense. So they try When there are apartments open because of death, or what have you, or when a real beneficiary left, when someone has passed or moved on to a nursing home, they do their best to only sell to minorities for lack of a better word. (Excerpt from interview with Tamara)

In my building, some of my best friends come from families of people who own in Harlem. One of my best friends, closest friends, her parents own the brownstone they

live in, two other brownstones and about five buildings in Harlem. They refuse to rent to people who are not people of color because they want to keep Harlem a certain kind of way. A lot of people don't know that that happens. If you don't live in Harlem, you wouldn't know I know that if it happens in my building, it happens in other places. One time one of my best friends and I was actually looking at a brownstone on 131st Street, it was a studio apartment, and it was lovely And the owner happened to be a White woman, and we were in there, and we were talking to her, and my friend was actually interested in this apartment. The woman told us some of her other realtor friends and the people that owned some of the other brownstones on this block wouldn't rent to us. And she said, "There are people in this block who own some of these brownstones and don't want to rent to Black people because they want a different neighborhood." That's not everyone, that's not everywhere, but it happens. It happens on both ends. It happens where Black people only want to rent to colored people because they want to keep Harlem the same, and then there is other people who won't just rent to the typical person because it's Harlem and they want to see it be different, and they want to see it be more diverse. That happens a lot. (Excerpt from interview with Tamara)

Non-profit developer Brown is not aware of such acts of resistance among Black residents stating, "Most of us you know, we'll accept anything from anybody. You know, but we are not the ones who kick them out. You know we really don't do that. You know we are a good set of people. You know more forgiving and honest" (excerpt from interview with Brown).

Elected official Roberts suggests that politicians in Harlem have also tried to keep Harlem mainly Black through purposeful congressional district remapping, but the number of residents needed for such an exercise proved unattainable. Roberts states that Harlem can no longer maintain Black control because the community is changing and the numbers do not exist.

And people are coming in. Whites are coming in; it's a mixed, you're getting a mixed, ya see what I mean? So you're not going to keep it. So there was a way to draw, we tried to. There's a way to draw a district. There is a streak of Black folks, not a streak, a place where we could of grabbed city hall, cut into the Bronx. There was an area that go up and end up in the cities and the other side of Westchester which are Black towns, all bourgeois Black and tie them all together, a ridiculous thing. That's the only way you could end up with a Black district. There is no way we can capture enough Blacks in that seven hundred thousand people because all these buildings were abandoned 20

years ago. So and now, we're just reopening them, and as we reopen them, we can't say we only want Black people. (Excerpt from interview with Roberts)

The reopening of Harlem to outside communities with its available housing stock makes the continued existence of Black dominance unrealistic. Roberts makes a critical point in stating that it is impossible to ban people of different races from moving into Harlem. According to him, despite the efforts of politicians or homeowners such as the coop association, change is inevitable. Because of their increasing numbers, Roberts believes the next US Congressman may not be Black but may be Dominican.

So as much as you'd like it to be Black again, I won't say that you won't get a Black legislator, but it's going to require a lot of freaky things to happen, somebody to get indicted, three people to run, and then a lower number race. So, we're gonna have a change; we're going to have a major change. (Excerpt from interview with Roberts)

Real estate broker Davis' story demonstrates that resistance to change is not just race based, but there is also evidence of resistance against those who are more affluent.

About nine months ago, I was on my way home, walking on Lenox Avenue wearing a suit and two Black folks, a male and a woman, commented, "Negroes wearing suits, that's what makes Harlem so expensive like that." I'm trying to make the community better, but I'm challenged as a civic leader because I'm viewed as an outsider. People see me as a threat although I'm trying to make Harlem better. (Excerpt from interview with Davis)

Davis sees himself as working hard to bring about real change to Harlem, whereas those he encountered on his way home view him as a threat to their reality of Harlem.

When I asked Tamara what other ways one can preserve culture in a changing community other than employing deliberate tactics of housing discrimination, she talked about keeping Harlem's aesthetics—repurposing buildings while maintaining its historical look so that Harlem looks the same. "For example, Hotel Theresa, that was a hotel decades ago It's a shared office building, different businesses on different floors, but it's still on the front, it says Hotel Theresa, and it still looks exactly the same" (excerpt from

interview with Tamara). Also, developers should make sure new construction complements Harlem's brick and mortar look, avoiding a sharp contrast. Other efforts of preservation include building more statues of figures tied to Harlem's past and placing them around Harlem. Residents must also make a commitment to keeping its culture alive by teaching it to their children, much like her father did for her, and she does with her son, and by investing in their community. Efforts should focus on "accepting the culture that already exists and . . . accepting new people and merging and creating a new Harlem, but not forgetting about the old" (excerpt from interview with Tamara).

We Let It Happen

When discussing the reality of community change, a few of the interviewees express that long-time residents gave Harlem away. Mary is disheartened by the takeover of her community and states the following,

You have to blame the people who sold their brownstones for dirt cheap. You would have to wonder, "Why do you want my brownstone now? Why and why not hold out? Try to fix up your own brownstone because it's a house." They don't build buildings like that anymore. And then as far as the community of Central Harlem, I feel like although a lot of the lots were vacant, we kind of let others come in and tell us how it should be, you know, instead of doing it ourselves and try to make it what we want it to be. But for those who were, definitely . . . Well, they had their eyes opened, how come this falls out? Like, why did they let it? What happened? Where was the disconnect? (Excerpt from interview with Mary)

Jennifer talks about a store in Harlem that was on 125th Street since her childhood, and she states that the owners gave up the property.

Yes, yes, yes, because they didn't change Harlem. We allowed Harlem to be changed. We as a people, as far as African-Americans who reside here, we allowed them because we didn't take initiative or we didn't have the lots. We had lots that were empty that were being sold. We had brownstones that were being sold. We didn't take advantage of that. (Excerpt from interview with Jennifer)

Mary blames those who sold their brownstones for cheap and did not see the value in what they had. “Why? And why not hold out? Try to fix up your own brownstone because it’s a house. They don’t build buildings like that anymore” (excerpt from interview with Mary). Developer and property manager Miles expresses similar thoughts in regards to attempts from new residents in changing the neighborhood,

Pretty bold of folks right? But that only happens in our communities because we allow it to happen . . . like, how dare you consider doing something like that in this community? If you move to Marcus Garvey Park, you live in Marcus Garvey Park. You have to respect our culture just like if I move to an area called Alexander Hamilton I’m going to respect it. I’m not going to change it just because maybe the nature of the folks who moved into the community. (Excerpt from interview with Miles)

Displacement of Residents

In the section above, I shared some of the adverse consequences of neighborhood change as discussed by those interviewed. Among those concerns, the issue of displacement of long-term residents comes up. Here, I take a closer look at what the respondents shared. I start with Cindy, who is a tenant’s rights advocate. “It has affected me in somewhat in seeing people pushed out, can’t get apartments, but opposed to letting other cultures coming here and get an apartment. And people just sitting here on a waiting list for years can’t get an apartment for their children” (excerpt from interview with Cindy). Cindy discusses how there is availability for market rate apartments, yet there is very limited availability for affordable housing. In her mind, there is a greater immediacy for the latter. She sees injustice in this disparity.

If you don’t meet that income criteria, a person that’s on SSI or a person that’s on SSD or public assistance or fixed income, it’s like they’re pushed out. They have to go to a project-based building. And a lot of these project-based buildings have a waiting list of five years, ten years. They have to wait for the project-based buildings or Section 8 or NYCHA, New York City Housing Authority and it’s not guaranteed they will ever be called. (Excerpt from interview with Cindy)

Joy shares how she lost some of her childhood friends due to them having to leave New York because they could not afford to live in the city anymore. She also discusses the experiences of the families of her friends who were bought out. “Their landlords bought them out; they went for it because they saw short-term versus long-term. So their landlord came to them with \$30,000, \$40,000 and they was like, ‘We taking this, yeah, you can keep this apartment’” (excerpt from interview with Joy). These same families exhausted the funds within a short period and then found themselves seeking housing.

I have friends that parents were bought out, and they were living okay for the first year or two. And then after that now they gotta move in with they aunt, who got a family of her own. And now they gotta go into a shelter or apply for housing. (Excerpt from interview with Joy)

A familiar story among the women included recollections of people who left Harlem and relocated to other boroughs. This retelling was perhaps the most agreed upon topic. Jennifer shared, “I mean just out of Harlem to the Bronx because it was cheaper” (excerpt from interview with Jennifer). Speaking of another friend she says,

So they moved to Brooklyn, and that's a big sacrifice coming from Harlem and to have to move to Brooklyn It was an associate. I know she had children, and she was saying the cost of living was too much. The rent was going up too much. And she found something cheaper in Brooklyn. That was before Brooklyn had its up and coming neighborhood. So that was about eight years ago. (Excerpt from interview with Jennifer)

Nicole also says she knows a lot of people who have left. Some moved to different boroughs, but most moved out of state to Atlanta or North Carolina. Wanda says, “Most people, if they leave Harlem, they’re moving upstate, down south, unless they was living in a shelter in Harlem and they end up finding an apartment in the Bronx” (excerpt from interview with Wanda).

Tamara said, “It’s been like this grand move to the Bronx, and everyone I know from Harlem hates the Bronx There’s been this crazy move to the Bronx, and I mean it started when I was like in 10th grade I want to say” (excerpt from interview with Tamara). Tamara remembers this great move occurring during the economic crash of 2008, which caused those who lost jobs or were down-sized to re-examine how much they wanted to spend on housing, asking the question, “do I want to spend this amount of money just to stay in this neighborhood or do I want to get more for my dollar?” Tamara tells how a lot of people that she knows moved to the Bronx. According to her, the idea that people were tricked to leave their apartments is not factual. Although she does not agree, she believes that many people were displaced from renovated buildings because they were not knowledgeable of the process and the resulting consequence on rent.

There’s a proposal to gut the building, keep the same structure, but gut the building and remodel it and everyone comes back in. When everyone comes back in, it’s going to go for market value. So the building across the street was a regular apartment building All these people agreed. I think they got bonuses. So they agreed to get these remodeled apartments, and I think it took like a year-and-a-half and when they were all said and done at market value, a lot of people that were living there for years, you know kids and families that I have grown up with, could not afford to come back and a lot of them ended up moving to the Bronx. The super that lived across the street, he had to be like maybe ten years older than my dad. He had to move to the Bronx, and he was really upset. But then it was no swindle. They explained to them that if we remodel it, you’re going to have to pay market value, and maybe people weren’t aware of what market value is, but it cost a lot of money and moving to the Bronx was the answer. (Excerpt from interview with Tamara)

Developer Miles gives some understanding to this topic. If an owner buys a building, rent stabilization protects the current tenants. But if they fall behind on their rent, they lose that protection. Monefa talks about residents she knows who received lump payment for their apartments. Her great grandmother previously lived in a walk-up building on Bradhurst Avenue for at least two decades and was bought out by the owner.

She said the rent was spiking; she couldn't afford it and because they were renovating the building and actually the entire block . . . people started to receive notices, so she said she received a notice. They gave her a nice lump sum, and she just moved out. She did, but I don't think she wanted to (fight) because she was getting older in age and it's a walk-up building. (Excerpt from interview with Monefa)

Elected official Roberts agrees that many are moving down south and believes that migration accounts for the largest share of population loss. "They gone back to Virginia. You know how many of our bourgeois Blacks are back south if they've aged out and they've done their politics; now that's the biggest story" (excerpt from interview with Roberts). Roberts gives an intriguing example of some of these constituents who relocate but attempt to hold on to their Harlem apartment.

The owner of your building who wants your apartment will check every state in this union, cause electronically you can do it, and they'll know you're paying taxes down there. They'll know your car is licensed down there, and they will come and try to get you removed from the building on the grounds that you don't live there anymore. And then the other problem we have is that same lady who has an apartment, her husband died, she still doing the travel, but she has a seven-room apartment; so you know the landlord wants that apartment. There are a lot of large apartments in those buildings, and they're physically large. They are co-oping them. So the co-oping them makes it very easy to get rid of people, but they need to get you out so they can sell it. So they'll catch you. So that's causing part of the problem with gentrification; again, something we can't stop because I can't tell her to live forever, or I can't tell her to stay in that apartment and not go south because you can't afford to live there anymore, which is the other option you know (Excerpt from interview with Roberts)

Although Monefa lives in a public housing development, she shares an interesting story of how her neighbor was offered money by management to give up her apartment.

They will send her notices to come down to the management office And they'll say, "We will offer you such and such amount of money if you decide to give up your apartment." I think when she first moved there, she had like five or six kids, and now she only has like two of her kids living there, so they want to downsize her, and she doesn't want to do that. She wants to keep her larger apartment, so I think that has a lot to do with it also. (Excerpt from interview with Monefa)

The likelihood of this story being true cannot be validated, but whether true or not, the very thought or rumor indicates that residents throughout Harlem, regardless of housing type,

have a fear of being bought or sold out. Real-estate broker Davis believes that those living in public housing developments are safe and are not going anywhere.

Although the developments are not presently in danger, I would advise the residents to better themselves—go to school, get a job, etc The probability of privatizing developments also exists, so residents need to get ready. What happened in Chicago and other places regarding tearing down developments can't work in NYC. But people in Harlem need to be ready for this change. Poor Blacks are moving elsewhere and once displaced; it takes a long period of time to gain momentum again. (Excerpt from interview with Davis)

Putman is transparent and states that his organization's Board of Directors often talks about the focus of their developments and how they do not want to displace residents. But yet, Putman challenges the Board by letting them know that by only focusing on affordable housing they too may be excluding certain people, which may violate the mandate as a public benefit organization. "We can't promote that type of housing strategy. We can't redline people; we can't block bust and things like that" (excerpt from interview with Putman). Ms. Garnett challenges the concept of displacement.

So you know, sometimes displacement is probably the wrong word to use in this instance, but sometimes leaving is what's best for someone. They have another opportunity somewhere, a job, or this or that. So I think that displacement speaks to being pushed out as opposed to exposures that opened your eyes to other opportunities. (Excerpt from interview with Ms. Garnett)

Ms. Garnett goes on to say that there are some who choose not to remain in Harlem because they are exposed to another lifestyle during their experience in college or elsewhere. Williams shares his organization's strategy to avoid the displacement of residents by providing them with the education, workforce development, housing, and social services necessary to remain. "So we're looking at how we can be impactful, but also keep resources in the community and also have people be able to afford the educational

opportunities, the workforce opportunities, keep the seniors in the communities and things of that nature” (excerpt from interview with Williams).

Displacement of Businesses

Residents are not the only ones displaced; businesses are as well. The interviewees share stories of stores and establishments that are no longer in Harlem because they could not afford to remain. Community leader Davis speaks of future changes that will occur in Harlem because of rezoning and believes that Harlem will one day look like Madison Avenue. Although that’s in the future, the current rate of development makes one question whether he might be correct. Davis shares that within the past twelve months, nine family-owned businesses were displaced because of increased rents. He uses the historic Lenox Lounge as an example.

For instance, the Lenox Lounge closed in its current location because the landlord wanted to increase the rent to \$20,000 which is 2x the current rent. The problem is that the site is a NYC landmark. Restaurateur Richard Notar and his team are scheduled to open a new jazz club, and the Lenox Lounge is moving to another location they can afford the rent. (Excerpt from interview with Davis)

Another long-standing community business that could no longer afford to remain in its previous location was a Black-owned record store on 125th Street. Jennifer talks about that store and remembers it from her childhood. A petition went around with hopes of saving the store, but the attempt was unsuccessful, and the business eventually moved to a smaller location.

It was Black-owned, but the property value like I had said had went up, that they, they wanted to take the rent up to move them out. He was relocated now, but the business is very small and ah. The business where he’s now is much smaller now than when it was on 125th, and he was actually being forced out, though And it was a petition and a petition, and it was so many petitions that was signed. He still had to leave. But he been there for as long as I was a little girl. I can’t even remember when. You know, and so he relocated to 127th and 8th Avenue, and they wind up you know selling up, they

wind up giving up the property, and now there's a shoe store. You know . . . I think I was more hurt by that, by that situation . . . and it's because it was Black-owned and because 125th Street is majority owned by Jewish people and . . . I never been in the shoe store that resides there now because I just didn't approve of the move and how he wanted to get the record store man out, the record owner out of his business. (Excerpt from interview with Jennifer)

Williams challenges the notion that big box developments displace smaller businesses. He talks about the community's experience with the Pathmark in East Harlem, the supermarket serves and employs people from all over the city.

It also provided an enormous amount of jobs for the people in the community to really be able to thrive and support some of the families that were also living in the communities. As far as driving some of the smaller businesses away, I really don't see it because I think depending on what the entities were in the community on that side, it really depended on the drive. Certain things you get at a smaller store you may not get at a major supermarket. So there's the kind of touch to the community where you have the small stores, but I think the big box stores actually supported the drive to really keep people employed in Harlem. (Excerpt from interview with A. Williams)

Harlem in Ten Years

I asked each of the interviewees to tell me what Harlem will look like in ten years at its current rate of development. Overall, respondents feel like Harlem will resemble the upper Westside, diversity will increase, the low-income will no longer be present, office buildings will increase, and Harlem will become a bustling shopping and dining district. Most of the women believe that they will not be in Harlem in ten years, while the community leaders attest to this high probability. I allow the data to speak for itself.

I don't think there will be a Central Harlem. It will be the Upper West Side, and there will probably be a majority Caucasians and other races out here. And there will probably be a small percentage of Hispanics and Blacks up here. The type of businesses that will be here will be the tourist attractions what Bloomberg is aiming for. The Joe's Crab Shack, the Red Lobster, the Hilton Hotels, the Marriotts, that's the type of stuff that will be here. Not something for anybody with low-income. And soon I feel like New York City as a whole is only going to be a tourist city. I don't think anybody is going to afford living here unless you're filthy rich. (Excerpt with interview with Joy)

I don't know if the projects will still exist. I honestly don't know. I honestly don't think the projects will exist. If so, it will just be different. It will be cleaner Hmmm, I think it will probably look like 72nd and Columbus The eateries, yep, I think we will look a little bit like 72nd and Columbus. A little replica of that But anyone making 5-6 figures will be able to live here. I don't even think I would be in New York. (Excerpt with interview with Jennifer)

I feel like in 10 years it would be mid-to-high income in Harlem. I don't think it will look the same. I don't think it will be the same demographics at all I don't think it will have the same tenants. I don't think it will have the same owners. They say NYCHA is for sale. I could see that. I mean whoever buys it is a smart, smart person. And they stand to make a lot of money off of that because it's all about location as far as where I live There's still vacant lots, and when those get developed, it will be something beautiful. It'll be beautiful now. It won't be everyone, unfortunately. I feel like in general, New York won't be for those who can't make it No, you really have to have it New York will only be a place where you can come and visit. I feel that way. You come into work, and then you leave. It'll be that kind of place. You know how Tokyo is? I heard about people who spend the week there, and then they go home on the weekends. (Excerpt with interview with Mary)

Wow, I'm hoping . . . I figured that more than likely Harlem will look like midtown. I hate to say it, but you know with the influx of different cultures and then also the different businesses I don't think it's right because some people have lived here for generations, but unfortunately its survival of the fittest, it's just like that. I hate to say it, but it's true. (Excerpt with interview with Monefa)

I think it's basically going to stay the same. It might have some changes, but I just think that eventually, it's going to have a lot of diverse people living in the area. More than what I see now. I think it's going to slowly get more diverse culturally. I think that more people are moving out to find a . . . because everything is getting high. Rent is getting high; like, because even me I plan to move once my son graduates. (Excerpt with interview with Nicole)

The ultimate gentrification is when the Hispanics will come in and take over everything more than the White people. I guess that would be it. You know what? I really can't tell you because what's happening here also goes along with the mayor that you get. Bloomberg played a big part in what happened here of the businesses and the people that moved in and what happened with housing. If he leaves and he no longer has a part in this thing, then the next mayor comes in, and he changes something about that housing authority. If he stops letting everyone claim eminent domain and take over this and take over that, the things may actually stop as far as the gentrification process is concerned, and people aren't being moved out. (Excerpt from interview with Roxanne)

In ten years from now, I hope to God that I am wrong, but I think it will be unrecognizable. I actually plan on moving in 2016 for a temporary time Ten years from now I think it's going to have this futuristic look, that whole metal, and glass thing.

. . . . I think that with the stores that are coming . . . will come traffic. Just the shopping traffic from the people who maybe live on the Upper East Side or West Side who don't want to travel all the way to lower Manhattan to go shopping, and the neighboring people from New Jersey, Queens from the Tri-borough Bridge to 125th street. I think it's going to bring a lot of traffic and with that traffic is going to come new people that's going to be like, "Oh, well that's how Harlem looks now? I think I might want to live here." I think slowly, but surely they won't be able to tell the difference in neighborhoods in general Manhattan. I just feel like the difference is going to be like upper-middle-class and just high-class. I don't think that there will be much lower-class. I just read an article about what they're doing with the projects, the St. Nicholas projects where they're going to start renting or selling to private owners I read it in the Daily News that within thirty years, the private owners can then fully own the projects, and NYCHA will no longer have any say-so over it. They can then sell their apartment for market value. I think ten years from now Harlem will be no place for people making under \$60,000. I don't know how those people are going to look. I just know I see Harlem being no different then maybe the upper West Side I don't see it being much different than maybe the area around like the Lincoln Center or the area on 72nd Street on the West side. I don't see it being any different. (Excerpt from interview with Tamara)

I think the people who work downtown with their Black suits will be up in here. I do think that there will be less African-Americans. I think that there will be more White people, and I think that there will be more homosexuals. They're already in Harlem. That was one of the differences that I noticed in the community earlier during the recession. I feel like from ten years ago until now, and ten years from now I feel like there's going to be more homosexuality in the Harlem community and I feel like it's going to be more White people in the community. I kind of feel like there's a relationship between gentrification and homosexuality. I haven't done much research on it so I can't really say there's a relationship, but I think that there is. I feel like it goes hand in hand, to be honest. (Excerpt from interview with Wanda)

More skyscrapers, more buildings to bring more people in. I think in ten years they will really try to get anybody who had any ties to the community, growing up in the community out because of the market. My friend sold his building and made money. Everybody that can afford to live in Harlem. That's what it's going to be more about. Not because this used to be a historical Black community. You know where Charles Rangel lived, and Al Sharpton came from, not because all that. It's who can afford to live here. (Excerpt from interview with Veronica)

That's a deep question because if the tide continues to move the way that it has, there will be more new residents, gentrification really took a full hold and the community may indeed flip in the next ten years. It's hard to say. I read an article the other day in the Amsterdam News or something about how NYCHA are going to increase their parking rates from \$75 to \$360 a year, but they told them on April 15th, and it takes effect May 1st, and you have to pay the whole thing in one lump sum, cash. There's no payment plan, no credit card, no check; you have to go to the office, pay in cash or you lose your

parking spot. This is all seemingly an attempt to rent those spots out to non-NYCHA residents at market rate. So there are some things like that, those institutional things that are going to impact people. But there is this whole push, even NYCHA; there's this green land they're willing to sell to developers for luxury housing on them What do I see for Harlem in ten years? More of what's happening now Yea it's gonna keep on going, especially as other parts of Manhattan become more and more unaffordable in real estate. I'm sure there's no green space left or very limited balance of green space left or vacant space left. But as people are getting pushed out of Lower Manhattan and Midtown and Upper Manhattan, they're just being pushed and it's uncomfortable. (Excerpt from interview with Ms. Garnett)

I think it also depends on the type of big box stores that comes into the community that will make that kind of difference because it will attract a population of certain finances of people that are coming in. It also depends on the type of hotels that's going to be built in Harlem. I think that's all going to be relative to the transition where you talk about 5 to ten years from now. (Excerpt from interview with Williams)

With quite, some humor elected official Roberts says that if he works hard, Harlem will be “clean and shiny.” He continues,

And young school going children who are all doing very well, all anticipating going to Harvard. That's what would happen, male and female. It will be everybody; it will be mixture It will gentrify, but as I stated, gentrification is not always bad. You don't want to move out poor people and move in poor people. You want to make sure everybody does well. (Excerpt from interview with Roberts)

Brown believes Harlem will be a very expensive place eventually. “This is the Mecca of Manhattan. It has all the virtues. It is beautiful. You have historic sites here, so this is like, this is like thee, thee, ‘go west young man!’ It's like the new West” (excerpt from interview with Brown). He states that developers will fight to come to Harlem to build those luxury condos and co-ops, while their organization will be the buffer to make sure that the developer is accountable to the community. “We support development with work, but the community has to be a part of that continuum. It should not, would not, ever be secluded as long as I am here. And as long as the boards continue to be supportive of this organization” (excerpt from interview with Brown). M. Putman of the same organization continues along the same line.

Drastically. I think there's gonna be new buildings, more new constructions which I think is a good thing, and demographically I think it's gonna change if we continue at the pace we're going. Then I think African-Americans will probably be the minority in this community. What (organization name) has done to slow that process down as we continue to commit to reestablishing the affordability for each building that we own, we try to select partners that are committed to that as well We recapitalized (hundreds of) units which guarantees 30 more years of affordability for those residents. So at least that generation will continue to be here. (Excerpt from interview with M. Putnam)

Today, what we're experiencing is economical gentrification. It's not about race; it's just about who has and who doesn't have. The earth is for no one; no one owns it. If you look at the history of Harlem, there's always been a turnover. Although there should be a balance, the reality of that happening is slim because there's no more land in Harlem. Harlem in ten years will be a melting pot. We're in 2013 and the Harlem of today is not the Harlem of 20 or 30 years ago. The days of the little old ladies are gone. Now people are coming to Harlem to sip wine and socialize. (Excerpt from interview with Davis)

I'm thinking the area between 125th and 110th. Again, I'm going to cut it up in those two sections. I think you're going to see more of what you see right now, and it's going to be more gentrified. I think you're going to see more market rate housing, which means you're going to get more families from outside the community. It's still going to be pockets of original Harlemites if that's what you want to call them, but I think you're going to see all of that from 110th up to 125th. I think you're also going to start to see it from 125th going North, but not as drastic just because of the nature of the housing stock. There's not that many vacant buildings here, there are a lot of homes, though. The homes are probably going to change. The home ownership rates are going to change where if they're predominately African American now that that probably will not be the case in ten years. As families move on, as families sell, chances are buyers are not going to be from this community, unfortunately. So you're going to see pockets. What's also interesting is when I think this Whole Foods open up on 125th. . . , that's a game changer to me. Other people may not recognize what that means to a community like Harlem, but that's a game changer. You're bringing Whole Foods to 125th street, and God forbids it does well, it just changes the landscape in real estate around here. I think we got to be careful what we ask for. I prefer to have those kind of supermarkets and places to shop, but that's a major game changer to me. I think when you do that, you're just going to bring in more outsiders and Harlem is going to be . . . I've seen some numbers now saying the majority of Central Harlem is no longer African American. Who says a community is supposed to stay like that forever? Maybe it's not supposed to; Harlem wasn't always Black. It was Europeans and what have you until the 1920s, but a lot of our culture and our business culture is here, so we're going to start to lose some of that I think. I think what's also going to happen is we'll probably get some more office buildings here. When that happens, I really think the fabric of this community will start to dissipate. Right, there's always going to be service positions, so that's fine. I think that there's going to be some changes. I think that there's probably going to be a commercial building that's going to open up at some point. There was talk of the building on 125th

diagonally from 103 125th street; that's a huge vacant lot right now. (Excerpt from interview with Miles)

Will Harlem be the same in ten years as it is today? From all the responses, I hear a resounding “no!” The issue of why Harlem will not be the same points to the overarching theme of the community's affordability. This next network of codes goes further and ties together all the responses as to why Harlem will most likely be drastically different ten years from now.

AFFORDABILITY OF HARLEM AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Throughout the interviews, the changing affordability of housing in Harlem was a common theme. What was once middle-income is now considered to be low-income, and upper-income is seen as middle-income. This reversal in definition disqualifies truly low-income individuals from participating in many of the affordable housing programs. The developers give me an understanding of affordability.

Affordability Breakdown

Non-profit developer Brown talks about the Bloomberg Administration's new market credits where there is a fixed formula for affordable housing. When using the formula, he states that those who end up in the affordable housing units are not the people who need it.

Out of the 1,500 units, how many are there that are \$40,000 or \$50,000 families of four? You look . . . there's none, but you find people there who have \$70,000-\$80,000. But that's basically because it is skewed. So as a not for profit, you have to wear it all, you have to do one or two things, you can either sit back and let formula overwhelm you or you can be in the vineyard pushing for change. (Excerpt from interview with Brown)

Private developer Miles states that when talking about affordable housing you have to know which population you are addressing. “Affordable to whom?” He also says that the

income eligibility formula for affordable housing depends on which agency is financing the project.

Just so you know, there are various loan sources, so there's the low-income tax credit which you can get from the City of New York and the State of New York. There are home funds, which are federal dollars. Those are grant dollars; those typically come from the federal government through the state, then there's the PLP, and then the City of New York also has loan products. If you go to HDC's website, they have a program called LAMP, and they will tell you the different distribution of incomes. If you can get LAMP financing, it's kind of quasi. Like I'm doing over here on 145th where some of the tenants are 90%, some are 80%, some are 70%. It's all a function where you get your money from. (Excerpt from interview with Miles)

Miles gives even greater insight, stating that the majority of developers who concentrate on affordable housing are non-profits and rely on government funding for projects. Therefore the affordability percentage is pre-determined.

Putman defines affordability as a function of a federal statistic called area median income (AMI). The federal government determines what is affordable based on a rather complicated formula that looks at the area's aggregate income. He states that low-income can be anywhere from 30%, 50% or 60% of the AMI and that the range of affordability can even go up to 100-120% of the AMI, which is considered market rate. Putman continues by saying that the formula was created to determine eligibility for Section 8 vouchers and that all other housing programs follow suit. "The rent cannot be more than the hundred, more than a household making over 120% of area median income" (excerpt from interview with Putman). Another factor of affordability is the tenant's gross income.

So the industry says, as a function of your gross, 30% of your gross income should be reserved for housing. That's just the industry. Nobody's imposing that, at least it's a requirement; sometimes we go up to 40%. But realistically if 30% of your income is reared for housing, 30% divided by 12 months, we would say in the industry whatever that sum is, that is how much you can afford in monthly rent. (Excerpt from interview with Putman)

Putman goes further to say that if the government gives land to a developer or a non-profit, the agency requires that preference is given to people that live in the respective community board. “That's, that's the rule of thumb. And if the project just doesn't make sense and nobody can afford it in that community board, they waive it. They waive that requirement” (excerpt from interview with Putman).

That's a function of the kind of financing a developer would receive. Earlier, I mentioned to you P.L.P.s, Participation Loan Programs. If you want to get financing, that 1% money from the City of New York and that other money would be regular market rate, then you blend it. You do that by limiting the amount of rent that you're going to charge. So you go to the City of New York and say, “I want to get one of these loans,” but then they're going to say, “You can only rent x amount of units at 80% of median income, some at 60% of median income.” As a matter of fact, I'm doing a deal like that right now. Of the three buildings, I have two vacant buildings next door and one here on Adam Clayton Powell and 143rd. So that's exactly the kind of deal I structured where I'm going to have rents running from 60% of median income to 90% of median income. (Excerpt from interview with Miles)

Miles goes on to say that the majority of his projects are funded with low-income tax credits or have some other kind of subsidy dollars. He has also developed using a home fund which is a federal program similar to tax credits and through New York City's P.L.P. He supports 50 percent of a project this way at a one percentage financing rate and then 50 percent at market rate, giving a blended rate of approximately 3 percent to keep his debt low. The majority of his projects, not all, have been affordable housing. He shares that there are no vacancies in his buildings. Even his market rate apartments, which are technically below actual market price, are occupied.

It's still below what I would consider market rate. In other words, there were two-bedroom apartments that I've rented, and now they're like \$1700, \$1600. Market rate in Harlem is 20, 22, 23 depending on the size of the unit, but a two-bedroom apartment can cost you \$2,000. So when I have something for \$1300 it gets rented like that. (Excerpt from interview with Miles)

He confesses that he could outsmart his tenants by rehabbing the apartments and then “jump the rent up.”

But that’s not what this is about here. This is about maintaining affordable housing for the community. No, I’m not purposely not doing that, but I could. One of our properties, I do have one property that’s market rate, but the rents are kind of unofficially low anyway, but I have to, the apartment is in horrible condition. When a tenant moves out I have to rehab it anyway, upgrade the electricity, but I do just the rent. I’ll give an example, a one bedroom in this building, \$1300, not crazy, but not like \$600/\$700. Majority of developers who concentrate on affordable housing will be not-for-profits. I just happen to be one because that’s how I started out, so I’m at some point going to do some market-rate housing also. Right now, for the most part, I’m still doing affordable housing. A project I’m working on in Newark, it’s affordable housing, but that’s because the market in Newark is the affordable housing rent. So if we were able to get higher rent, we would but we can’t because tax-credit is the market out there. This project I’m doing over here on 145th is a quasi-affordable because there’s some 60%, 70% units, but there also the 90% units. So when you talk about what’s affordable, to whom? (Excerpt from interview with Miles)

Miles recalls the days when the City of New York and HUD owned properties, and they offered it to community residents. Miles developed some of those homes, and many of those families came from the Harlem community. Unfortunately, that stock of housing is no longer available. He believes that those sort of homeownership opportunities should occur again because that is the only way that working class families in Harlem can afford to own.

I know a couple of people when they bought from Abyssinian, they were \$200,000. Things of that nature, and that was affordable. Even though that might be 15 years ago, but they were still affordable for two families and what have you. There needs to be more of that. Unfortunately, there isn’t a lot of that right now. When it comes to affordable housing, it’s more on the rental side, which I can imagine as an owner. As for me, that’s what I do. I own properties I feel good when I have families who live in one of my apartments, particularly one of my affordable apartments, and then they go purchase a home. It doesn’t happen a whole lot, but it does happen. And it’s always going to be rentals here; I never have to worry about finding a tenant for one of my apartments because that’s just the nature of being in New York City. If all my tenants were like, “Hey we’re buying houses,” that’s great for me because I know that families are moving up, generations are getting better. That’s a point that should happen, but that’s unfortunate that it doesn’t happen. (Excerpt from interview with Miles)

I asked the elected official to define low-income and to discuss what sort of housing options are available to those on the lower spectrum. His knowledge is based much more on his constituent services than how the city defines low-income. “I don’t know where the poor people are living; I really don’t know that. Because I don’t know who is defined as poor, so I have trouble with it. We get a lot of walk-ins, we get people walking in, but I don’t see, I don’t know how you define poor” (excerpt from interview with Roberts).

Davis, community association member, has a similar response. He does not believe that the city’s affordability formula works. He believes that it is rather impractical and wrong. There are teachers, small business owners, and others who are not able to afford a studio. As a member of this association, he attends meetings concerning new housing developments, and the organization asks the developer to include affordable housing, or rent stabilized units.

Not all developers listen, and we can’t force anything specific. We have no control over what they consider affordable. Personally, when I tried to bring Blacks to certain developments, but they either can’t afford or don’t know how to invest in real estate. Many are not able to take the risk or do not know much about real estate. Therefore they are left behind. (Excerpt from interview with Davis)

According to Putman, 25 years ago affordable was truly affordable to those original tenants. Even when buildings were rehabbed, residents continued paying whatever rent they were paying previously for the life of the new building. But for the new incoming residents, affordability is now based upon a percentage of the area median income.

And for the most part, consistently that percentage has been defined 60% of the area median income. That ratio is called low-income. The lower, lower than that ratio percentage is 50%. And that's typically defined as very low-income, because it's half of what the area makes, so it's considered very low-income. And there’s another definition that's even lower, that's called 30%, or that’s 30% the median income, and that is called, I'll just make a term up, “extremely low-income.” The 30% is usually reserved for people who are under the poverty line and maybe even at the time of tenancy homeless.

So as a generalization, you could go from 30, 50 to 60 and all of them are categorized as low-income in some form. (Excerpt from interview with Putman)

Putman shares that in their funding allocation Congress limits affordable housing to those earning 60, 50 and 30% of the AMI. Since the definition of affordable housing evolves, Community Board 10 Land Use/Landmarks Committee Meeting on May 17, 2013, suggests that the term “income-targeted” be used instead of affordable to describe housing that is not truly affordable to those who are traditionally viewed as low-income. At a November 24, 2014, Housing Committee meeting, the Committee discussed ways in which they can develop a community survey to ask residents about housing in their area and its affordability. There is no further mention of this survey in the other meeting minutes.

Much of what I presented thus far criticizes the affordability breakdown and what is considered low-income. What I have not mentioned until now is that the non-profit developer cannot afford to fund 100% of a project, so they are in essence forced to do projects that are quasi-affordable. M. Putman shares that his organization’s typical ratio of affordable to market rate is 80% affordable and 20% market.

The reason why you need 20% market is because the reality is that you have a considerable amount of debt that will have to be amortized on the project in an over 30 year period. See you have to have a mix of housing units. And even the affordable units have to be mixed because you obviously don't want to have all 30% units, right, cause they're paying all low rents. (Excerpt from interview with Putman)

The diversification of apartments also exists in the for sale market.

We've done it with a condominium We did guarantee some affordable condominiums, but that was relative to, you know, what the definition of affordable is for a condominium. So give me an example of the lower and of a condominium in that particular field in range from about \$300,000 to around \$500,000. Which if you're talking about buying a home in New York City that's, that's low, that's on the lower end. It may be shocking to some people, but it is. On the higher and they were about 500 to over a million dollars. (Excerpt from interview with M. Putman)

Another example of this occurred at a Land Use/Landmarks Meeting on March 21, 2013. In 1993, the Mayor, Manhattan Borough President's Office, and Community Board 10 charged Greater Harlem Housing Development Corporation (GHHDC) with developing affordable housing around West 135th Street.

GHHDC developed 117 units of affordable housing in the immediate surroundings of West 135th Street and Saint Nicholas Avenue. The vacant lot remained undeveloped due to murals that were on the exterior of the adjacent buildings. However, these murals were destroyed when the exterior walls were waterproofed. Now, rising sewer and water costs and expiring tax abatements have put GHHDC's affordable housing under financial stress. (Land Use/Landmarks Meeting Minutes, March 11, 2013)

At the meeting, GHHDC announced that it had a buyer for the empty lot and planned to use money from the sale of that property to complete the 117 units of affordable housing.

To get a closer look at whom the developer is building for and project financing, Table 5.1 below shows the breakdown of affordability among the housing proposals made at the Land Use/Landmarks and Housing Committees from 2013-2014. I only include those plans that provide details on affordability. Those excluded are the projects that did not contain any details regarding cost, rent, AMI, etc... In Table 5.1, I take a closer look at eight housing proposals and the affordability.

The first property, developed by Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement and L+M Development Partners on 260 West 153rd Street, will provide 43 units affordable to those earning 50% of the AMI and another eight units for those earning 30% of AMI. The larger bulk of units have rents ranging from \$685 for a studio to \$870 for a 2-bedroom. The second property, developed by West Harlem Assistance, Inc. promises 54 units offered to those earning 50-60% of AMI, and tenants will not pay over 30% of their income. This project involves the temporary relocation of some residents with a guarantee that they can return to the development once complete.

The third property by West Harlem Group Assistance Inc. and Trinity Financial is another joint venture, providing 169 units financed with Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) and they will redevelop the remaining 147 units of public housing. This was the only proposal during the time frame of this study that involved the redevelopment of public housing units and income diversification. Of the non-public housing units, 28 are for those earning 60% of the AMI and 141 LIHTC units for families who make less than 60% of the AMI. The fourth property proposed by the National Urban League and the Hudson Companies and BRP is located on 121 West 125th Street. Fifty percent of the 114 units are market rate, 20% for those earning under 50% of the AMI (approximately \$29k-\$33k, depending on household size), and 30% reserved for people making under 130% of AMI (roughly \$80k-\$105k, depending on household size). 50% of the affordable units will be reserved for residents of CB 10, 5% for municipal employees, and 2% for people with disabilities.

The fifth property from Lemor Realty Corporation includes 130 units for those whose incomes are between 60-100% of the AMI. Apartments range from \$996 to \$2,190. The sixth property includes townhouses for sale. The developer, Azimuth Development Group, Inc., estimates an asking price of \$695,000. Taking into consideration rental income from the rental unit, the buyer will have an approximate income of \$80,000. The seventh property, Artimus Construction, includes 120 apartments with 20% reserved for families earning 40-60% of AMI. The remaining 80% of the units are market rate. The last property shown in the table, proposed by Northpark Companies, offers eight affordable units at the 100% range and 29 units at market rate. As you can see from the eight properties shown, the definition of affordable housing varies per developer and is based on

whether they receive any subsidy or tax credit. Given this range of definition, affordable housing units range from 30% to 100% of the AMI.

Table 5.1: Housing Development Proposals Presented before Community Board 10

[illegible]

Date	Developer	Joint Venture	Funding	Location	Affordable Units	Rent	Income Range	%AMI	Market Rate Units	Rent/Sell Price
11-21-13	Lemor Realty Corporation	N/A	N/A	407, 409, and 415 Lenox Avenue	130 units	studio, one, and two, bedroom apartments at an average price range of \$996 to \$1,698, \$1,070 to \$1,823, and \$1,287 to \$2,190 respectively	N/A	Apartments will be offered based on 100%, 80%, and 60% of AMI	N/A	N/A
12-19-13	Azimuth Development Group, Inc.	N/A	N/A	2805 Frederick Douglass Boulevard, between 149th Street & 150th Street	N/A	N/A	The target buyer is a household with a total income of around \$80,000.	N/A	N/A	The developer anticipates selling these Town houses for \$695K
<i>Note: The developer suggests that with a 3% down payment (\$20,850), 5.5% mortgage interest rate and \$1200 in rental income, mortgage payments would be \$2800 per month.</i>										
04-18-13	Artimus Construction	N/A	The developers do not anticipate making use of Low-Income Housing Tax Credits.	St. Ms. Thomas Church on 118 th Street and Saint Nicholas Avenue.	120 apartments (80 rentals and 40 condos)	N/A	N/A	Approximately 20% of the units will be Affordable to families earning 40% to 60% of AMI	Approximately 80% of units	N/A
<i>Note: The zoning for the project site is R7-A. The developers have applied for a rezoning to R8-A with the Department of City Planning, as current height restrictions do not make the project feasible. An R8-A zoning would allow a building height of 120ft or 12 stories, four additional stories than under the current R7-A zoning</i>										
06-20-13	Northpark Companies	No			8 units	The price for the affordable units would be approx. \$180,000 for the studios, \$220,000 for the 1-BD and \$270,000 for the 2-BD		Affordable to people earning 100% of AMI (3 studios, 3 1-BD and 2 2-BD)	29 units 5 studios, 20 1-BD, and 12 2-BD	N/A

Source: Manhattan Community Board 10 Meeting Minutes, Land Use/Landmarks and Housing Committees, 2013-2014

Community leader Ms. Garnett believes that there is nothing that can be done to keep Harlem from being inundated by luxury developments. However, she gives credit to the government programs that require the developer to reserve a certain percentage for low-income families. She admits that the majority of her organization's development is on the high-end, but some projects are affordable housing.

And so while we do development on the high-end—co-ops, condos. Even in those buildings, there's still an element of whatever percentage of low-income apartments reserved for low-income families. So there is a commitment of preventing displacement for the people who live in the buildings that already exists. Are we going to be able to prevent Harlem from being inundated with these luxury apartments and living facilities? No. And will we be able to position people to be able to afford them? No, we can't afford them. But we can do our part and try to keep those who are here, here. (Excerpt from interview with Ms. Garnett)

The concern expressed by the community leaders I interviewed is echoed in the various Community Board 10 Housing Committee meetings. The Committee discussed a draft resolution calling for affordable housing programs to serve the needs of the District's residents better. "Current programs are based on Area Median Income, which is inherently skewed towards higher incomes than those in our District, resulting in affordable housing programs that are in fact unaffordable to the residents they are intended to serve" (JLULHC Meeting Minutes, March 20, 2014). In that same meeting, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer requested that community boards assist in making an inventory of affordable housing units (JLULHC Meeting Minutes, March 20, 2014). On another occasion, the committee members expressed concerns over the affordability of the units for much of the existing community (Land Use/Landmarks Meeting Minutes, March 21, 2013).

In conversations with both single women who live in public housing and community leaders, there is the general understanding that public housing serves as a buffer and protector for the traditionally low-income. However, comments shared demonstrate

that there is both a perceived and real fear that public housing may indeed be up for grabs. Jennifer says that she has heard rumors of them selling Rangel Houses, which is the development located in the rear of her development. Although it frightens her, she says that she cannot complain if she is not willing to do anything about it. Mary says, “They say NYCHA is for sale. I could see that. I mean whoever buys it is a smart, smart person. And they stand to make a lot of money off of that because it’s all about location as far as where I live” (excerpt from interview with Mary). She believes that in ten years her building will have different owners. Monica agrees, “Yeah. It was a few tenants that complained they received a notice stating they could possibly be bought out, so a lot of that is going on” (excerpt from interview with Monica). She heard that Donald Trump bought the lot, but was unable to confirm the rumors online. Even Roxanne, who does not live in public housing, but in a rent subsidized building states,

I have no idea, and that’s the issue. I’m quite sure you heard about big name corporations buying out the projects in the area and stuff like that. Eventually, they want to move, the goal in gentrification was to move the people out of the projects and have a lot of the apartments for private housing. (Excerpt from interview with Roxanne)

Land Use Landmarks and Housing Committee Concerns

After reviewing the meeting minutes, it is very clear to me that members of the Community Board 10 Committees are concerned about the rampant development occurring throughout the district. Some of the less grave concerns involved thoughts regarding the allocation of parking spaces, the accessibility of a recreation facility or community center in a building, the height of a proposed building differing significantly from surrounding properties, the small size of apartments, and building façade contrasting against neighborhood aesthetics. Concerns of more grave consequences centered on the

accessibility of housing to community residents. There was one Joint Land Use, Landmarks and Housing Committee that focused on one of the Abyssinian Development Corporation's project. Although the organization was not presenting a housing proposal, the CEO attended to respond to complaints that the Board received from tenants.

ADC's plan is to build a high rise on the parking lot of the Ennis Francis homes on 123rd Street and move the tenants there while it fixes the low rise buildings. This project has run into financial troubles which have caused the project to be stalled for the past nine months. ADC explained they split up with their original partner on the project and that they are seeking a new partner to finish it. They are in conversations with potential partners and hope to restart work in February 2014 and finalize it by February 2015. The work is currently 70-75% completed, according to ADC. In the meantime, residents of the low rises are complaining that few, if any, repairs are taking place and that they have mold, mice, roaches, leaks and no heat, among other conditions. ADC says it looked into relocating the tenants but could not find affordable units to do so. (JLULHC Meeting Minutes December 19, 2013)

The above testimony demonstrates the reliance that non-profits have upon for-profit developers. Despite their desire to maintain affordable housing, they are unable to do so without the assistance of a funder who will make money by creating market rate units. Regarding the sixth project listed in Table 5.1, committee members expressed skepticism as to whether the housing was affordable to someone earning \$80,000, especially since affordability is dependent on the ability to get rental income.

The Committee discussed a draft a resolution calling for affordable housing programs to better serve the needs of the District's residents. Current programs based on Area Median Income, are inherently skewed towards higher incomes than those in the District, resulting in affordable housing programs that are in fact unaffordable to the residents they are intended to serve. (JLULHC Meeting Minutes, March 20, 2014)

On April 18, 2013, the Land Use and Landmarks Committee agreed to adopt a checklist of questions to ask every developer to help with consistency and accountability.

Some of those questions are included in the meeting minutes:

Will workers on this project be paid living wages? What is the general contractor's history of safety violations? What has been the outcome of any violations? Have there

been sanctions? Will the project include income-targeted housing? Will there be any type of give-backs to the community? Is any member of Community Board 10 affiliated with the developer? (LULC Meeting Minutes, April 18, 2013)

The Housing Committee also maintains a listing of the Slum Landlords Watch List. This list is shared at the November 2014 Housing Committee meeting, along with a discussion on Mayor de Blasio's 5 Borough—10 Year Housing Plan. The Housing Committee states that it is important to connect with the Mayor's staff, the Borough President's office, and to monitor progress in the District. "This discussion led to a review of the District Needs Statement and the affordability of housing and the lack of follow up with the developments that exist and those that are planning to build in our community" (Housing Committee Meeting Minutes, November 24, 2014). The committee admits that the Land Use and Landmark Committee does not follow up with the developers that present before the Board. Although developers, in some instances are required to offer housing to residents in the community, the Committee does not know how many Community Board 10 residents apply and receive affordable housing.

I asked the single moms if they were familiar with Community Board 10, if they had any knowledge, or if they attended any of the meetings. Joy never attended and stated that she did not know how to go about getting involved, but she would attend if she received flyers. Jennifer has attended meetings before, and Monefa has attended one meeting before as well, while Mary has never heard of the Community Board. Veronica states, "I wouldn't even know where to go for that stuff" (excerpt from interview with Veronica). Wanda is aware of the community board and had planned to attend due to a school assignment, but missed the meeting and did not go to another one. Monefa recalls her experience from one of these sessions,

I thought it was pretty good. I mean there was a lot of shouting because you know sensation is a little heightened at this point because you know like I was telling you. People, they don't know what's happening, and we're not exactly being told what's going on, we're not being informed of a lot of things that's happening in the area. We just watch things build, you know? Or we just watch things happen, and we're not exactly sure what's going on. We hear a lot of rumors, so when we go to the board meetings people are upset, and they're confused, so it tends to... It was loud, the last one I went to was loud. (Excerpt from interview with Monefa)

Tamara has also attended a meeting, but it has been a long time since she last went. She stopped going to the meetings after feeling like no one was hearing her voice. Tamara discusses the emotionalism and feeling powerless. She recalls attending a meeting where people argued that Columbia should not expand along Broadway.

I remember the man who was like the primary speaker at that meeting basically saying he heard everyone's point, but he said something to the extent that "they will review what everyone had to say," but no one argued the claim as to how this was going to be harmful? I remember him saying, "Everyone's testimony seemed more emotionally driven rather than factual," and I just kind of felt like what's the point of going to meetings and having things to say if no one is there to really hear you? So I stopped going. (Excerpt from interview with Tamara)

Ability to Live in Harlem

The research subjects also had their thoughts on whether or not they would be able to continue living in Harlem in the years ahead. Joy flatly states that she will not be able to. "No, it's not for us. With all this new stuff coming, it's raising our rent. So how is it for me if I can't even afford to enjoy it? I won't be able to even live here long" (excerpt from interview with Joy). Mary says that she will remain if she can. "If I could find an apartment that was affordable, a two-bedroom, not a studio because that's insane, then yeah I would stay in Harlem" (excerpt from interview with Mary). Monefa wants to remain in Harlem as well and will attempt to apply for one of the affordable condominiums. She realizes that she will need to save a lot more money, but is willing to do so, thinking of it as a way to improve herself. Nicole would like to stay in Harlem because this is where she

grew up, and it's what she knows. Wanda is still in Harlem because she lives with her father and has a level of financial support. Her ultimate goal is to finish her education to advance her career and then purchase a brownstone. Veronica, who is going through the process of buying a home out of state, does not share the sentiment of wanting to remain. She wants better for her and her daughter. She has lived in Harlem her whole life and is ready for something different.

Community leader Williams would like to live in Harlem, but it's outside of his financial reach. Davis says that he is lucky that his family was able to purchase a brownstone over ten years ago. Although he contributed to the purchase of his home, it took his entire family to do so—parents and siblings. “I realize that one day if I do get to establish a family that I may not be able to afford to stay in Harlem because of the rates things are going” (excerpt from interview with Davis). It is because of the opinions expressed here and others that non-profit developer Putman feels obligated to continue to make sure that “those people have an opportunity to stay here” (excerpt from interview with Putman).

Rent Increase

When speaking with the women, the topic of rent increase came up. However, most of the women did not experience major increases in their rent since their rent is based on their income. They were only able to give anecdotal stories of people they know in the community who experienced an increase in their rent. The only increase they experienced was related to increases granted by the Rent Guideline Board. For instance, on Monday, June 29, 2015, the New York City Rent Guidelines voted to secure rent on all lease renewals for tenants living in a rent-stabilized apartment beginning on October 1, 2015.

According to the Guidelines, rent-stabilized tenants would only see a maximum 2% increase on two-year lease renewals and a 0% increase on one-year lease renewals.

Rent stabilizes your rent, and it goes up every two years. It's the rent control tenants that are not affected. They have something that's called a Fuel Charge they pay. Seniors and their families that live in rent control apartments, sometimes they're being challenged in court because their parent passed on and they say they don't have rights to the apartment, which they do because they were born in that apartment. I have a lot of those cases that I advocate for. (Excerpt from interview with Cindy)

When I asked local politician Roberts if there is any threat of deregulation he responds, "Not as long as I live. I'm rent control" (excerpt from interview with Roberts). Joy recognizes that she is blessed to have a mother who lives in a rent-controlled building. Jennifer, who lives in public housing, feels safety in knowing that her rent does not increase based on property value, but only upon her income. Roxanne lives in a subsidized apartment and experiences the increases granted by the Rent Board. She is unsure whether her building will still have a rent subsidy in the future. Its continued existence is based largely on the next Mayor.

Given the significant presence of rent stabilization in Harlem, I asked Miles what is the average rent in Harlem.

The average rent for a one bedroom, the thing with rent stabilization is that it's hard to say what an average is because rent stabilization keeps the market unofficial because it's rent stabilized and its controls on the rent. I will say that market rate apartments; a one-bedroom will probably now \$1500, two-bedroom, \$1700/\$1800 and obviously, you see things much higher. You can also catch some of those apartments much lower because they're rent stabilized. If you have a landlord like myself whose tenant was originally paying \$600/\$700, then I re-rent when the tenant moves out the rent is going up to \$800 now, but that's far and few between. (Excerpt from interview with Miles)

Miles continues and states that there are limits on how much he can raise the rent of a unit when the tenant moves out. Although he can rehab a unit and increase the rent drastically, he chooses to continue providing affordable housing. 70% of his portfolios are tax-credit

apartments, and there are limits on the amount he can charge, as well as an income limitation on what a family can make when they move into one of those apartments.

Rent Assistance Programs

I asked the women to share with me any challenges they have had with housing in the past and if there were any programs to assist them. Cindy, who is the only single mother who had experience with helping tenants discusses how at one time many turned to the Human Resources Administration to get a one shot deal for housing, but that program no longer exists. Joy shares her experience with living in a shelter system previously and how there were not any vouchers to assist with affordable housing. They no longer exist. The last program she benefitted from was Work Advantage, which no longer exists. I asked her to explain the program.

Work Advantage was a voucher where the way you qualify you had to be working a job 35 hours or more where they would pay a majority of your rent, and you would have to pay the rest. So my voucher for instance for me and my son was \$912, and I had to pay \$60 because the voucher amount was supposed to be for \$962, no I had to pay \$52 or something. Yeah, the rent was \$962, so they paid \$912, and I paid the rest. So the city claimed they couldn't afford to pay these vouchers anymore, they couldn't afford to fund these vouchers anymore, so they cut them. Thousands of families became homeless; I was one of them. So how you can't afford to provide housing for low-income people but you can afford to build a Joe's Crab Shack, and Bloomberg can afford to make a garden. He made this garden for the tourist attraction, but you can't afford for people like myself to stay in their homes? It's just crazy. (Excerpt from interview with Joy)

I was able to confirm the existence of a program called Advantage, earlier known as Work Advantage and Advantage—New York. The program was administered by the Department of Homeless Services and was in existence from 2007-2011. It provided two years of rent subsidy where households only contributed “30 percent of their gross monthly income toward rent the first year, and 40 percent the second year and DHS contributed the balance of the rent to the landlord” (NYU Furman Center, Directory of New York City Affordable

Housing Programs). Surprisingly, no other women had stories of rent assistance programs. Their primary form of support came from public housing and rent-subsidized apartment buildings.

Ability to Leave Harlem

Not only did I talk about a resident's ability to live in Harlem, but we also discussed one's ability to live elsewhere. Given that affordable housing and family support is a safety net for all of the women, can they even afford to leave Harlem? Joy shares,

The only option for low-income families when you move is to move out-of-state, down south or something like that because it's more affordable. Basically, we have no choice but to stay here. We leave here; we have to leave to go out-of-state because once we leave out of here, we won't be able to afford anywhere else to live. We're stuck. (Excerpt from interview with Joy)

Nicole says, "If I didn't have my son in a charter school, I would've been gone" (excerpt from interview with Nicole). Veronica is preparing to leave Harlem and says that she was not going to leave Harlem unless she found something better. Comparing her experience to others, she says, "Not everybody left because it got bad for them; life got bad, or they couldn't afford to stay there. They left because things got better for them They wanted better" (excerpt from interview with Veronica).

SINGLE-MOTHER SPECIFIC VIEWS

For much of the dissertation, I have shared the viewpoints of the single mothers. However, there are some key areas we have not covered, such as personal motivation, which speaks to mention of personal goals and aspirations, along with neighborhood effects (how the environment influences them) and what would an ideal Harlem look like to them. I also point out their definition of community.

Personal Motivation

I begin discussing this with Joy who shares that as a child she got into a lot of trouble because she hung around negative people and that her choices as a teenager led her down a path where she did not pursue an education. To provide further explanation, she uses the example of her mom and aunt. Her mom stayed in Harlem and did not go to college, whereas her aunt graduated from college, moved upstate and both of her children graduated from college. Joy also talks about a childhood friend, who went to college and now has a good job earning \$62,000. Her friend also lives with a parent, but because she has a good job, she was able to purchase a car. Her friend's father, who also had a college degree, played a huge role in her life and influenced his daughter.

Jennifer also talks about the impact that her environment has on her and her son. She is affected by the reality that her son won't ever be able to go outside and play by himself. "He's a witness to, you know just the regular ghetto mentality as far as people standing outside people standing on the corner, people standing in the lobby, people urinating in the elevators, you know, it affects me, and it affects my son" (excerpt from interview with Jennifer). Jennifer's goal is to work hard and to move out of her current neighborhood. She confesses that it will require greater sacrifice. Presently, she sacrifices to put her son through private school and understands that she needs to work even harder to reach her goal. "Because I think I can be where they are if I work much harder" (excerpt from interview with Jennifer). When speaking of "they," she is referring to the new Harlem arrivals. She continues by saying that she does not work hard and that the new arrivals can afford Harlem because they work hard. "Yet I can't say it's not because they don't work, we, I don't work hard. But, I just think, it's that I think I have to work a little bit harder that

the next person, and it's in my neighborhood that they do this" (excerpt from interview with Jennifer).

Monefa wants to be able to purchase a condominium and similar to Jennifer she realizes that she needs to work harder because of its cost.

You know I may have to put a little down payment instead of paying first month's rent and security, but I don't mind. To me, it helps for me to better myself. It helps for me to improve because I also lived in Murray Hill for some time so I know the difference. It is. It's helping me to realize that elevation is a necessity, especially if you live in New York City and I mean hands down Harlem The gentrification is what's going to happen, unfortunately, whether we like it or not. It's going to go down, so I just tell us all to keep it up. Keep doing what we need to do to strive For me personally, I mean it's so many ways to elevate yourself if you wanted to. (Excerpt from interview with Mary)

Mary does not feel any motivation from community change. Her personal motivation is a result of her being a mother. Similarly, Wanda is also motivated to improve her circumstance in life so that she can leave something behind for her children. For her, the changes in Harlem have driven her to step up her game.

If I don't step my game up, for me personally that would be devastating and then what about my children? I want to leave my kids something. When my parents dying, I ain't getting nothing. Nothing. Nobody is leaving me anything, not even bills. I'm not paying nobody anything, but I want to be able to leave my kids something. My kids, they got college saving plans. I didn't have that growing up. I want them to be able to go and do whatever is they want to do. It may not necessarily be college; they may want to do something else. Whatever it is they want to do, I want them to have the resources that they need to do it. (Excerpt from interview with Wanda)

Tamara's goal is to move out of her father's apartment and to find a place that she can afford on her present salary. She is willing to leave Harlem temporarily if need be but will save and eventually return to the community she loves. Her goal is to become a homeowner and get into real-estate with hopes of owning apartment buildings and brownstones. Wanda's words add to Tamara's comments.

That's why I tell people all the time to "step your game up." I step my game up. It's moving slow, but it don't matter how long it takes. Just do it. However you do it. Everybody don't got to go to college. You want to be a carpenter? Be a carpenter and learn how to build buildings and when you come back to the community, you get your team and y'all learn how to build buildings for the people. That's how everybody else did it. The blueprint is there. Do it! (Excerpt from interview with Wanda)

For most of the women, their present circumstance and their community environment have influenced them in one way or another. One woman was affected negatively by rowdy teenagers, while the others speak of their children, the changing demographics and their present financial situation as drivers to push them to work harder and do better.

Ideal Neighborhood and Children Programs

So what would be an ideal neighborhood? How would it be different than its present state? I tried separating the codes "ideal Harlem" and "children programs," however, they were so interconnected that I was not able to do so. In the women's version of an ideal community, there were more children programs. Tamara likes the fact that the parks are changing and wants Harlem always to be a place where kids can play and be safe. To Nicole, Harlem would be "beautiful, peaceful and clean" (excerpt from interview with Nicole). Everyone would know each other, and there would be community events. "I think the block parties are a very good thing and bring back somewhere for the kids to go instead of just hanging out on the stoop or community centers" (excerpt from interview with Tamara). She goes on to say that children need to have something to do, rather than just hang on the streets and get harassed by the police. "We need more role models" (excerpt from interview with Tamara). If there were more Community Centers, the role models would come. Nicole talks about her experience of going to the Reality House and how the

adults served as role models, helping with homework and engaging the children in learning activities.

I think it's important; it's very important because say, for instance, you have a single mother that doesn't have a father figure in their child's life. Like I was saying, you have these community centers, you know these people: role models that these guys, I mean women, boys and girls could look up to other than their parents, if their parent is working. You just got to keep them busy, so they don't go astray. (Excerpt from interview with Nicole)

Not wanting her son to get involved with the wrong crowd, Nicole's son plays basketball, and she keeps him busy, so he won't be on the streets. She does not feel that there are any programs available. "I could only say that the Harlem Children's Zone is about the only place that I know of in Harlem. I think they have another place on the East side, but that I know of in Harlem is the Harlem Children's Zone for the kids to go" (excerpt from interview with Nicole). Wanda also talks about the Harlem Children's Zone's college program and its transitional college program for kids who graduated high school but are not ready to go to college. Cindy also hopes for more after-school and recreational programs for children, but not just any program, free programs. "They don't have football teams, baseball teams; they don't have gymnastics. I was on the gymnastics team. They don't have any of that stuff to offer to the children for free" (excerpt from interview with Cindy). She recognizes that there are programs, but they have a cost associated with them, and the only free programs she knows of are educational programs at Columbia University, which is in West Harlem. Cindy's ideal Harlem will also have housing readily available for seniors and those with disabilities. Also, the senior housing would also be accessible to those who are raising their grandchildren.

Joy's vision of Harlem includes low-income housing and better education, such as charter schools for all children, no longer having some kids exposed to one level of

education and the remainder a lesser form. Harlem should also have better jobs, better child care, health insurance, and more activities for children.

You know how hard it is for me to find a basketball camp or any kind of sports or arts program for my son? I'm looking for a free one, to be honest, because I can't afford to pay \$400/month for lessons. I can't afford that so if we want to keep our children out the streets, we need to make activities that will promote that. (Excerpt from interview with Joy)

In her vision, Harlem would have affordable housing to those who need it and it would be safer. Jennifer believes that her community should have colorful parks, along with additional libraries, fewer bodegas and more grocery stores, fruit stands and after school activities. "Let's see ah, more after school activities. We had a lot of those growing up; I don't see much of those anymore. You know" (Excerpt from interview with Jennifer)?

Mary believes that buildings should be developed and opened up to offer housing to people who could afford it and to promote home ownership.

When people own, I feel like they have a different mindset. They're not going to let certain things slide in their development. It's not going to be dirty, and they kind of all rely on each other because they know this is their money that's working. Whatever they put their money into they're like, "no, certain things is not going to happen." It's not going to be dirty, it's not going to be nasty, locks are not going to broken; elevators will be serviced. You know (Excerpt from interview with Mary)

For Veronica, she desires for the community spirit to return. Wanda wants children to have access to quality education, schools to have up-to-date materials, adequately trained staff, and the appropriate support so that the school can succeed. People also need to be more involved in schools. She also thinks there should be community centers, in addition to community resources—agencies that can help families stay in place. As for the resources that are already in place, people need to take advantage of those.

Adequate community health clinics, jobs, housing, the sanitation of the community. I think that there should be quality police and community relations. I think that that partnership right there is really crucial because don't only have to be disciplinarians of

the community, they can also serve as catalyst for the community altogether, like social workers. We advocate for change as well as conformity, so there's a balance there. I feel like the police in the community should have that balance as well. (Excerpt from interview with Wanda)

An overwhelming majority point to the need for free afterschool activities in Harlem. Wanda felt proud of herself for finding a free summer camp for her son. Those who participated in those programs when they were children want the same experiences for their children. Wanda participated in Harlem Grow as a teen and worked in the community parks and cleaned the community. Those mothers who have older children, also know the benefit of having access to these sort of programs. Roxanne tells me about a Street Squash program that her daughter attended when she was in high school. The program was very influential in her daughter's life. Not only did the participants learn the sport, but they received homework help, went on college tours, and received assistance with college and scholarship applications.

They even give some scholarships. It's a good program and my daughter's been playing squash since she was in junior high school when she got into the program. She went to college playing squash, and I didn't even know what squash was until she started playing it. (Excerpt from interview with Roxanne)

Roxanne attributes the program to introducing her daughter to things that the school did not expose her to, things her daughter would have never known if she were not in that program. Ms. Garnett shares her organization's mission to provide experiences to children that will expose them to opportunities that they may never have known otherwise.

My objective is to try to provide the children of Harlem with access and exposure to great academic and enrichment opportunities that expand and enrich their lives and open them up to "Oh, I can do this." . . . "Oh, I can go to college and play Squash," or "Oh, that's a vehicle to get me to college and I like squash so let me focus on that." So, we've introduced them to rugby and African drumming and swimming on a smaller scale. We're trying to provide opportunities, if continued over a span of time, they can become proficient in it and perhaps provide college scholarship opportunities and things of that nature. (Excerpt from interview with Ms. Garnett)

PLACE OWNERSHIP

So, after all, is said and done, who owns Harlem? Does it belong to anyone? The opinions on this matter are interesting and varied. I begin with a story shared by housing developer Putman of a newly built condominium on 119th Street and 8th Ave. and how its owners complained about the use of the community room by tenants of a neighboring building. “They said there was people making noise . . . , which is reasonable. But it was really a conflict I guess those people have a right as well of their own. Now do they have a greater right, you know what I'm saying, than the people that rent” (excerpt from interview with Putnam)?

The issue of who has a right leads to a deeper conversation as to who is right or wrong in their use of Harlem. Does it belong to anyone? Who sets the rules? I asked the women and the community leaders to answer the question of “Who owns Harlem?” Cindy does not believe that Harlem belongs to anyone. After all, “anyone should be able to move to Harlem if they choose” (excerpt from interview with Cindy). Jessica agrees and thinks of Harlem as a shared place. “So it’s like, we share activities. We share the community” (excerpt from interview with Jessica). Nicole does not believe anyone owns Harlem. Rosa shares a similar sentiment and views Harlem as “a big melting pot right now” (excerpt from interview with Rosa).

Tamara once thought that Blacks owned Harlem and that they deserved it. “Not just that we owned it, but I felt like minorities in general, not just Black people. We owned Harlem, and no one should take it from us because that what I was taught. Having my son actually changed my perspective of that. I don’t think that anyone owns Harlem” (excerpt from interview with Tamara). Instead, she now believes that the culture and history must

be kept alive by teaching it. However, she still wishes that Harlem could stay predominantly Black. Monefa thinks that African Americans are the primary owners. “We’re the ones that make it happening in Harlem so to speak” (excerpt from interview with Monefa).

Not everyone’s comments were so concrete. Wanda believes that Harlem belongs to anyone. To her, there is no owner and that anybody can live anywhere. “No, I don’t think Harlem is for Black people, it’s not for White people I just wish that Black people would step their game up as a whole and hold on and don’t let people just come in and just take it” (excerpt from interview with Wanda). Despite her beliefs, she feels that when you live somewhere your whole life, it becomes your home and there is an emotional connection. “I feel like I’m being plotted on” (excerpt from interview with Wanda). Wanda is conflicted because she ultimately believes that living is about survival of the fittest and that she can not complain about someone else's ability to move into an area and take up residence. Similarly, if a healthy person chooses not to contribute positively to his or her community then “they become what I call a cancer. You’re not giving to your community; you’re taking from your community. You’re letting the opponent, which is anybody who is on the outside come in and take what you have” (excerpt from interview with Wanda). Developer Putman believes that people who invest their energy in an area should have a say. That is why people used historical names on buildings and streets to have a say in how Harlem was represented. He realizes that change is inevitable. “What can you do about it unless you have the same energy to rally for keeping something as those people have energy to change it” (excerpt from interview with Putman)?

Elected official Roberts says that Harlem has reopened, “we can’t say we only want Black people” (excerpt from interview with Roberts). Miles goes further and says, “Who says a community is supposed to stay like that forever” (excerpt from interview with Miles)? He points to Harlem’s history and how it wasn’t always a Black dominated place, but that it was once home to Europeans.

I always tell the folks we never owned Harlem; that’s number one. Culturally, I still believe it belongs to the African-American community, not only because we live here, but I mean culturally we have deep cultural roots that run through this Harlem community . . . I still think we need to hold on. But I still don’t think it’s okay to change Marcus Garvey Park back to Mount Morris Park. I don’t think you should change Adam Clayton Powell back to 7th Avenue just because folks come in. I don’t agree with that. (Excerpt from interview with K. Miles)

Davis, who has done extensive study on the history of Harlem, also believes that “Harlem wasn’t made for us Black folks” (excerpt from interview with Davis). He mentions how Blacks lived in other areas in Manhattan—Central Park, Seneca Village, now the Great Lawn of Central Park, The Village, Lower Manhattan, Hell’s Kitchen, and Lincoln Center area. He tells me about Philip A. Payton, Jr, a light skinned real estate broker, who purchased tenements and passed as a White person. He purchased many tenements and rented them to Blacks for a profit. When Blacks started to move to Harlem, they could not live from 135th Street northward. That is why places like Striver’s Row exist because they had to strive to live there. 138th and 139th Streets, between 7th and 8th Avenue, are the historic blocks in Striver’s Row. They had to create their community. There were Black professionals, architects, doctors, lawyers, and many intellectuals. Average folks lived in what they called tenements. Other areas where Blacks resided included Sugar Hill, Hamilton Heights. This community formed because Blacks were not welcomed elsewhere. He continues by saying that synagogues in Harlem were converted to churches once Blacks

moved in. Due to the magnitude of the migrants coming from the south and the Caribbean in the late 1800s and early 1900s, White folks called the local banks and stated that they didn't want them to live here and told them not to give Blacks loans. He then discusses the Great Depression, the increase in poverty and the changing community. In the end, he concludes that Harlem is going through a process of change that has not just begun, but has always been in existence.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, I shared a story of community change as perceived by those on the ground—single mothers and community leaders. I began by discussing the borders of Harlem and asking the respondents to describe what they considered East, West, and Central Harlem. Overwhelmingly, the respondents disagreed with the separation of the three sections as I presented, but viewed Harlem as one place with cultural enclaves. Continuing in this vein, I summarized the viewpoints on how Harlem once was and shared thoughts concerning neighborhood effects and meaning of community. I then contrasted that with the Harlem of today and the many changes, including diversity and perception of new residents, changes associated with branding and commercialization, and an increase in charter schools. The word gentrification comes up numerous times in most interviews, and I asked the respondents to explain its meaning as well as share their thoughts on this process. The conversation goes deeper as the men and women discussed the motivating force behind change, and they expressed sentiments on whether this is right or wrong.

Regardless of one's opinion, the rationale behind such unprecedented development is understood, and each respondent gave light to the reasoning. Despite this change, there is still a level of resistance shared in anecdotal experiences—resistance from both the old

and new residents. In speaking of the idea of a community take over, some believed that what is occurring today is the result of long-time residents not taking advantage of the available land and real estate that was available at a much lower rate years ago. This section then concludes with a discussion on the real and perceived displacement of residents and businesses from Harlem, and what Harlem might look like in ten years at the same rate of development.

I then switched to discussing the affordability of Harlem, which includes affordability breakdown and affordable housing. I looked in detail at what affordable means and to whom are the new housing opportunities affordable. The meeting minutes from Community Board 10 were very helpful in getting this level of detail, along with conversations with the community leaders. I shared the concerns of the interviewees, as well as the concerns expressed by the Community Board members in the meeting minutes. Given the degree of current day changes, I asked the women if they would be able to continue living in Harlem and most indicated that they would only be able to remain based on the availability of affordable housing. This then turned the topic to rent increase and rent assistance programs. I included thoughts on whether the women would be able to leave Harlem given their present housing situation.

The text then began to take a personal note as I shared the definition and meaning of community from the single mothers' perspective. The dialogue on personal motivation was very intriguing because it gave insight as to how the women internalize the changes occurring around them and whether it influenced their aspirations for themselves and their families. I then engaged the respondents further by asking them what would an ideal Harlem mean to them and what sort of support services are needed to realize that goal?

Last, but certainly not least, I included all thoughts reflecting place ownership. The majority felt that Harlem does not belong to one particular group, but there is hope that the richness of Harlem's historical past and its African American significance will always remain.

Next, in Chapter 6, I take a deep dive and explore the findings that arise from the data. Within that discussion, I will triangulate the data from single mothers, community leaders, and the community board meetings. I also examine the findings by comparing and contrasting them to the literature.

CHAPTER 6

TYING IT ALL TOGETHER: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND THE LITERATURE

In this chapter, I organize the research data into findings. Beyond the categorical groupings presented previously, I now begin to look at what the data reveals. What is it saying? I only focus on the most important points that address my research questions, and I examine whether the findings are consistent with theory. I review the assumptions I made at the onset of this research and I conclude by answering the questions: What does neighborhood change mean to the working class single mother? What role do community leaders play in bringing about that neighborhood change?

FINDING #1—DISPLACEMENT AND COMMUNITY TURNOVER

Harlem's metamorphosis is not just economic but entails both a gradual displacement of people and its dominant Black culture. This transition is seen in the neighborhood facelift, growing unaffordability, population shift, and the entrance of market rate housing. At the current rate of development, the single mothers and community leaders believe that Harlem will resemble the Upper Westside, and there is a high possibility that those interviewed will not be able to reside there any longer. Real and perceived fears regarding displacement and the continued existence of rent control and rent subsidies promote a level of vulnerability, anxiety, and uncertainty about the future. The metamorphosis has begun, and it shows no signs of slowing down. The stark difference in old and new within a one block radius exasperates issues of inequity. There is a conflict—a conflict within the women. They want to enjoy the changes around them, but they hate what the change is doing. The people,

place, and culture is transitioning to something unfamiliar. This finding explores the particular phenomena occurring in Harlem and endeavors to bring light on the possible displacement of a historically significant area.

In my review of the literature, I referenced this question, “does neighborhood economic development mean driving out the poor and encouraging the presence of a new population or does it mean improving the life circumstances of the residents” (Taub et al., 1984: 497)? The women shared stories of residential displacement of friends and family members who could no longer afford to live in the city and those who were bought out by landlords. Of those who left the city, the women and leaders stated that the majority went to other boroughs such as the Bronx or Brooklyn.

Improvements of towns, accompanying the increase of wealth, by the demolition of badly built quarters, the erection of palaces for banks, warehouses, etc., the widening of streets for business traffic, for the carriages of luxury, and for the introduction of tramways, etc., drive away the poor into even worse and more crowded hiding places. (Merrifield 2002: 13)

While one can conclude from this statement that the lower income groups living in such an environment will eventually get displaced, we cannot be quick to assume that everyone leaves because of displacement. This is not a simple black and white issue. There are many gray areas. Some residents leave because of opportunity, others because of choice. Without knowing the circumstances, there is no way to prove displacement.

In the description of the third and fourth waves of gentrification, Lees, Slater, and Wyly (2008) describe an environment where corporations play a role in restoration with the return of big businesses to an area, and there is a shift in socioeconomic demographics. We see this in Harlem. Not only are residents affected, but the viability of businesses that were once the bedrock of the community are affected as well. Second to the displacement

of residents is the movement of business. The interviewees share stories of stores and establishments that are no longer in Harlem because they could not afford to remain. Their connection to the companies no longer in existence further complicates their perception of communication change. My research did not uncover that businesses were displaced because of big box developments. Instead, they were displaced because of the general increase in rents for commercial establishments. However, I realize that one can argue that the two go hand in hand. Community leader Davis speaks of future changes that will occur in Harlem because of rezoning and believes that Harlem will one day look like Madison Avenue. He shares that within the past 12 months, nine family-owned businesses have been displaced and that they are closing because the rent is too high. He uses the relocation of the historic Lenox Lounge as an example.

The concept of change in community ownership is expressed in the change in the ownership and presence of local businesses. The influx of new middle-class residents into distressed neighborhoods also attracts businesses and private capital. The addition of businesses not only adds to the appeal of a locality, but it creates jobs. Nonetheless, big box development creates competition, drives down prices, and increases rents. Hence, small businesses in many instances find it difficult to stay afloat. New residents in a neighborhood may become potential customers, but as franchises and brand-name developments arrive, small businesses are eventually stifled.

When I asked the research subjects what Harlem will look like in ten years at its current rate of development, the majority stated that diversity will increase, the low-income will no longer be present, office buildings will multiply, Harlem will become a bustling shopping and dining district, public housing may or may not exist, Harlem will resemble

midtown, those who work downtown will move uptown, and ultimately Harlem's African American cultural presence will diminish. Lupton (2003: 5) states that neighborhoods are "being constantly re-created as the people who live in them simultaneously consume and produce them," and Davila (2004: 73) states that "groups survive by controlling space and maintaining a viable and visible presence." With places undergoing social diversification the question of ownership of place naturally arises. Place creates tension between those wanting to maximize exchange value (e.g., capitalist accumulation) and those wanting to maximize use value (e.g. residential accommodation). Evidently, local government has considerable influence over policies and programs that favor one type of value over another. Logan and Molotch (1987:3) hypothesize "that all capitalist places are the creations of activists who push hard to alter how markets function, how prices are set, and how lives are affected." These capitalist places are driven by market forces and give no room for the human experience or questions regarding whether this is right or wrong. With that in mind, it helps explain why the women feel unimportant in their city.

When considering Galster's (2012) "bundle of spatially-based attributes," all would agree that Harlem of yesteryear lacked many of the attributes offered in Manhattan neighborhoods south of 110th Street. The way the literature (Wilson 1987/1996, Jargowsky 1996, Massey and Denton 1993, Lewis 1968) describes neighborhoods that were products of residential segregation, one would be surprised to know that residents love their community. It seems like the inner city has nothing but drugs, crime, and poverty. People are discussed in a manner that strips them of their human dignity and labeled as being a member of the "urban underclass" and exhibiting a "culture of poverty." This viewpoint is limiting and disparaging. Residents of inner cities do not love the social woes that are

vividly illustrated in literature and media, but they love the feeling of belonging. Forrest and Kearns (2001) share that neighborhood is held in higher regard in low-income communities because residents in such places tend to spend more time in their locality. Their theory helps explain why Harlem means so much to the respondents—both the women who live there and the community leaders who work to make Harlem better for residents old and new—and why they relish the importance of Harlem. To Tamara, Harlem is everything; it's her hometown. She takes pride in it. Those who spend the majority of their time in Harlem, possess a stronger connection and even commitment to it. The personal connection to the neighborhood has nothing to do with quality or type of services provided. Despite the history of poverty and disinvestment, Harlem means something. Its value is not connected to material wealth. What's passed from generation to generation is not a detrimental set of behaviors (Lewis 1968, Wilson 1987, James 2008, Jargowsky 1996), but pride in one's heritage.

Cindy remembers a time where African Americans owned their businesses and stores as opposed to now. Jennifer recalls there being a lot more Black-owned small businesses. Whether or not African-Americans owned the businesses cannot be verified, but instead the existence of Black-operated businesses gave the appearance of ownership and gave the respondents a sense of belonging in Harlem. The literature states that place is of particular importance to women because place is a social construction. "People create place and place gives meaning and direction to their lives" (Muniz 1998). My research substantiates its truth. As explained by Michael Southworth and Deni Ruggeri (2011: 497), "what a place means to people is a deeper level of identity. Meaning or significance may result from personal experiences with a place: the market where we shop every Saturday

or the neighborhood where we grew up.” For the women I studied, the displacement or change in businesses is a visual display of neighborhood turnover. This transformation challenges their feeling of belonging, and makes them feel like their history and culture is being removed and replaced. For Joy, the change in establishments has also changed the history of her community because she can no longer see her childhood in the stores and façade. The removal of what was commonplace removes those memories.

The creation of cultural trusts and the establishment of institutions have been established as a way to rectify some of the wrongs produced out of the subjugation of one’s culture. Culture helps build community, cohesion, and serves as an educational tool. I wonder if politicians recognize that gentrification in Harlem will eventually serve to undermine this development. For instance, millions of dollars in Empowerment Zone legislation was designated to the arts and culture for all the reasons listed above. Young (2002) shares that vibrant cultural institutions have risen in inner city environments to bank on the positive elements of a community, thus instilling pride in the people. The cultural landmarks mentioned by the respondents are not just limited to physical locations like a museum, library, or theater, but instead run the gamut of Black-owned businesses, community parks, apartment complexes, stores known from their childhood, and the names of streets and parks. For most, this degree of pride is reflected in their strong connection to Harlem. Everything they saw and engaged with during their time in Harlem is connected to their association and affiliation and influences their concept of community. Their connectedness is linked to those people and places. This explains why some of the women comment that Harlem had a stronger community before present-day community change. If a community is made by the people, businesses, and homes within it, changing those

elements changes the very essence of that community. Harlem's richness furthers my point that the issue in inner-cities is not the people, but it is the rampant inequity seen in the school system, streets, and public housing (Massey and Denton 1993, Gephart 1997, Brooks-Gunn 1993, and Sampson 2012). In the stories where the women recall childhood memories, they reference some of the negative elements, but primarily they focus on a sensation of being at home, being in a community where everyone looks like you. In such places, it is ok that your skin is darker, your dress is different, and your hair is unique. In fact, it is not different at all. It's ordinary. Residents can find stores that service their needs and meet their tastes. Even today, people of color still have to go to communities of color to get beauty supplies.

Critics on both sides of the coin realize that Harlem needs economic stimulation. Gentrification is needed but at the expense of what and whom? Black history has yet to be widely adopted into the American history books, and Harlem is a place that has made that history a part of its own. While gentrification may move these institutions to other sections of New York, it will never have the same impact as it did when located in Harlem. When institutions are removed from their cultural place, they lose some of their significance because they are removed from their environmental landscape. As the bedrock of their communities, they are symbols of the society's achievements and power, the core of intellectual and artistic endeavors, the guardian of the rule of law and source of public information. Cultural institutions represent what a people value and celebrate; it houses their intellectual presence. They collect and preserve evidence of the past, including artifacts, books, documents, film, plays, dances, and exhibits. These institutions hold the evidence of what happened, and their role is to give continuing life through research and

interpretation to the ideas, knowledge, artifacts, traditions, and rituals of the culture. These institutions order and structure the human experience. Cultural institutions were created to protect one's cultural identity in a world hostile to it. The same goes for communities.

Despite this argument, I am well aware that there are non-Blacks who want to live in Harlem because they enjoy the culture and architecture, not because they want to change it. However, the possibility of change not taking place seems daunting. Is it possible for Black residents to move into a former majority-White neighborhood and maintain White culture, or for East Indians to become the majority in any area and not change the culture? To say yes to any of those questions would be naïve. The culture of Harlem will only stay intact if the Black residents hold a majority. Any less and the culture of the place will undoubtedly change. While the revival spawned by the Black middle-class has produced some of the same adverse effects of Whites gentrifying areas, they have done so to a lesser degree (Taylor 2002). Black middle-class residents do not threaten the historical significance of the area. At the pace of current development, twenty years from now Harlem will have changed for the better and the worse. The good is the improvement in the physical and economic infrastructure, the bad is the diminishing African-American presence. Harlem's historical distinctiveness fades, and it becomes just another Manhattan neighborhood. Regardless of economic status, there is still an urgency amongst African Americans to keep Harlem as the world's leading Black metropolis. Taylor (2002) found this as she researched the interaction of the Black gentry and the Black lower class residents while assessing how the Black gentry was changing the culture of Harlem. Given the short time of their arrival, White residents in Harlem have yet to become fully entrenched members of the community.

While the presence of Whites dominated much of the interviews, Harlem's neighborhood change is not just a Black and White issue, or upper and lower class issue. Those studied also mention the presence of Hispanics, Arabs, Asians, Indians, and the LGBTQ community, and how their arrival is diversifying a historically Black place. And although Harlem is now increasingly diverse, two separate classes appear to exist side by side. Within those groups are divisions based on ethnicity and income. In prior years, residents had to leave Harlem and go to other parts of Manhattan before they knew that there were socioeconomic disparities. Now those differences are more visible with images of affluent residents and luxury condominium towers erected a few blocks from an aging public housing complex. In this climate, the visual presence of the projects highlights the difference between the two contrasting economic groups. Additionally, the mention of new residents walking their dogs closely resembles what you would expect to see on the Upper Eastside. The images of parallel worlds that once existed outside of Harlem now exists within. In this environment, conflicts between old and new residents are likely to ensue. Walking through the streets of Harlem, one can visually attest to the truth in what Madanipour (2011) states. There is a shift in community control from one group to another, poor to rich, and Black to non-Black. The women discuss this loss of community as a loss of power and even a loss of themselves.

A new population brings new interests, concerns, and desires. This can work both for the betterment and detriment of a community. The research (Wood 2002, Joseph et. al 2007, Musterd and Andersson 2005, Galster 2010) suggest that increased diversity should heighten social cohesion. However, from the stories of the women it seems that social awareness, not cohesion has grown. Some of the thoughts about new residents fall along

the lines of wonder and amazement. “To see them around is incredible” (excerpt from interview with Monefa). “We’re mixing, and everybody’s here” (excerpt from interview with Joy). Tamara shares, “I never really had experiences around White people until I was in my summer business program So I had no idea of what they were like or any other culture. I was only used to dealing with Blacks and Hispanics” (excerpt from interview with Tamara).

Now, these women are more aware of their White neighbors and are living in the same space. This is something they once thought would never occur. The struggle for control of space is revealed as I talk with the respondents about neighborhood conflicts between old and new residents. Tamara talks about subtle conflict as evidenced by the expression of African Americans lashing out at non-Black residents whom they believe have a hidden agenda. In her son’s school, the Black and Hispanic parents see gentrification as a White face and question why White children are attending the school. Despite the changing community, the mothers still view Harlem as a residence of people of color. From a resident’s perspective, the loss of place and the loss of social networks are damaging to a community (Martinez 2010). Although community leader Davis is Black and works at making the community better, his perceived middle or upper-class status causes him to stand out and to be viewed as an outsider. Similar to Martinez’s findings (2010), some see the arrival of more affluent Whites or Blacks in their neighborhood and their participation in the community as a sign that change was forced upon them. They were not questioned. They were not invited to participate in discussions on what their community needs. They were not invited to a forum.

Furthermore, as suggested in the literature (Young 2002), the entry of wealthier residents brings greater human and social capital, but political leaders can lose their historic voting blocks, as they are challenged by the new fabric of the community. Homogenous neighborhoods allow marginal groups to elect representatives that reflect their views. A diversified community breaks up this block and scatters the minority vote. Institutions and politicians have the option of adapting their mission to the needs of the new population, or they can follow their constituents to their new location. Communities are more than residential habitats; they are the heart of society. Churches, social clubs, block associations, local businesses, parks, and schools frame their existence. Hence, when the face of a community changes, so does its institutions. The implications of losing one's place are profound. Ethnic communities across the nation were created out of a fight to show their existence in a mainstream society that did not recognize them.

The struggle for control of space is also seen in the branding and renaming of Harlem. This is where exchange value holds some merit. Research subjects talk about how Harlem is now referred to as the Upper West Side, as seen in real estate brochures. There is also a segmenting of Harlem where the area near Central Park is called South Harlem or SoHa, and areas north are called North Harlem or NoHa. Developer Miles believes that the branding of Harlem is connected to the intensity in which development is occurring. Real estate speculation spurs branding. Miles refuses to call the neighborhood SoHa and recognizes that the terms are mainly used by real estate brokers and newer residents. To longtime residents, it is still Harlem.

My research uncovered that there is resistance to change happening on multiple levels. There is resistance from old Harlem residents, and there is a push for change from

the new. There is a desire to keep Harlem either as a place where Black culture and residents thrive or as a place where new residents affect change and keep it from reverting to its former use. Tamara tells the story about the co-op association in her residence that has purposed only to sell to people of color to preserve Harlem's Black majority. Politician Roberts discusses failed attempts from politicians in Harlem to remap the congressional district to make Harlem a Black majority. Tamara also tells me about a White woman who owns a brownstone and tells Tamara and her friend that there are people on that particular block who would not rent to Blacks because they wanted a different neighborhood. Community advocate Ms. Thomas tells me about being approached by a White neighbor to sign a petition to change the name of Marcus Garvey Park back to Mount Morris Park, and there were talks to change the names of Avenues from Malcolm X, Adam Clayton Powell Jr, and Frederick Douglass Boulevards, back to Lenox, Seventh and Eighth Avenues, respectively. There is also resistance as expressed in the Community Board 10 meeting, as committee members are concerned about whom Harlem is changing for and who is benefitting from that change. After hearing about these practices, it makes me wonder why someone would move to Harlem if they do not want to live in Harlem. Instead of intermingling, it seems that newcomers are building their world on top of one that is already in existence.

When I asked the women what they missed about Harlem, they shared that they miss the sense of community. To them, community (a shared experience among neighbors who are connected by residence and relationship, and have common goals toward a way of life) was at its strongest when they knew those who lived in their neighborhood. Each single mother raised in Harlem mentioned a feeling of community in their childhood and a

desire for that community to return. They were referring to old Harlem. Stories centered on people coming together to solve problems. There were rent parties and an overall sense of safety because everyone knew each other. There was a sense of togetherness, along with community celebrations such as block parties and fairs, as well as a village approach to raising children. To them, social organization (Wilson 1996) always existed and was even stronger when Harlem had a greater degree of isolation. This opposes Wilson's (1996) theory which relates the cause of negative behaviors to a lack of social organization in the ghetto, where deviant behaviors are not confronted or challenged. These women would say that the isolation caused them to stick together and look out for one another, not the opposite. On the other hand, when your neighbors begin to change, and you no longer know the one next door or down the street, you stop looking out for one another and crime can also increase. When community breaks up, a way of life does as well.

Similar to Cahill's research (2006), the women used phrases such as stripping away the feeling of community, not feeling at home in their neighborhood, losing the sense of personal connectedness, no longer recognizing their old neighborhood, this is not Harlem anymore. On the other hand, the women are enjoying the benefits of residing in an area that is becoming more and more like other neighborhoods in Manhattan. There is diversity, appealing aesthetics, charter schools, the convenience of nearby stores and restaurants, and a stronger police presence. How can a person be completely opposed to something they enjoy? The enjoyment comes with the understanding that Harlem is changing at a rate that might jeopardize their ability to remain. Capitalism has two contradictory tendencies. One is towards the equalization of conditions and levels of development and the other their differentiation (Zukin 1993).

The concept of one's neighborhood is more than a physical border. It is abstract and based upon where a person lives and with whom she interacts. When discussing the cultural significance or meaning of their community, respondents refer to the people, location, physical structures, music, stores, and the names of local landmarks. When each of these elements begins to change, residents' ability to identify with their neighborhood changes, resulting in a feeling that their neighborhood is being taken away without regard to a community that was already in place before its rediscovery. Allowing resident associations, new residents, and developers to rebrand (change the names of streets and parks) displaces the significance of place for its previous residents and ignores the contribution they have made to the community.

FINDING #2—NEIGHBORHOOD CHANGE IS COMPLICATED

Along with the presence of higher-income residents come businesses, investments, improved services, residential development, and increased neighborhood marketability. However, the sudden improvement in an area due to the entrance of new residents results in long-time residents feeling as if the developments are not for them. This viewpoint influences whether the long-time resident will participate in the new community and raises questions of their perceived worth and value. The entrance of higher income persons in a neighborhood brings about a greater level of social control, resulting in safer streets and local responsiveness. The well-off receive higher levels of government responsiveness and improvements are made because their financial stake in the community demands it. However, where there are uneven levels of development the increase of social control in one area will lead to a decrease

of social control in another. The implications of change go beyond its physical makeover; we are dealing with people.

Everyone I interviewed spoke to Harlem's charm and key location as features that make it attractive to those who desire to live in Manhattan. They understand why it is desirable. They are not ignorant. Not only does Harlem have available housing, but the housing type is alluring. The old brownstones and 19th-century tenements have large apartments—an amenity prized in a borough known for matchbox sized apartments. Harlem is located near all forms of transportation, which make it very accessible to other central business areas such as Midtown and the financial district. People want to live in Manhattan. Harlem makes that possible. It is less expensive, and it is one of the last places in the city that still has land where a new building can be erected. The availability of housing stock makes it a gold mine. They understand that it makes sense to fill vacant lots and to take advantage of a renter's market that is bursting at its seams.

The responses of the women and community leaders around the appeal of Harlem supports the concept of the rent gap theory (Lees 1994). When certain market conditions are in place, cities that were previously left abandoned and have a history of disinvestment are now ripe with potential. The rent gap theory states that ground rent under its current use is substantially lower than what it could be under a higher use. The value gap refers to the difference between a property's "vacant possession value" and its "tenanted investment value" (Lees 1994: 5). "When the gap between the actual ground rent and the potential ground rent is large enough, reinvestment in the form of gentrification may occur" (Lees 1994: 5). Potential ground rent increases as the social status of a neighborhood improves. Low ground rent widens the rent gap and encourages gentrification. Therefore government

officials encourage gentrification as a way to maximize property value, attract new residents, and revitalize the economic sector. Realizing its prospects and understanding the rationale, the women comprehend this line of thinking. It only makes sense to capitalize on an underutilized space. They even understand why revitalization is occurring now. But, what they cannot understand is why didn't it occur before?

The respondents expressed frustration that long-term residents allowed for the takeover from external residents to occur. They speak of the years where empty lots and vacant brownstones were available in large numbers, and Harlem residents did not take advantage of its availability. A few of the interviewees expressed that long-time residents of Harlem allowed the community to be taken over under their watch. This emotion of possession is conveyed by others as well. They feel that Blacks once owned the community. That ownership is not defined by dollars and cents but is reflected in the presence of people. Mary is saddened by the takeover of her community, but she states the following, "You have to blame the people who sold their brownstones for dirt cheap" (excerpt from interview with Mary). Jennifer says that "they" did not change Harlem, rather "we" allowed it to change. Housing developer Miles shares that this could only happen in Harlem, nowhere else.

I choose not to take a stand on whether Harlem was stolen or given away. To do so, I would have to research the conditions under which brownstones were sold and uncover who made the purchase, which lending institutions were involved, was there a government subsidy, what did the owners do with it, and where did the original tenants go. That level of inquiry is outside of the scope of this research. But what I do know is that overcrowding, poor building maintenance, substance abuse, crime, and discriminatory

lending practices also contributed to community downturn (Bernt 2012), and the economic and political gains of the Harlem Renaissance were practically eliminated (Nicholson 2009). This downturn also led to massive layoffs and business closures. Massey and Denton (1993) state that this was the period when the Black middle-class and affluent left the ghetto and left behind the lower class.

Mortgage redlining practices made it impossible to secure mortgage lending in urban neighborhoods and instead made loans available in growing suburban communities. In the 1960s, Harlem's population declined due to social problems and the relocation of many Harlemites to other neighborhoods. In the 1970s, its housing stock deteriorated as landlords abandoned their properties. Because of institutionalized discrimination, neighborhood image, and inability to obtain capital, abandonment instead of development was a favorable option. Added to the issue of housing deterioration was the closure of firehouses in low-income minority neighborhoods throughout New York which then led to an increase in fires and destruction of buildings, leaving behind boarded-up buildings and vacant lots (Nicholson 2009). Bernt (2012) and Freeman (2006) state that between 1950 and 1980, Harlem not only lost 1/3 of its population but the poverty rate was 40 percent. The City of New York ultimately ended up being the largest landlord, owning 60 percent of the housing stock (Bernt 2012 and Hyra 2008).

As a consequence, Harlem became a paradigmatic example of a 'rent gap' situation as conceptualized by Neil Smith (1979): well-located and equipped with a good standard of housing stock, the neighborhood had a fairly high potential ground rent, while in practice the capitalized ground rent was much lower and continuously decreasing (Bernt 2012)

Given the story of Harlem's deterioration, the complaints of the research subjects are not without their contradictions. They are guilty of the same error as those who blame the

victim by placing the responsibility of the state of the inner city on its residents. The mindset that the “old timers” gave Harlem away by not being proactive and taking advantage of past housing programs ignores the larger forces at play—redlining, unavailability of loans, poverty, and other socio-economic barriers completely. Just like most of the women and some of the community leaders are not prepared financially to take advantage of the housing opportunities in new Harlem, the residents of old Harlem were not prepared when there were vacant and boarded up buildings everywhere. I would even argue that those who were present in the 80s and 90s were least prepared. Besides the individual purchasing power of a few or those who lived in the closed off areas of Striver's Row and the like, Harlem did not have the collective power to elicit widespread development. Poverty concentration was at its highest and even if the City sold a property for pennies, community residents were most likely unable to afford the cost of demolition and rehabilitation. As stated earlier, Harlem was victim to exclusionary practices and disinvestment. Outside of its historical preeminence, Harlem was no different than any other inner city.

Political economy of place states that with the presence of higher-income residents come businesses, investments, improved services, residential development, and increased neighborhood marketability. For the first time in many of the mother's lives, they can take advantage of the same services and amenities offered in downtown neighborhoods. Now they have restaurants, bars, and lounges. Harlem now provides services which were once unfathomable such as fitness centers, coffee shops, market rate apartment buildings, new residences, new supermarkets, major department stores, and neighbors of other races. The women have enjoyed the new businesses, but they are conflicted. The emergence of these

places highlights the reality that new businesses were established to meet the needs of new residents and not that of old residents (Taylor 2002, Hyra 2006).

Similar to research conducted by Cahill (2005) and Martinez (2010), the common sentiment held by those interviewed is that the developments are not happening as a result of the long heard pleas of community residents to make their home safer. Instead, developments are here because of the presence of higher-income people. Changes are occurring as a part of a plan to redevelop the area for new residents and new commerce, not for them. The way one interprets that reality is different from person to person. Tamara wonders why it took years for Harlem to have the things that other people have and she questions why Harlem was not worthy of these developments previously. Joy does not feel like any of the changes are for her, but that it is meant to benefit the market. Mary also believes it should not have taken an influx of different races for the community to receive the services it always needed. Veronica expresses anger at this reality. The leaders expressed the same views. Why did it take so long? These benefits are easily perceivable, but many resent that these advantages only came about because of the existence of well-off Whites (Martinez 2010). For generations, Blacks rode their bikes in Harlem without bicycle lanes. Fast forward to the entrance of White residents and now bike lanes course through.

While political economy of place theory states that neighborhood amenities and services improve as a result of the entry of new residents, the question of whether the women will take advantage arises. In short, the women were glad to have access to establishments within proximity. Even still, the closeness did not guarantee whether they frequented the new establishments. There was no consistent response among the women.

Joy did not go to any because she had the perception that it was too expensive for her. She did not feel like the establishments were for her. Mandanipour (2011) states that in situations like Joy's, residents may feel further alienated. Conversely, a couple of the women did not have a desire to go to any of the social places or eateries in Harlem because of preference; and some gladly frequented the new establishments. For those who chose not to, it appears that they have an overall disconnectedness to the community.

Social mix theory (Joseph, et al. 2007) infers that the presence of higher income residents will lead to greater accountability and social organization. However, as expressed by the respondents, what is considered social control is relative and subject to interpretation. As an example, Cindy, a single mom, discusses how new residents may interpret what is the correct usage of space differently. She mentions how new residents complain of noise from children which is acceptable to those who resided in the neighborhood previously. Realtor, property manager and developer Miles shares an interesting story about how an organization put an end to the public playing of music for community kids in the spring. He comments on how the intrusion of new residents and their demands to quiet the neighborhood are unfair and unrealistic. Developer Putman also discusses the different opinions on playing music on the street. Old residents are accustomed to music playing, whereas new residents are not. In fact, Harlem is known for its small town feel of music playing in the streets, and people congregating on stoops, in front of stores, or on sidewalks to engage in conversation. One person may view a quieter neighborhood as having an increased level of social control, whereas a long-term resident may feel like their cultural expression is hampered by someone else's desire to elicit social control. This is Harlem, not mid-town. These are competing values. By saying that higher

income persons bring a greater level of social control, one is inadvertently saying that how the affluent choose to use space is better than that of those who are less well off. There is then a preference toward the community noise and cultural celebrations of those who are considered well-off.

Another observation has to do with the spread of crime in neighborhoods as reported by the respondents. The areas where there is a heavy concentration of new residents and new developments is safer than previously. However, the areas that have less development appear to have increased rates of crime. The respondents believe that crime has been pushed further north and concentrated in areas north of 125th Street. As it relates to social control, it appears that new residents banded together and demanded increased police presence; and as a result, the other areas suffer because of that greater control. Community leader Davis, who believes in community integration, and lives and works in the community, mentions how the voices of new residents are heard because they participate. They go to meetings. He does not see anything wrong with the heightened responsiveness. Davis also shares how new residents place a greater demand on the city. He believes that the reason is due to their constant push for what they want in their new neighborhood. The literature affirms this. In a mixed-income community, there is an increase in higher income individuals, homeowners, and residential stability, which means that more residents will participate locally in organizations and have a stronger desire to curb issues such as crime, delinquency and other socially deviant behaviors (Joseph, et al. 2007).

While that may be true, issues of fairness arise. When I walk through Harlem, the stark difference between areas with lessened and increased gentrification is vivid. Is the

difference due entirely to public responsiveness or is it partially due to a new community of residents who have banded together to make sure that their block does not pale in comparison to better off areas in Manhattan? I'm not sure. Although motivated by selfish reasons, the advocacy of new residents benefits anyone who lives in that vicinity. They are helping to remove the place-based stigma that Wood (2002) mentions. But, even as I analyze this phenomenon further, the same issue arises. Why is the voice of the newcomer louder, and why is it heard? As shared in the literature review, urbanization is a process of change—a change reflected in population shifts, political quandaries, and economic tidal waves. This change is not sensitive to socioeconomic demographics nor history. By this logic, urbanization will eventually produce inequality and impoverishment (Merrifield 2002: 104). Hence, residents in gentrifying places are in a constant state of vulnerability. The uncertainty I express in this discussion allows Merrifield (2002: 129) to reason that “whatever route, the city falls to the highest bidder.” A socially mixed neighborhood can improve a place socially and economically, but the new global city is now full of paradox as it only welcomes itself (by affordability) to those who fit the description of that which is deemed desirable.

The relationship between economic and residential development and the arrival of new residents gives the impression that improvements in Harlem were not made to better the lives of existing residents but to attract new residents. In other words, the powers that be did not care about the welfare of old Harlem until the new Harlem residents arrived. This creates a greater divide in the community and positions the old group against the new, the disadvantaged against the advantaged, and causes for each to see one another as an “other.” Earlier decades were characterized by community demands for improved housing

conditions, better social welfare, higher standards of health care, and more educational opportunities, but nothing happened. The practice of redlining was rampant in communities like Harlem and was spurred by federal institutions such as the Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) in the 1930s and the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) in the 1940s and 1950s (Nicholson 2009). So, why does the city hear now? It seems that money captures the attention of everyone. More money results in greater responsiveness. Less money, and there is little to no response from local government. Those with limited economic means are then left wanting. The women interviewed express a degree of hopelessness when it comes to where they live. Some do not know how to get involved; they are not even aware of Community Board meetings. And others, are not able to participate in community meetings either because of work, busy schedule as a mother, or because they do not feel like their voice is heard. In general, the overall sense from the women is that there is nothing they can do. They feel powerless, and the feelings of community alienation further this emotion.

When you bring money into a neighborhood, services improve, and the streets are safer. But no one initially thinks that by making one area safer, other areas become less safe; crime must go somewhere. Additionally, no one initially believes that one person's expression of social control can hinder another person's expression. And no one thinks that when you change a neighborhood without including long-time residents in the process, that you will arouse feelings of anger and resentment. Neighborhood change is not simple at all. By preferring one group over another, you are choosing who is right and who is wrong. The abovementioned adds weight to the notion that neighborhood change is complicated, twisted, often unfair, and given the economy, unstoppable.

FINDING #3—BRICKS AND MORTAR ARE NOT THE ONLY THINGS NEEDED TO DECONCENTRATE POVERTY. A COMBINATION OF SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES ALONG WITH A DIVERSIFIED COMMUNITY, HAS THE POTENTIAL TO LESSEN THE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL ISOLATION.

What is needed to lift a community out of poverty requires a multiplicity of efforts, with social and human development at the forefront. Community programs in Harlem continue to exist; however, current development has shifted the type and availability of these programs. Research suggests that the entrance of affluent residents in inner city areas will improve social capital and improve the area in general. Although social networks between new and old residents seem to be non-existent, and cultural enclaves are created and reinforced, I find that the ability of higher-income or higher status persons to influence those of lower economic status is not contingent upon a relationship. If the actions of those are perceived as successful, their regular presence in the community can have the indirect effect of influencing others to work toward the same goals. To acquire the essential tools to succeed, the women attest to the need for social programming for themselves and their children. The organizations represented realized this to be true as well.

In their literature review, Joseph et. al (2007) gave four propositions on the goals of mixed-income development: social networks, social control, behavioral argument, and political economy of place. Social mix is thought to prevent or decrease societal problems such as poverty and unemployment, or at least their concentration, and to avoid the

stigmatization of residents living in a particular neighborhood. In Chapter 2, “Concentrated Poverty, the Neighborhood, Gentrification and Their Effects,” I discussed the use of social mixing as a way to combat the adverse effects of social isolation. The rationale for mixed-income strategies stems from the common-held view among policymakers and scholars that high concentrations of poverty in a neighborhood have the debilitating effect of perpetuating negative social behavior (Gary Bridge, et al. 2012). While social control and political economy of place have been addressed in Finding #2, here I focus on social networks. Social mix is achieved at the neighborhood level because it is there that people have an opportunity to see and interact with one another (Galster 2010).

Perhaps one of the most exciting areas of discourse is that of neighborhood effects. In their description of Harlem, the single-mothers share their experience and discuss the impact living in an inner-city community has on them. Although the women and leaders come from various backgrounds, they share similar stories of the negative aspects of Harlem. Some of the views are from the years prior to neighborhood revitalization, while others continue to persist till this day: crime, people loitering on the streets, teenage pregnancy, vandalism, abundance of methadone clinics, drug abuse, vacant lots, abandoned buildings, crumbling brownstones, saturation of subsidized housing, vagrancy, dirty parks, and the like. The persistent environmental stressors are experienced in varying degrees based upon residential location—with heightened rates existing in the areas north of 125th Street.

The extent to which environment affected the respondents as they matured into adulthood also varies. Forrest and Kearns (2001) insinuate that the “causal link” between neighborhood characteristics and an individual's outcome is hard to verify because there

are those who are greater influenced by parental circumstances—education, income, and employment. I agree. Although Joy shared her experience of being negatively influenced and Veronica managed to do well later on in life after overcoming years of drug abuse, the other women managed to do well regardless of their backgrounds. Each had their set of setbacks that they were able to overcome. While I cannot make a definite statement on effects, the data suggests that parental influence affected the women more than the external environment. Practically each woman under 50 years old point to the significant role their parents played in their lives and that of their children, whether positive or negative. This causes me to question the argument of Robert Sampson (2012) who believes that neighborhood inequality has more of a deterministic effect than the individual. The research subjects who were able to overcome environmental stressors were able to do so because of strong parental influence. Nonetheless, I caution against making a definitive statement regarding whether parental or neighborhood influence holds more weight. Since the literature (Forrest and Kearns, 2001) infers that parental circumstances are impacted by the opportunities made available in one's locale, neighborhood attributes are important and cannot be dismissed easily.

The parents of the single mothers who pursued higher education or had a good job, influenced their children to do the same and even assisted with childcare when their children had children. Because of this, it behooves us to make sure that the parent has access to the social support necessary to rise above impoverished circumstances. Joy, who has lived in the same neighborhood her entire life and was raised by her mom who did not go to college, talks about her struggles with being influenced by her peers during her adolescent years. Conversely, she talks about her aunt who went to college and moved

away from the neighborhood, and whose children also went to college. Joy also compares herself to a childhood friend who went to college after being motivated by her father. Tamara talks about her volunteer activity with teenage girls who are looking forward to having children early because it's acceptable in their community.

Their stories, combined, paint a picture that the most impactful way to improve the life chances of low-income residents is not just through physical enhancements to the community, but through investments in human capital. New and better housing is needed, but that is not sufficient. While neighborhood development brings enhanced services, there is no direct correlation to human development. From all of their stories, each woman could have benefitted from either career development, education assistance, or the like. All of the mothers express the desire to shield their children from negative influences. In fact, there is a degree of sorrow expressed by the respondents when they think of those who have been impeded by their inner-city environment, especially children who may not have the benefit of positive influences.

The women discussed the steady decrease of free children programs which they benefited from in their youth. They believe that their children are missing out on the same opportunities because today's programs have a cost associated with them. This is not to say that community programs no longer exist, but the women feel like gentrification has shifted the type and availability of these programs. Linked to a decrease in youth development programs and youth-oriented community centers is a decline in a sense of community among the women. Not only do they want community back, but they want community-based organizations back as well. The two go hand in hand. They want opportunity back. The presence of higher income persons within the same vicinity

highlights their present situation and emphasizes the need for improvements in their lives. In their viewpoint, free programs are available to those who are considered very low-income, but not for those who are low or middle-income. The lack of access to these type of programs for low-income children helps perpetuate cycles of social isolation and economic disparity. Community-based organizations play a vital role in positioning residents with the tools and resources needed to succeed. The importance of children programs and afterschool activities is conveyed in discussion around program volunteers and staff who serve as role models in these centers and help children with homework and other learning activities. These types of programs provide an organized way for children to have mentors and for role modeling to occur. “If there were more Community Centers, the role models would come” (excerpt from interview with Nicole). To them, role modeling did not decrease because there were no longer any residents exhibiting the strongest ideals living in the community. Role modeling decreased because the organizations that provide an avenue for this to occur no longer exist to the same degree as they once did in previous years. Opposite of what is suggested in the residential segregation literature (Wilson 1987 and 1996, Lewis 1968, Jargowsky 1996), none of the women implied that there were no positive elements in the community. In fact, in discussing community programs, there is no expectation that outside persons would be the solution. Instead, the Harlem-based organizations are a medium for the exchange of information and the proliferation of norms.

A central theme within the social development model (Adamson et. al., 2004) is that social interactions aid in the development of pro- and anti-social behavior. Given this mindset, socio-economic diversity at the neighborhood level would mean greater access to

information for the one lacking the social networks. The Harlem Children's Zone is recognized as the primary provider of children programs within Harlem, but there is an overall lack of knowledge of other programs that are available. Wanda felt proud of herself for finding a free summer camp for her son. For those who participated in similar programs when they were children, they want the same experiences for their children. Roxanne tells me about a Street Squash program that her daughter attended when she was in high school. The program was very influential in her daughter's life. Not only did the participants learn the sport, but they received homework help, went on college tours, and received assistance with college and scholarship applications. The free summer camps, afterschool activities, and weekend programs leveled the playing field. It made them feel like they had a chance in a competitive city. A change in the neighborhood means a shift in the type and availability of programs which were closely related to the residential experience of those who live in Harlem either because of choice or circumstance. Certain attributes (Glaster 2001) or opportunities are available to people based on their neighborhood of residence. The lack of certain characteristics contributes to the way one's neighborhood is viewed (Glaster 2001) and to how a resident internalizes that perception (Forrest and Kearns 2001). Research (Forrest and Kearns 2001) also shows that one's immediate residential neighborhood has a greater bearing on those of lower incomes than on the well-off, who are more likely to escape the confines of their locality.

Connected to the discussion on the need for youth programs, just about each single mom included access to charter schools as an equalizer for their children. Much to my surprise, this was not an anomaly, but a topic that came up rather frequently. None of the literature I reviewed discussed the rise of charter schools as a part of gentrification

processes. To the mothers, they are one in the same. The availability of charter schools in Harlem is viewed as a part of the overall neighborhood redevelopment. The women see charter schools as access to quality education, whereas, before neighborhood revitalization, there was no diversity in school choice. Good schools bring balance to communities that have been bankrupt. Organizations bring in the resources that the government provides in other places. The government has let them down, providing services everywhere else except in the ghetto, as seen in the schools. Access to charter schools serves as an equalizer for those children who otherwise may not get a quality education in the local public school. For them, to have these schools in Harlem means that their children can have a quality education similar to those living in areas south of Harlem. Quality education means their children will be prepared to do and become whatever they would like. However, the reality that admission is due to a lottery system highlights the fact that neighborhood development is not for everyone, but for those who get lucky.

In the context of a changing community, the lack of charter school accessibility due to a lottery system parallels the lack of housing accessibility within the new Harlem to those who are less fortunate. Joy gives a candid depiction of walking in a building that housed multiple schools—the public school her son attended had no air condition, whereas the charter school housed in the same building on a different floor had air condition. Although some applaud the charter schools, the lack of accessibility to all children highlights the overall sense of inequality felt in the community by these women. This reality breeds inequality as some kids can go to seemingly high performing schools with more resources, while others cannot. But to the majority of mothers and community leaders, they offer a better education than children had access to previously. This

discussion on children is centered on the idea that youth in Harlem will be able to overcome the negative environmental stressors discussed earlier by being exposed to positive influences and academic resources. The availability of schools and programs means that their children have the same opportunities as their counterparts, who come from two-income or well-to-do families.

Criticisms against social mix are grounded in the idea that outside forces, not the actual person, are the source of their advantage. The women do not agree. The only difference is that when they discuss role modeling for their youth, they do not reference outside sources coming in. They make mention of community resources. To them, the return of community is related to restitution of community organizations that invest in the lives of those who were less fortunate. For single mothers whose children do not have the benefit of their fathers being in their lives, these programs make up that difference. The absence of such programming leaves a gap in the inner city, and the transferable benefit of social capital is not realized.

Despite my discussion of social capital and the need for role modeling, I understand that social capital theory “responds explicitly to the social organizational and cultural explanations of poverty but does not address macrostructural factors such as changes in the U.S. economy and structural discrimination” (Joseph, et al. 2007: 376). I do not believe that those structural factors can be changed at the local level and in many respects, the organizations referenced are limited in their ability to obliterate these trends. The community leaders discuss the preponderance of public housing, drug rehabilitation facilities, and property damage, and its effect on the psyche of residents. Also, they mention the services their organizations provide to thwart the perpetuation of poverty from

generation to generation. They know that housing alone is not enough to lift people out of poverty; there are additional services needed. The most economically disadvantaged are not prepared to participate in the new Harlem.

For the most part, the new community elements brought about by neighborhood revitalization are outside of their reach—the housing marketplace, boutiques, and cafés. Ms. Garnett and Williams discuss their organizations' work around preparing young people for careers, and the case management services available to the homeless and senior populations. They all know that help is needed. They know that at the current rate of community development, the cost of living will surpass the earning power of low-income residents.

Now that I have covered the role of organizations, how does this relate back to social mix? A question that arose in this research is the following, do the women interact with the new residents and if so, what is the level of interaction? “The logic would be that the housing mix that is created will provide more social mix and subsequently also better conditions for positive socialization; it will also reduce the stigmatization and the risk for individual poor inhabitants to become excluded from the environment” (Musterd and Andersson 2005: 764). The social networks argument assumes that social interaction amongst people from more affluent backgrounds can connect the less fortunate to better opportunities (i.e., resources, information, and employment). This may be true elsewhere, but from the women's stories and even the community leaders, there is no interaction. Instead, it is a world of us and them, separate and unequal. The majority of the women had little to no interaction with new residents. The woman who had the most interaction was Tamara, who is engaged in her son's school and interacts with new residents on the

playground when her son is playing with their children. This lets me know that school activities may be the best way to promote interaction among residents who have school-aged children. What other institution touches families from various backgrounds?

Joseph, et al. (2007) insists that social mixing can only occur with relationship building. For the majority of the women and community leaders, there is an overwhelming feeling that there are two communities—one for the old residents and one for the new residents, or rather as community advocate Ms. Thomas stated, “There’s a segregation of the haves. Very little cross-racial mixing” (excerpt from interview with Ms. Thomas), and Davis shared “many of the newcomers formed their own community, and they socialize amongst themselves” (excerpt from interview with Davis). He talks about going to meetings or social events and being the only Black person present. Ms. Thomas referred to Harlem of today as the “Harlem of the Black haves and haves not. And a Harlem of the White haves, and the have-nots” (excerpt from interview with Ms. Thomas). I witnessed the same as I walked through Harlem. The new restaurants and cafés were filled with what I would refer to as new additions.

These findings are consistent with Galster (2010), Joseph, et al. (2007), Atkinson and Kintrea (2000), Brophy and Smith (1997), Buron et. al (2002), Hogan (1996), and Mason (1997), whom indicate that interactions among members of different economic groups are quite limited and in some instances non-existent. As stated by Madanipour (2011) and in the experiences shared by the women and leaders, social mixing does not result in the creation of social and cultural links between individuals of different economic backgrounds. Instead, it often results in the creation of community enclaves. The inclusion of new residents into a community does not mean that social mix is accomplished or that

there are increased levels of interaction between the two groups. Taylor (2002) researched the interaction of the Black gentry and the Black lower class residents while assessing how the Black gentry were changing the culture of Harlem. Other research (Katherine Newman 1999, Monique Taylor 2002, John Jackson Jr. 2001) indicates that mixed-income strategies do not necessarily serve to improve the levels of social capital amongst its least advantaged residents. Moreover, the two groups do not work together, worship together, nor do they belong to the same social organizations. With the interaction amongst the least advantaged and the better off being nil between members of the same race, interaction between those of different races is likely to be nonexistent. Consequently, gentrification cannot promise that the social capital of current residents will improve due to the new residents. “For those living in gentrifying or newly gentrified neighborhoods, gentrification is not academic. It is both real and personal” (William Patrick Nicholson 2009: 269-70).

In chapter 2, I state that the merits of social mix in a gentrified neighborhood cannot be realized by just adding higher income residents to an area. As a result, I question the behavioral argument and challenge the premise that one group can teach something to another group. After analyzing the data, my response has changed. The frequent reference to the need for youth development supports the behavioral argument. After all, that is the purpose of youth programming—influence young people by having them interact with those who have managed to rise above their circumstance and they will be inspired to do the same. The race and income dimension of gentrification cause people to dismiss the idea that social mix might play a role in the betterment of a place. But is it any different? The network argument may not be correct, but could the behavioral one hold some validity?

The behavioral argument, as the name implies, believes that higher-income residents will serve as role models and change the behavior of the less fortunate. Michelson (1976) and Bandura (1977) assert that mixed-income developments have the potential to create environments where role modeling occurs and those from higher socio-economic backgrounds can have a positive influence on those from lower socio-economic backgrounds through observations and interactions. For this to happen, the person modeled must be perceived as successful educationally, occupationally, and socially (Bandura 1977). “The argument here is that simply being in an environment where others are acting a particular way may provide motivation to adapt one’s behavior” (Joseph, et al. 2007: 390).

Wanda feels disheartened by the presence of Caucasians because she feels like they have more of a chance at getting an apartment than she does. Jennifer is torn because she feels like the new residents have more of a chance at living better in her community than she probably ever will. Despite this, to my surprise, responses from the research subjects indicate that the merits of distal role modeling are real. Similar to the impact that community-based organizations have on youth, the women are inspired by those around them. Interestingly, Jennifer is the first mom who begins to talk about the impact of watching "others" move into her neighborhood. She realizes that the new arrivals can afford new developments because they work hard. Jennifer admits that she does not work hard and will have to work harder to move out of public housing. The people per se do not inspire Monefa, but she is inspired to work harder because she wants to be able to purchase a condominium like others. She intends to participate in the growth happening around her. Wanda believes that the changes going on in Harlem have caused her to “step up her game.”

By witnessing the ability of new residents to come in and purchase property, she realizes that she wants to be able to do the same thing and leave an inheritance for her son.

The entrance of socially and economically successful residents has the potential to inspire those who are less successful in striving for more. While the fear of being displaced angered some, it appears to have an unintended effect of the residents' belief that they must do more to be able to remain in their community. Doing more entails working harder, finishing school, and positioning oneself to partake in the benefits of living in a revived Harlem. They are very much aware that their neighborhood is revitalizing around them and they will be left behind if they do not advance in their lives. The women are not just motivated to succeed in life because they want to purchase a home one day and live in Harlem, but they are concerned about the life chances of their children. They want to expose them to something different. But, some of the women are stuck. Other than the one woman whose family owns an apartment that has been handed down and another who is relocating out of state, everyone else lives in public or subsidized housing. There is this pressing reality that unless they earn the money to move out of their buildings, their children will not experience the benefit of living in a burgeoning community. Chances are if they ever move out of their development, they must move to another borough. Despite the uniqueness of each situation—young pregnancy, never married or separated, these women are making it, and they are no different than anyone else. They possess a desire to rise above their circumstances just like their middle-class counterparts. They have experienced setbacks just like anyone else, but they are no less, nor is their culture inferior. These are moms, good moms who are thinking about the future of their children. Although the majority live in public or subsidized housing and have done so for decades, they are

not members of an underclass. They have not embraced a culture of poverty (Lewis 1968, Jargowsky 1996). There is no ambivalence to what is happening around them or a desire to remain in the projects or continue experiencing adverse circumstances. Instead, each expresses a desire to be and do better. What they lack is an opportunity.

If what Robert Sampson (2012) says concerning neighborhood inequality having a greater deterministic effect than the individual holds any value, then failure to address the socio-economic needs that these communities present ensures that low-income single moms will remain unprepared to compete in a growing metropolis. And if the women are ill-equipped, then their children stand no better chance. A government that has created scores of public housing isolated in a segment of the city cut off financially from the rest has now opened it back up without regard to those who have made this their home whether by choice or circumstance. Focus needs to be placed on developing residents, not just buildings and streets.

FINDING #4—THE ABILITY OF NON-PROFIT DEVELOPERS TO CONTINUE PROVIDING AFFORDABLE HOUSING IS CONTINGENT UPON THE FURTHERANCE OF JOINT VENTURE MARKET RATE DEVELOPMENTS THAT IMPROVE THE SUSTAINABILITY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS.

Community leaders are well aware of the role they play in bringing about neighborhood change. Although they recognize the unintended adverse effects on existing residents, they do not feel as if there are any alternatives. This duplicity of roles lead to a conflictual relationship where developers who are committed to improving the community for existing residents are simultaneously improving the marketability of the community and attracting new residents. This reality means that the non-profit developer is a part of

the structural forces responsible for community turnover. Non-profit housing developers cannot afford to do 100% affordable housing developments. Because of this reality, there is no way around market-rate development. Non-profits are dependent upon joint ventures with private developers, and as a result, only a portion of units in a new development are truly affordable to low-income community residents. This reality threatens the viability of affordable housing. The use of the Area Median Income as a determinant of housing affordability lends itself to programmatic interpretation and results in unbalanced growth. This definition of affordability listed on signs and in advertisements is a visible marker that the neighborhood is changing and what was once considered low-income is now outside of the reach of the poor. Community Board 10 is a sounding board for the community's housing issues. However, when it comes to housing proposals, there is no evidence that CB10 can hold developers accountable for assuring that existing residents have access to new homes.

Over the last 60 years, nearly 235,000 units of affordable rental housing were developed in New York City through HUD financing and insurance programs, HUD project-based rental assistance, the NYC and NYS Mitchell-Lama programs, and Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) (Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy 2011:17). Although these programs are of great benefit to those who otherwise would not be able to afford quality housing, most of these programs have expiration dates, where the developer can opt to continue or not. Of the 309 current properties made possible by HUD financing and insurance, 25 percent are set to “reach the end of all affordability restrictions tracked in the SHIP Database within the next five years” (Furman Center 2011: 7). Of the

remaining HUD project-based rental assistance, 193 of them have a contract with less than five years remaining. Less than half of the originally financed Mitchell-Lama properties remain and 26 of those are eligible to opt out within a year's notice from the landlord (Furman Center 2011). By 2020, 24 LIHTC properties can exit the program and rent at market rate.

Expiring subsidies, shrinking housing affordability, and increasing housing price in Harlem create an environment of housing vulnerability for those who do not live in public housing and cannot afford the high rent of a Manhattan apartment. To maintain the stock of affordable housing, government entities grant new subsidies as the expiration dates draw near. It is more feasible for the city to subsidize such existing affordable housing, instead of purchasing land and building it themselves. From this perspective, it seems like the government then entrusts developers to create housing that is affordable to those who cannot afford the full price of an apartment in New York City. This housing would be reserved for the moderate to middle-income New Yorkers who make up the majority of its residents. Affordable housing would then be a buffer against displacement in the midst of urban redevelopment. While this would be ideal, I quickly learned that this is not the case.

The redevelopment of Harlem “straddles public and private power” (Zukin 1993: 195), with the government subsidizing development. When the Lower East Side underwent its neighborhood transformation, city-owned housing served as a buffer, providing low-income housing for the poor in LES and preserving diversity in the community. During this time, rent control, and rent stabilization programs also came under attack and were subsequently weakened. Changed resale rules made it easier for the gentrification of tenant interim lease buildings. City and real estate interests wanted the

city to get rid of its property by selling to private parties (Mele 1994). Although the Lower East Side experienced substantial changes, the presence of public housing allowed for the continuance of a low-income, working-class constituency (Martinez 2010). Furthermore, to reduce the burden that lower earning households faced, various city, state and federal government housing subsidies were created. In 1984, the “administration announced that most of its Lower East Side properties would have to be sold to private developers to raise scarce money that might later be used to subsidize low- and moderate-income housing” (Sites 1994:194). No comprehensive plan was created; instead, heavy reliance was placed on the use of tax incentives for business and real estate development. These programs encouraged private developers to diversify their developments and to add affordable housing to the city’s rental stock. However, the affordability of these units are not permanent, and each year New York City faces a shrinking supply.

Just as on the Lower East Side, programs such as Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, Participation Loan Programs, and Low-Income Affordable Marketplace Program (Furman Center 2011) encourage affordable developments. Most of these projects are mixed developments, having mixed affordability. As revealed in my research, depending on the funding utilized, a new development may offer housing that is affordable to those earning anywhere from 30% to 100% of the area's median income. Those families or individuals are entirely different from one another. However, in today's marketplace, what was once considered middle-income is the new low-income. As a person raised in this exact inner-city, I still marvel at this anomaly. I choose the word anomaly because this is not supposed to happen in an inner-city. The ghetto is not expected to be expensive; the

ghetto is not meant to have high-rise million dollar condos. The ghetto has always been the affordable place to live within a city. That is no longer the case.

As Madanipour (2001) surmises, gentrification entails a shift in population groups, a shift from low to high-income. Globalization and the resulting competitive city move its respective poor persons to the periphery where they are no longer noticed. Merrifield (2002:89) purports that capitalism works best when there is a permanent bottom rung of society—the under and unemployed. This follows along with Marx, “the diminution of the variable capital corresponds rigidly with the diminution of the numbers of laborers employed” (Merrifield 2002: 90). Cities are hurt the most with employment shrinkages, outsourcing of jobs, and spatial mismatch. Public subsidies are a necessary component to urban redevelopment.

Practically everyone I interviewed disagreed with the housing affordability formula and believes there should be real solutions to those who cannot afford the new developments. Recognizing this contradiction and that affordable housing can be a misnomer, the Land Use Landmarks Committee of Community Board 10 suggested using the term "income-targeted" to indicate units that are geared for people earning a particular income. While the board did not specify, one can assume based upon their hostility toward the AMI that the proposed criteria are not based upon an area median income, but the median income of that zip code.

The changing affordability of housing in Harlem is the most commonly discussed topic when mentioning gentrification. One question that surfaced throughout the discussion on community change was who qualifies for affordable housing? The term has become vague and subjective on a case by case basis. It does not take a researcher to

confirm the theory that economic change marked by market-driven development results in unbalanced growth. It is all around you—apartment towers not matching the traditional architecture of Harlem, along with new buildings next to old. Gentrification is the restructuring of inner city residential space, thriving in the climate of privatization (Zukin 1993). The implications of such can be seen throughout many NYC neighborhoods. Along with the decreasing stock of subsidy programs, owner-occupied and rental housing is more expensive than it was one decade ago; and the NYC median household income (in 2010 dollars) has been virtually stagnant, going from \$49,693 in 1970 to \$50,886 in 2009 (Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy 2011).

Whereas it is clear that the housing affordability for those earning 50 percent and less than the median income has decreased considerably since 1970, from 46.4 percent to 18.1 percent in 2010. For those earning 80 percent of the NYC median income, affordability has decreased from 82.1 percent to 43.5 percent for that same period, and from 90.7 percent to 62.3 percent for those earning the NYC median income. Likewise, contract rent has also nearly doubled, while income has remained level. Today, households pay on average 48.7 percent of their income on rent, versus only 28.5 percent in 1970. Even more drastic is the 26.3 percent that spends more than 50 percent of their income on rent. Furthermore, the median sales price for condominiums increased from \$237,379 in 2000 to \$880,500 in 2015, with homeownership increasing from 6.6% to 12.2% in the same period (Furman Center 2015), and brownstones selling for millions. See Table 6.1.

Table 6.1: Housing in New York City, 1970-2010

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Total Occupied Housing Units	2,836,872	2,788,530	2,819,401	3,021,588	3,109,784
Homeownership Rate (% of occupied units)	23.6%	23.4%	28.6%	30.2%	31.0%
Renter Occupied Units	2,167,523	2,136,918	2,012,023	2,109,292	2,146,892
Affordable to 50% NYC Median Income	46.4%	20.5%	27.3%	21.3%	18.1%#
Affordable to 80% NYC Median Income	82.1%	60.9%	66.3%	56.3%	43.5%#
Affordable to 100% NYC Median Income	90.7%	81.1%	82.0%	76.7%	62.3%#
Market Rate Rental Units				672,368*	772,650**
Affordable to 50% NYC Median Income				6.2%*	4.4%**
Affordable to 80% NYC Median Income				38.0%*	24.6%**
Affordable to 100% NYC Median Income				62.9%*	42.6%**
Rental Vacancy Rate	2.6%	3.3%	4.1%	3.2%	4.5%
Median Household Income (2010\$)	\$49,693	\$40,645	\$51,865	\$50,539	\$50,886#
Median Contract Rent (2010\$)	\$555	\$628	\$779	\$853	\$1,004#
Households Paying More than 30% of Income on Rent (share of renter households)	28.5%	38.6%	39.0%	40.7%	48.7%#
Households Paying More than 50% of Income on Rent (share of renter households)	—	20.1%	—	22.3%	26.3%#
Table Excerpted from “State of New York City’s Subsidized Housing: 2011.” New York University: Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy. Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey, New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey. Note: 2010 is the most recent year available for most data in this table. The following symbols indicate variations: *2002, **2008, #2009					

With the reopening of the urban frontier (Neil Smith 1996), the government provides incentives for housing developers which are meant to encourage urban resettlement by suburban dwellers. The public/private housing partnerships focus on real estate development and open up previously closed off areas by creating an atmosphere where capital can flow. As a result, we witness growth in our large cities as the frontier even expands into the central cities which breed speculation and development occur on behalf of the more fortunate. Opportunities are then realized regardless of the effects it may have on residents. In conversations with both single women who live in public housing and community leaders, there is the general understanding that public housing serves as a buffer and protector for the traditionally low-income. But what about those who are in between? There are those who are ineligible for both public housing and affordable housing in the marketplace. Mary, who has lived in public housing her entire life, shares her unfortunate experience with looking for affordable housing. She desires to find an apartment but is unable to afford what she has found. She is caught off guard by the income eligibility and is shocked by what is considered low-income. According to Joy, when it comes to the income requirements starting from low to high, she states that she is nowhere within the income ladder. Tamara says that the only way she will get a new apartment is if she gets lucky and is selected in the lottery system. Cindy talks about the limited availability of housing she can afford. To her, affordable housing is a right, making its inaccessibility an injustice. Joy connects the change in housing price to the removal of her childhood friends and loss of community.

While there is a level of security offered by the projects, stories of New York City Housing Authority selling land and development rights compromises that security. There

is a common belief that the City may already be in conversation with major corporations, which elicits fear among those who live in public housing. Single moms Jennifer, Mary, Monica, Tamara, and Roxanne, and community leader Ms. Garnett share this sentiment. Residents have already seen change as evidenced by the increased parking rates. Additionally, a joint venture proposal was submitted to Community Board 10 to redevelop public housing units and offer it to families earning between 50% and 130% of the AMI.

Community leader and developer Miles says that it is especially unfortunate for African American families that live in this community because many cannot afford the new housing. This motivates him to keep the majority of his units truly affordable to the families who are from Harlem. The majority of the community leaders were equally devoted to maintaining housing that is accessible to Harlem's low-income residents. However, Putnam disagrees and states that his organization's mission as a public benefit organization warrants that they create housing for all segments of the community and all income groups. I find his argument illogical since there is no lack of housing for those who are well-off. There is no massive outcry from higher-income groups asking for representation or for housing to reflect their needs. Conversely, there are tenants' rights organizations advocating for the working class.

Irrespective of Putman's comments, the majority of community leaders are committed to preserving community in the wake of gentrification. But despite this commitment and their criticism of the variable affordability definitions and the market rate developments, it became clear that the non-profit developer cannot afford to fund 100% of a project. As a result, they are in essence forced to do projects that are quasi-affordable. Putman shares that his organization's average ratio of affordable to market rate is 80%

affordable and 20% market. He explains that market rate units help reduce rents on the affordable units because it shores up profits and decreases the amount of debt needed to fund a project. This knowledge helped me understand the necessity of market rate housing and set the stage for a conflicting reality that non-profit developers cannot provide new affordable housing or rehab existing units without market-rate developments. The financial instability of non-profit developers means that an improvement in housing for those earning 30-60% of the AMI cannot be made in exclusion of market rate housing unless a government subsidy covers the balance. For example, during a Community Board 10 meeting, Greater Harlem Housing Development Corporation shared plans on selling an empty lot and using the proceeds to shore up the finances for the surrounding 117 units of affordable housing.

Public housing provides the most security in terms of rental assistance since it is managed directly by the City. But since everyone else is not eligible for public housing, that leaves behind an affordable housing gap. A vast majority of New York City households rely on one or more forms of housing subsidies to maintain housing affordability, with the majority utilizing rent control/stabilization. The continuance of these programs allows residents to stay in place despite a changing housing market. The expiration of subsidies or the removal of households from stabilization programs threatens the ability of residents to continue living in their community. Miles tells me that if a tenant falls behind on their rent, they lose the protection of rent stabilization. Once that tenant is evicted, the landlord can then rent that unit for the regular price. The same occurs if the tenant moves out or passes away; the unit can then be offered at market price. Similarly,

if the landlord buys out a tenant, the subsidy leaves with the tenant. Thus the apartment is removed from the list of affordable housing units.

As a housing developer, there are unintended consequences of creating new and refurbished residences and business establishments. When buildings are rehabbed, new residents come. When new buildings go up, and rental prices are above the cost of standard living, businesses will come. That reality impacts everyone differently. Across the board, each community leader understands that while they have a love and fondness for their community and the old residents, they are in fact participating in community turnover by virtue of their organizational involvement. The New York City Planning Department conducted a major study of private reinvestment throughout the Upper West Side and Park Slope areas. The report concluded that reinvestment had improved housing conditions, stemmed deterioration, strengthened neighborhood commercial areas, increased assessed values, and that it even led to displacement, one of the unfortunate consequences of gentrification. But no attempt at measuring was made (City of New York, Department of City Planning 1984). Peter Marcuse (1986) estimated that between 10,000 and 40,000 New York City households were displaced by gentrification each year during this period. Similarly, the leaders in Central Harlem are also participating in the turnover.

Although the Community Board express real concerns at keeping developers accountable to the community and ensuring that some of the new units are available to low and moderate-income or long-time residents, the Board has no real way of holding developers accountable. Developer questionnaires or resolutions do not ensure housing affordability. The Board is not even aware of how many affordable units are offered to community residents. The single moms themselves are quite ambivalent about the

Community Board and ignorant of the role the Board plays in neighborhood developments. One of the outspoken single moms previously attended Community Board meetings until she realized that it was just a place where emotions concerning projects were expressed, but nothing was done. Community leader M. Putman informs that if the government gives land to a developer or a non-profit, the agency requires that preference is given to people that live in the respective Community District. "That's, that's the rule of thumb. And if the project just doesn't make sense and nobody can afford it in that community board, they waive it; they waive that requirement" (excerpt from interview with Putman).

Politicians created government programs, which made it possible for tax abatements and other such incentives. Elected official Roberts, himself, states that rent control will continue as long as he and his colleagues are alive. However, there is no permanency in that statement. To know that the continuance of affordable housing is dependent upon the continuation of a particular set of elected officials and community-minded leadership is frightening. What happens when they are no longer in position? Real estate agents market the community to fill vacancies, and neighborhood improvement associations advocate for a better community. Collectively, these stakeholders contribute to the growing appeal of Harlem. Because most non-profit developers cannot afford to develop projects that are 100% affordable to the people in the community, they are forced to do market rate housing to help fund affordable housing. Due to the broad definition of AMI and its use, each developer can decide which income criteria they will pursue. The subjective application of the affordability criteria leads to uneven and unbalanced development. Although developers must appear before the Community Board to present their housing proposals, the Board does not have a real way to hold developers accountable

to make affordable housing units available to existing residents. Loopholes allow for apartments that are carved out for community residents to be offered to non-community residents if tenants are not identified in a timely fashion. The effectiveness of the local planning board, Community Board 10, is diminished by the lack of knowledge residents have of the Board, its purpose, and its meetings.

After meeting with the community leaders, it was clear that the image of the non-profit developer as a money grabbing entity unaware of its actions and the role it plays in the physical, economic, and social transformation of Harlem is unfounded. These men and women care. Their interviews were laced with feelings of pride to be a part of the Harlem community, something they each consider a prized accomplishment as they reflect on Harlem's historic past and its viable future. Most of them live here. This is their home. As mentioned by all, change in Harlem was needed and warranted the attention of the government to create programs to draw capital to a place previously closed off. If a community-based organization wants to survive, they must diversify their housing portfolio. Outside of housing, the leaders want the old residents of Harlem to have access to the same services enjoyed in other Manhattan neighborhoods. That, however, comes at a price.

The changes occurring around them are a result of years of advocacy and demands for the same services enjoyed in other areas of Manhattan. Finally, Harlem has opened up, and there are no signs of stopping. They are well aware of this and in some way they feel responsible for what is happening. Harlem is getting better. The community leaders are both agents and beneficiaries of that change. Access to affordable housing allows low-income persons to stay in place in a gentrifying neighborhood. A continual decrease in the

number of affordable housing units is ultimately connected to a drop in the number of low-income persons and threatens their ability to remain. The very ones charged with the responsibility of providing affordable housing are the same ones responsible for promoting economic development.

Correctly implied by Merrifield, corporate welfare is a “more insidious redistribution of public money than ‘trickle-down’ Reaganomics” (Merrifield 2002: 94). Despite the seemingly helpless disposition of cities, they do have power. They can legislate that companies increase their minimum wage. They can legislate that affordable housing reflects what is affordable to members of that community. However, the unwanted effects of such a demand can only be thwarted when and if cities mobilize nationally. But, the competitive stake in this global age makes this highly unlikely. The restoration of deteriorated urban property and further reinvestment eventually causes displacement of current residents. Eventually, rents will increase as a result of the booming real estate market, thus forcing the less affluent to move out.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, I have answered the following research questions: (1) What does neighborhood change mean to the working class single mother? (2) What role do community leaders play in bringing about that neighborhood change? I summarize those points below.

What Does Neighborhood Change Mean To The Working Class Single Mother?

The concept of one’s neighborhood is more than a physical border, but it is based upon where a person lives and with whom she interacts. A women’s neighborhood is an

extension of herself, aids in her personal development, and shapes her understanding of the world. Rampant change pursued without her input results in displacement of belonging and displacement from her neighborhood. Though not physical, this displacement is felt in the presence of new residents from various economic and racial groups, the building of new places, and the entrance of resources. Neighborhood change in Harlem also means that African Americans will lose their dominant presence and the culture of place will change. Thus, it is embraced with caution because the transformation, though promising, ultimately means that one day their community will no longer resemble what they have come to know as home. When home no longer feels permanent, questions of what the future will resemble rise. Their home is changing before their eyes, much of which was warranted. Now other people desire the very community that was once thought to be unsafe, intimidating, and inferior. Just like Christopher Columbus did not discover the Caribbean, Harlem was always rich and viable; money did not make it that way. It was rich because they were there all along.

In the midst of this changing community, it becomes clear that change does not occur without conflict. When one group is allowed to exert its influence and change an area or when one group's voice is heard over another's, it speaks volumes to whose voice matters. The city ultimately falls to the highest bidder. This open door presents an opportunity for human capital to be developed and prepared to compete in the global city. Neighborhood change in Harlem means that unless women earn more money or secure an apartment that is truly affordable, they will one day live in another borough or outside of New York City. For their children, it is exposure to something the mothers never thought possible. This means improved education in an environment of competitive schools, better

neighborhoods, access to amenities, and exposure to people from different backgrounds. For the single mother, it's also a change in home, a breakup in relationships, and a loss of community. It's exposure to people from different racial and economic backgrounds; it's diversification of their neighborhood.

This dueling reality is expressed throughout the interviews. While happy about Harlem's exposure, they are saddened by the rapid onslaught of new residents and their ability to buy up the space around them. The charter schools promise a better education, but not everyone has access. Harlem is becoming more and more like the Upper West Side, but the community feel among long-time residents is decreasing. Neighborhood diversity is occurring at heightened rates, which means that one day Blacks might not hold the majority and their cultural heritage will wane in the coming years. Demographic change improves social awareness of other racial and economic groups, but this threatens the strength of the voting bloc. Community organizations exist, but the list of free programs has shortened.

Neighborhood change to the single mother in Harlem means that the stigma related to where she lives is lifting, everyone is welcome, and what matters most is purchasing power. She does not matter, her children do not matter, and her history in the neighborhood does not matter. This is not personal. Community is defined by those who have the ability to purchase. The only way the women can continue to live in Harlem is by doing everything within her power to position herself educationally and financially. She must either stay so poor that she can continue living in public housing, find an apartment that is not set to lose its subsidy, earn enough to afford the new affordable housing, or move out of Harlem to another borough or out of New York City. In a neoliberal capitalistic society,

the irony of this statement is purposeful. As stated by Donald Trump (1987) in The Art of the Deal, “whatever route, the city falls to the highest bidder.”

What role do community leaders play in bringing about that neighborhood change?

During the urban social movements of the 60s, "development policy shifted away from Moses' 'slum clearance,' seeking instead to pursue neighborhood preservation and low-income housing along with expensive projects to promote core economic development" (Sites 1994:192). The 1970s crisis changed the way NYC was managed. Less affluent citizens and neighborhoods received decreased services; and instead, under Mayor Koch, the interests of lending institutions, businesses, large developers, labor leaders, and government surrogates, such as the Financial Control Board and the Municipal Assistance Corporation, rose to the forefront. Local government restructured to promote economic development. Government scaled back on intervention and regulation and allowed businesses to revitalize the economy. Loan programs, tax incentives, and zoning changes increased development. Major commercial development initiatives were also created—South Street Seaport, Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, and the 42nd Street Development Project—which helped spur a positive and vigorous business climate.

Federal economic policies (deregulation, anti-unionism, and the subsidization of capital mobility) combined with cutbacks in urban assistance to further encourage the trend toward deindustrialization, service-sector growth, financial market hyperactivity, and labor-market polarization. The resulting restructuring city was characterized by uneven economic and spatial development. It is in this environment that community development organizations came to the forefront.

The organizations represented by the community leaders formed during a time when Harlem experienced significant disinvestment. Individuals banded together to provide for members of the community who were neglected. They established organizations to create housing outside of HUD developments and to help Harlem residents rebuild their community. In place of the government, they provided social services. They purchased lots and built housing that was affordable to residents of the community. They stepped in when slum landlords were negligent and restored the neighborhood. They helped local businesses secure loans, and they worked with government agencies to bring businesses and jobs back to Harlem. To redevelop Harlem, public and non-profit actors appealed to private developers, telling them to look uptown and to build there. Politicians appealed to the federal and state government to invest money in its business corridor. Harlem needed jobs, schools, and quality housing.

Whether by fault or by design, the voice of Harlem's leaders was heard and the door was opened. The multifarious role of community leaders is rather complex and contradictory. They are enablers of community economic and real estate development, advocates for community residents, promulgators of affordable housing, and partners in market rate housing. In one manner they cry for neighborhood investments and in another, they want those services to be available to all members of the community. Some recognize the competing values and have made it their goal to ensure that their organization continues to build and restore affordable housing. Others understand that Harlem has changed and have a vested stake in providing both market rate and affordable housing. There is no good or bad cop in this scenario.

Global shifts in the social economy have an enormous impact upon the local instances of gentrification in Harlem. Cities are not only struggling for jobs, capital, and investment, they are also fighting for the right sort of people. In a globalizing world and NYC's desire to be more competitive and entrepreneurial, growth made its way uptown. The community leaders embraced this change because their town was finally getting the recognition that it deserves. And even in this, they recognize that there are some contradictions. The majority of the community leaders interviewed live in this community too. The better things get, the pricier it becomes, and at its current rate, it may even become too expensive for them. Despite this collision of roles, their partnership with private developers ensures that new housing also includes affordable housing units. They are the community conscious for the private housing developer. While the affordability formula allows for some variance in income eligibility, their commitment to community increases the likelihood that developers will continue building housing that is actually affordable to Harlem's low-income residents. Similarly, community associations can ensure that the interests of all Harlem residents, new and old, are taken into consideration when addressing local matters. "The rise of African-American political power, a deregulation of credit markets, the emergence of a CDC model of urban renewal and entrepreneurial city politics all played a role in rechanneling capital to a formerly abandoned part of New York City" (Bernt 2012: 3057). In this light, community leaders are both stabilizers and agents of change.

CHAPTER 7:

WHOSE NEIGHBORHOOD IS IT ANYWAY?

OVERVIEW OF DISSERTATION

This manuscript began with a discussion on present-day urban development trends in America's inner-cities. I introduced the topic of gentrification, describing it as a process that includes economic, residential, and social transformation in radical record-setting ways. I covered the various waves of gentrification beginning in the 1950s till present-day, differentiating each stage. I then connected gentrification to New York City, asking why it has occurred and why it is still occurring, moving from neighborhood to neighborhood with a focus on Harlem. I then provided the research questions: What does neighborhood change mean to the working class single mother? What role do community leaders play in bringing about this change? And I concluded the first chapter with a brief overview of the qualitative research approach, along with my perspective, and an outline of the dissertation.

The second chapter, Concentrated Poverty, The Neighborhood, Gentrification and the Effects, gave an in-depth review of the literature that influenced my frame of thought. Together, I believe the sections within that chapter give a clear picture of the creation of the ghetto, the resulting poverty concentration and its problems, social mix as a way to combat the negative neighborhood effects, gentrification as a response, along with community change, and meaning of place for women. The theories presented are weighed by supporting and contrasting views, and I raised questions that I hoped my research would explore. Considering the horrid depictions of the inner-city in the residential segregation literature, I asked whether there is anything good left in the hood. From my research, I

conclude there are scores of hard working individuals living in inner-city neighborhoods who are no different than their suburban counterparts. What differentiates them is opportunity, not culture. Could gentrification be the answer that inner-cities have been waiting for? Both the literature and my research conclude that there is no one answer.

Chapter 3, Research Design and Methodology, describes the way in which I conducted the research, providing a rationale for conducting a qualitative study. It also includes an overview of the population selection and sampling, and a detailed description of the way in which I employed the methods selected. Chapter 4 detailed the analysis and introduced the research subjects. It was evident from the onset that Harlem was an appropriate focus due to the degree of neighborhood change. Furthermore, the selection of single moms allowed me to tell a story of change from the perspective of a group impacted by increasing prices and population shifts. My involvement in the community and attendance at Community Board 10 meetings influenced my decision to include the perspective of community leaders. The richness of the conversations which took place during the Community Board 10 meetings helped me ascertain the pace of on the ground change and inspired me to include it within my research. In chapter 5, Single Mom's Voices, Community Leaders' Perspectives and Community Board 10 Meetings, I gave voice to the stories of the single moms and community leaders.

The use of interviews and document analysis as methods allowed me to trace the development of neighborhood improvement as perceived by the respondents and explore what area change means to the working class single mother, and what role community leaders play in bringing about neighborhood change. More specifically, I uncovered how single mothers encounter gentrification in Harlem, and the community leaders helped me

to understand the larger forces at play. James (2008: 35) states, “why not try to understand the attitudes and beliefs of the residents of low-income neighborhoods? Perhaps they can give policy makers insight on how to help residents help themselves.” My dissertation research evolved from this school of thought and prompted me to look further into the residential experience and examine the impact that the entrance of new businesses and diverse population groups has upon long-term residents. In chapter 6, *Tying It All Together: Research Findings and The Literature*, I synthesized the themes that emerged from the data into four findings, which I believe contribute to the discussion on the residential experience with gentrification.

Yes, gentrification brings the resources that inner-cities have been lacking. In its immediate entrance, it meets the needs of new residents and even old residents who are ecstatic to live in an up and coming neighborhood. But down the road, the neighborhood that was up and coming becomes an area that is most welcoming to those who earn higher than what was once customary for those living there. Not only do people face possible displacement, but there's also the likelihood that the cultural meaning of the area will lose its significance as the population shifts. This cultural, racial, and social connection to Harlem clouds the view of the single mothers and the community leaders, who in one sense want to applaud the developments, but on the other hand give it thumbs down. The reality sinks in that not only will Harlem no longer be an African American community in the years to come, but it will cease to be affordable to those who are low to moderate-income.

This injustice is internalized and expressed in thoughts of bias, inequities, conspiracy, and conflict. However, in the midst of this, something strange occurs. The single mothers are motivated to improve their economic positioning for themselves and

their children. Witnessing the ability of outsiders to purchase property and afford exorbitant rents may anger the women, but it fuels them. It drives them to think about their current situation and how they might prepare themselves to either remain in Harlem or to afford housing choices elsewhere. Perhaps that's how social mix works. Additionally, the community leaders are caught in a web of urbanization and globalization. Global shifts in the economy push their hands. Politicians and developers are a part of the forces that are shaping the landscape and making it a competitive city. They are advocates for community residents, and they are also drivers of gentrification. The non-profits are a part of this microcosm as well, but they provide a number of social and educational services to low and moderate-income groups.

WHOSE NEIGHBORHOOD IS IT ANYWAY?

I asked the single mothers and community leaders to answer the question of "Who owns Harlem?" Responses to that question are varied as the history of Harlem and range from ownership by Blacks, to no one, and those who can afford it. I lean toward the first and last opinions with a slight modification. But, in an effort not to answer this question in a vacuum, I provide Harlem's historical development gathering facts from Mount Morris Park Community Improvement Association, NYC Department of Planning, and several authors who give light to Harlem's history.

Presently, African Americans are the majority group living in Harlem, but that was not always the case. Other groups, immigrants, in particular, have been there before. I would like to side with Jacob Vigdor (2002), a Duke University urban planning professor, who holds the "romanticized view [that] a neighborhood is where people are born [and] live their entire lives." However, in a state of neoliberal capitalism, money trumps race.

Gentrification is about money which has some Black and Brown consequences. In an editorial piece done by ABC News (Libaw 2007) entitled, "'Yuppie Scum' Save the 'Hood,'" John Palen, a professor of Sociology at Virginia Commonwealth University, was quoted as saying that "cities aren't museums; they change. It's part of their nature. Generally, areas that are gentrifying were once comfortable and are basically being returned to how they were 100 years ago." Could that be the case in Harlem? Maybe Monefa was on to something when she said that gentrification is a cycle that begins every other decade, with each population group building the community and making it acceptable for the next group to come.

Harlem was established by the Dutch in 1658 (Matthias Bernt 2012) and was developed in stages. Beginning in the early 1800s, the population of Harlem grew as immigrants swept into New York and investors began developing the area. As single-family brick and brownstones rose in West and Central Harlem, upper and middle-income families were attracted to the area. It was not until the early 1800s that Blacks began to move into the area in high numbers. "The completion of the Lenox Avenue subway in 1904 was accompanied by a major building boom and rampant real estate speculation" (Mount Morris Park Community Improvement Association 2002). However, the housing supply far surpassed the demand and resulted in vacancies. Faced with a busted building boom, developers were forced to open up rental units designed for White middle-income families to African Americans, who were leaving the southern states in search of a better life. Landlords first rented to upper-class Black families at inflationary prices, but this changed with the increase of migration. For instance, Strivers' Row includes three rows of townhouses on West 138th and West 139th between Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Boulevard

and Frederick Douglass Boulevard. Constructed between 1891 and 1893, they were originally designed for upper-middle-class Whites but were made available to wealthy, and prominent African Americans in the 20s and 30s after Whites left the area. Also, townhomes in Astor Row were occupied by White New Yorkers but in 1920, but most of the homes were sold to Black buyers.

Between 1910 and 1920, Central Harlem became a Black neighborhood when its real estate market collapsed, leaving scores of new apartment buildings empty. Faced with rising demand, landlords then subdivided the rental units and raised rents, thus beginning a legacy of overcrowding and poor maintenance and laying the foundation of slum conditions (Matthias Bernt 2012). It was during the 1920s that the Harlem Renaissance occurred (Nicholson 2009). Harlem thrived as a major environmental center and showcase for talented Black artists (Bernt 2012). Theatres, libraries, and institutions provided cultural outlets for the Black community. The 20s and 30s were also the time when Harlem became the center of the city's nightlife.

Harlem's Black population soared from 83,248 in 1920 to 203,894 ten years later. The residential density of 236 persons per acre was twice that of Manhattan as a whole. Driven by low incomes and high rents, one family apartments were converted into two and three family apartments. The areas to the west and north of Central Harlem were exclusively White, except for some distinct areas such as Sugar Hill occupied by a few middle and upper-income Black families. Most Blacks were concentrated in Central Harlem. During the Great Depression, 50% of the city's African Americans became unemployed, impacting Harlem tremendously. "The Depression of 1929 brought all new construction and building maintenance to a halt. A community that was becoming the

leading Black metropolis of the world was, at the same time, rapidly declining into an area of extended slum neighborhoods" (Mount Morris Park Community Improvement Association 2002). As I share in finding #2, Neighborhood Change is Complicated, overcrowding, poor building maintenance, disease and crime, and discriminatory lending practices contributed to community downturn (Bernt 2012). This recession also led to massive layoffs, business closures, and the departure of the Black middle-class and affluent from the ghetto (Massey and Denton 1993).

Fast forward decades later, by the early 1990s Harlem was separate from the rest of Manhattan due to its isolation, persistent poverty, and myriad social problems. However, in that same decade, Harlem saw the slight beginning of a rebirth as a massive program of redevelopment began. Since New York City's real estate boom in 1996, brokers and developers have made fortunes in Harlem buying and selling brownstones for renovation. Thirty years ago, the presence of financial institutions was dismal, to say the least (Julian Brash and Neil Smith). In the early 1980s, Harlem was almost entirely redlined by private lenders and banks. It was an everyday occurrence for me to walk past abandoned tenements and brownstones that had been converted to drug houses and homeless dens, empty lots turned into junk yards, and boarded and broken windows. Spawned by unprecedented investment by the Clinton Administration, mortgage investment totaled \$163 million for Central Harlem in 1993 and rose to \$686 million only five years later. While there are still small pockets of Harlem that lack private investment, the presence of banks has become even more apparent. Harlem residents now have access to the very services they longed for just two or three decades ago—mainstream financing, loans, home ownership, shops, and upscale amenities (Julian Brash and Neil Smith).

Harlem is distinct in that New York State subsidizes a 48-square-block Banking Development District that assists banks in opening branches in Harlem and invests money in local projects (Zukin, Trujillo, Frase et al. 2009). Several avenues in Harlem were also rezoned to allow for the construction of high-rise apartment buildings with retail stores on the ground level (Zukin, Trujillo, Frase et al. 2009, Brent 2012).

The zoning strategy, which balances growth and preservation in south-central Harlem's residential core, fosters new opportunities for residential development, promotes building forms that are more compatible with the existing urban fabric, and expands opportunities for new ground floor commercial uses. (NYC Department of City Planning)

Best stated by Miranda J. Martinez (2010), "During the 2000s, an even higher level of gentrification has taken root as new development has become more generically luxury, targeting 'an elite, globally connected' gentry based in the financial services industries, rather than the niche market of 'creatives.'" David J. Maurrasse (2006), author of "Listening to Harlem," created a scale to rate the transformation of Harlem. He devised seven stages of gentrification that begin with grass-roots organizing. Maurrasse places Harlem between stages four and five, where we see both intensive investment and population shift. According to his process, the next phase involves displacement of low-income residents and a decrease in rent stabilized apartments, ending with a full transformation. Eventually, low-income residents of the gentrified area will face internal displacement—the forced migration to another area.

From all appearances, this seems to be the direction Harlem is going in. Furthermore, there has been a "strong growth in 'new entrepreneurial' retail capital (boutiques); a notable increase in 'corporate' retail capital (chain stores), especially in Harlem; and deep decline in old, 'local' retail stores" (Zukin, Trujillo, Frase et al. 2009:

58). The chain or corporate retail stores help make the area more desirable to private developers while also bringing a shopping experience that offers something for all income groups. The increase in large chains puts a strain on local businesses as evidenced by a mapping project done by a marketing consultant who found that 50 percent of businesses in Harlem changed between 1987 and 2005 (Maurrasse 2006). A large reason for this shift is the declining existence and availability of affordable commercial space (Zukin, Trujillo, Frase et al. 2009). Harlem is not running out of space, just affordable space.

Today, rent and mortgage for moderate-income housing can be as high as 165 percent of the area median income. Hence, it is not unusual to see advertisement of moderate-income housing requiring incomes of \$100,000+. Even the new development geared towards moderate-income families requires incomes well above the median. Gentrification does not discriminate. It does not entail attracting only White middle-class families, but anyone who can afford it. As the single mothers reveal, Whites are not the only ones moving in. The difference, this time, is that this population shift entails the moving in of Whites, Hispanics, Asians, Arabs, and members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer community.

Braconi and Freeman (2004: 39) stated, "Existing residents of inner-city neighborhoods could benefit directly from gentrification if it brings new housing investment and stimulates additional retail and culture." That's true. But, as Arlene Davila (2004: 73) shares, "groups survive by controlling space and maintaining a viable and visible presence." If the African American working class resident cannot afford to live in Harlem, then they are not able to benefit from the developments. Additionally, the changes taking place in Harlem such as the marketing of culture questions "the operations of culture

in the spatial politics of contemporary cities” (Davila 2004). Neo-liberal policies favor deregulation and the privatization of social services, such as public housing, education, and the arts—characterized by smaller government and the free market in the guise of government efficiency.

With this in mind, I can only conclude that Harlem does not belong to any particular group. Cities are not museums; they change with the economy. Harlem is simply a product of neoliberal capitalism and the low to moderate-income residents are victims of that process. There are no feelings associated with dollars and cents; it is no longer about people. Harlem is a space that has been home to various groups—first the Dutch, then immigrant Whites, affluent Blacks, low-income Blacks, and now a combination of wealthy Whites and non-Whites of different economic groups. It is the same cycle but in reverse, and this time, it is slower. African-Americans made Harlem their home amidst residential segregation and the exodus of Whites. Today, Whites and others are making Harlem their home in an atmosphere of mixed developments and an open frontier, while low-income Blacks are moving further and further north, remaining on the fringes of development in section 8 housing and NYCHA developments.

ADDING TO THE LITERATURE

This dissertation does what has not been done for Central Harlem until now. It tells the complex story of eight low to moderate-income single mothers from different backgrounds who are living in a neighborhood that is changing rapidly. It puts their voice to an issue. Their candor, frustration, and aspirations scream throughout their stories, “I’m here!” In the midst of brick and mortar development, these voices have been silenced. They are not heard in Manhattan Community Board 10 which is an arena where issues are raised,

but there is no real power to solve them. Most of the women do not know how to get involved or how to make themselves heard. Instead, the prevailing sentiment is that they are pieces on a chess board being moved by forces beyond their control. The addition of the community leaders lends details to the women's skepticism and fact to their observation. The Community Board 10 meetings show the intensity of developments and give proof that these women are not exaggerating. Their reality is changing before their eyes. Individually, they may seem insignificant. But collectively their stories are compelling.

I realize that contrary to my argument, the demographics of Harlem might not change entirely, diverse income and racial groups might live in harmony side by side; they might embrace community, and Harlem's unique cultural significance will remain intact. Although I doubt that outcome, if that is the case, then my dissertation research has still achieved its purpose—to inform the literature on the human experience with neighborhood change.

I began this dissertation by stating that scholars must bring to the forefront the experiences of the most vulnerable members of the inner city, and not just criticize neoliberalism. How has gentrification impacted those individuals who have been there all along? Their experience is unique because they are dependent upon the government to make living affordable in most cases. But in the age of public-private partnership, affordable, as discussed throughout, no longer means what it once did.

Community leaders need to take a closer look at the overall effects of their programmatic and development decisions. They must realize that while gentrification is helping Harlem economically, its unique social and cultural infrastructure lay on the

peripheries of neighborhood change. They must be aware that without their commitment to providing and sustaining truly affordable housing, there is no housing guarantee other than public housing for the low-income. Maintenance of affordability and cultural legacy is dependent upon the continuance of community-minded politicians and leadership.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESEARCHERS

Recognizing that this is academic research, I include here a short set of recommendations for those who are interested in studying gentrification. (1) Further study of distal role modeling in Harlem is warranted. Scholarship could benefit from further insight into how the addition of higher income groups due to forces of gentrification influence personal motivation of lower income groups. (2) Additional study centering on social control and the diversion of crime to less gentrified areas is another area of research. If the internal and external policing of one area increases crime in the less affluent area, a deeper investigation of what this means to that community is needed. (3) Because there are so many vibrant stories throughout Harlem, a close look at the experience of particular blocks or residents in one complex or apartment building would prove quite fascinating. However, I caution that one needs to be careful of defining neighborhood for the research subject, instead, let them define it themselves. As I discovered, neighborhood is more than just block radius.

A FINAL REFLECTION

Walking through Harlem as a former resident, I kept recalling memories of what I knew Harlem to be growing up, while another world was unfolding before me. I saw the realization of economic aspirations—what seemed like a dream come true. Saying that I

was from Harlem was not as negative as before. Now to say I was from Harlem meant that I was from a happening place, a place attracting droves of newcomers. While I was able to benefit from the new amenities and community beautification, I was not able to participate in the housing boom. I started asking myself, “Whose Neighborhood Is This?” In retrospect I was upset. According to the city’s homebuyer’s program, my mom and I made too much money to purchase a home at the subsidized rate. But without the housing subsidy being offered to Harlem residents, we would never be able to afford that mortgage. The logic made no sense to me. The income eligibility seemed like a scheme propagated by the city to market the community to wealthy families, knowing that the majority of Harlem residents could not afford the asking price. I began my research with this mindset.

Influenced by my upbringing and my experiences in Harlem I selected my research topic thinking I knew the answers and that it was clear cut. The city is up to something, gentrification is wrong, and it has an adverse impact on the existing residential base. I thought that I would find much resistance and that much of the interviews would turn into conversations of we are right, and they are wrong. But, that did not happen. Instead, I met different men and women with different opinions. Each could find virtues and critiques with the way in which their community was changing. Virtually no one was completely opposed or in favor. Most stood in the middle of various viewpoints.

Choosing to do a qualitative study made the most sense for a topic such as this one, yet it was not without its difficulties. An interviewer faces the same resistance as a telemarketer. I had to be creative and adapt with every road block. Also, this study has its limitations. There is only one wave of interviews with a set number of individuals, and it focuses on a set location. Therefore, most of its findings are only applicable to Harlem and

cities of a similar history. I could have selected the elderly, immigrants, fast food workers, the formerly incarcerated or even the disabled, but I opted for the single mother. Memories of being raised by a single mother and the experiences of my childhood friends and their single moms prompted this selection. Despite these limitations, I believe this dissertation contributes to the literature on the human experience with neighborhood change and gentrification in Harlem.

The topic of community change is not a straightforward one. It is filled with complexities, ambiguity, and frustration. I, myself, learned a great deal. The interviews opened my eyes and challenged my thinking. I hope others will read this manuscript and find inspiration to look further—to take a deep dive into understanding the impact that neighborhood change has on the most vulnerable, and to realize that policy leaves a greater imprint than ink on paper. Neighborhood Change has a real effect on real people. The espousal of capital rids itself of any responsibility or human obligation. That is the biggest problem. Research must continue to assess the pros and cons of policies, programs, and processes, but I hope it does not stop there. I hope it makes a significant difference.

Appendix A: Codes and Code Definitions

Count	Code	Definition	Grounded	Density
1	ability to leave Harlem	can you afford to live anywhere else	17	3
2	ability to live in Harlem	are you able to afford to remain in Harlem	30	9
3	affordability breakdown	looks at cost of housing by %AMI as per developer	12	3
4	affordable housing	specific affordable developments or proposals	38	6
5	affordable housing units	units in new development set aside for affordable housing	9	3
6	age	single mother's age	10	2
7	anti-displacement strategies	specific steps to keep current community residents from being displaced	2	6
8	anti-poverty strategies	government programs to assist in combating poverty among low-income	1	1
9	appeal of Harlem	factors that make Harlem attractive/appealing to non-Harlem residents	23	2
10	assistance with housing	resources available to help people obtain housing	10	7
11	awning/signage proposal	proposal to change awning/signage on a building	4	1
12	benefits of gentrification	pros of gentrification as expressed by interviewee	17	3
13	branding of Harlem	attempts at changing the name of Harlem streets, areas, districts, etc...	9	4
14	building alteration proposal	proposal before CB10 to alter building exterior	6	1
15	business name and address	that of businesses that appear before CB10 economic development committee	99	7
16	businesses beneficial to community	businesses giving back to the community by way of jobs and community programs	7	2
17	charter schools	any mention of charter schools in conversation	5	2
18	child school	school that single mom's children attends	30	3
19	children demographics	any demo info related to single mom's child's school	14	2
20	children programs	mention of programs for children (past, new, existing)	22	2

21	committee conflict	member doesn't participate in the vote because they have a disclosed interest	2	1
22	Community-based organization	CBO presents at cb10 meeting for information purposes on resources available to the community	19	2
23	community board	mention of knowledge of cb10 by single mothers	9	3
24	community change	any mention of change in Harlem from how it once was to how it is now	57	9
25	community events	events mentioned at cb10 meeting	11	2
26	community garden proposal	proposal for community garden presented at cb10 meeting	1	2
27	community resources	mention of resources available to community residents	10	14
28	community space	mention of space in development proposal that would be available for use by community members	5	3
29	community support	community organization or members attend cb10 meeting to show support for proposed project	1	3
30	concept of neighborhood	views on the importance of neighborhood	4	1
31	conditions of raising children	does the mom have any assistance in raising children	25	2
32	conflict	conflicts between community residents	12	3
33	criticism gentrification	negative views on gentrification	22	4
34	cultural center proposal	proposal before the board on cultural issues	1	1
35	cultural legacy	discussion of Harlem's cultural significance	16	4
36	define 3 Harlems	ask how person differentiates between the three sections of Harlem	26	3
37	definition of community	women's definition on community	11	2
38	definition of gentrification	understanding of the word gentrification	9	4
39	developer accountability tactics	tactics used by cb10 to keep developers accountable to the community	7	4
40	developer community outreach	steps developer takes to make units available to existing residents	6	4
41	developer name and project address	name of the developer and address of the proposed project	42	2
42	disability residence proposal	proposal to build a residence for the developmentally disabled	1	1

43	displacement of businesses	existing/former businesses leaving because of changing community, affordability	9	4
44	displacement of residents	existing/former residents leaving Harlem because of housing changes, affordability	43	5
45	diversity in Harlem	any mention of racial groups in Harlem and growing diversity	44	6
46	ec business accountability tactic	tactics used by cb10 to keep businesses accountable to the community	1	4
47	ec committee concerns	economic development committee concerns expressed concerning a particular project	1	7
48	ec delayed vote	person/organization needs to present again before the economic development committee with more information	6	1
49	ec future plans	events/projects/forums that the cb10 committee will undertake in the future	6	1
50	ec issues identified	issues of project presented before ecdev committee; issues identified primarily by residents	15	7
51	ec no vote	proposal presented at ecdev committee not approved	1	1
52	ec pending yes	proposal received a yes vote pending additional information received	3	1
53	ec resident complaints	complaints raised by residents concerning a econdev proposal project	2	7
54	ec tabled vote	vote tabled because of additional steps or information needed	3	1
55	ec yes vote	proposal presented at ecdev committee not approved	75	1
56	ecabstain	number of committee members who abstained	82	1
57	ecno	number of committee members who voted no	82	1
58	econ committee business	non-agenda items by econdev committee members	1	1
59	econ dev comm absence	econdev members who were absent	17	1
60	econ dev comm attendance	econdev members who were present	24	1
61	econ non-voting item	presentation is for information purposes only; no vote is taken	0	1

62	economic development	discussion with EL about commercial development in community	7	2
63	ecyes	number of committee members who voted yes	81	1
64	education system	conversations on different schools in Harlem	10	5
65	El community involvement	indicates whether the leader is engaged in the community	7	2
66	EL length of present employment	length of time leader is employed in present job	4	2
67	EL name	name of leader	5	4
68	EL opinion of job	personal thoughts on their job	1	2
69	EL past employment	employment prior to current employment	1	2
70	EL personal history	details about the leader's life	6	9
71	EL personal motivation	personal drive, goals, ambitions	3	2
72	EL place of origin	where born	8	2
73	EL place raised	where raised	3	3
74	EL residence	where live	8	3
75	EL residential street	specific street lived on	2	2
76	EL school	school leader attended	1	2
77	employer address	where job is located	9	2
78	existing property	current use of property under proposal	11	2
79	extension proposal	proposal to extend portions of the building	2	1
80	garage alterations proposal	proposal to alter building garage	2	1
81	grandmother	mom is also a grandmother	1	2
82	handicap	proposal to make a building ADA compliant	2	1
83	Harlem 10 yrs.	view of what Harlem will look like in ten years	41	2
84	historic district extension proposal	proposal to extend district beyond its current street borders	2	2
85	history of Harlem	mention of Harlem's history	11	2
86	housing affordability	discussion on housing affordability in Harlem	43	6
87	housing availability	availability of housing in Harlem	7	6
88	housing problems	mom reports issues with her housing present or in the past	1	2
89	housing proposal	proposal before committee to build housing	20	11
90	housing services	bundled social services in addition to housing provided	4	2
91	housing type	what sort of housing mom lives in	7	3
92	housing upgrade proposal	proposal before board to upgrade a housing development	1	2

93	ideal harlem	views as to what would make Harlem the ideal place to live	19	2
94	income	women's salary/earnings	3	1
95	interaction w/ new residents	interaction between old and new residents	15	5
96	JLULHC absence	lulhc members who were absent	2	1
97	JLULHC attendance	lulhc members who were present	23	1
98	joint venture	project done in partnership with another developer	11	2
99	land marks	mention of land marks in Harlem	9	1
100	letter of no objection	specific request made to the board	1	1
101	liquor license alteration proposal	business wants to alter current liquor license	1	6
102	liquor license conversion proposal	switch from beer to full liquor license	1	5
103	liquor license new	request for new liquor license	39	5
104	liquor license renewal	request to renew current license	32	5
105	lulm abstain	committee member doesn't vote	19	1
106	lulm committee business	non-agenda items by lulm committee members	25	1
107	lulm committee concerns	land use, landmark, housing committee concerns expressed concerning a particular project	30	4
108	lulm delayed vote	person/organization needs to present again before the land use, landmark, housing committee with more information	7	1
109	lulm future plans	events/projects/forums that the cb10 committee will undertake in the future	7	1
110	lulm no	number of committee members who voted no	17	1
111	lulm non-voting item	presentation is for information purposes only; no vote is taken	8	1
112	lulm pending yes	proposal received a yes vote pending additional information received	1	1
113	lulm resident complaints	complaints raised by residents concerning a land use, landmarks, housing proposal project	5	5
114	lulm resident support	residents at lulm committee meetings in support of project application	3	4
115	lulm tabled vote	vote tabled because of additional steps or information needed	3	1
116	lulm yes	number of committee members who voted yes	21	1
117	lulm yes vote	proposal presented at lulm committee approved	23	1

118	meaning of neighborhood	what neighborhood means to the single mom	11	3
119	median income formula	how affordability is created	12	3
120	mixed units	development has market rate and affordable housing units	7	4
121	neighborhood effects	any discussion on how neighborhood environment impacts the individual	15	3
122	new Harlem charac	mention of Harlem characteristics that are new to Harlem and different from the old	44	15
123	no issues	no issues identified with the proposal	42	6
124	no of children	number of children the single mom has	10	5
125	no show	presenter didn't show	5	1
126	old Harlem charac	referring to the way Harlem once was, describing conditions characteristic of old Harlem	34	6
127	old stores	thoughts of old stores	17	3
128	opinion of job	single mom's personal thoughts on her job	4	3
129	organization description	description of the community based organization	10	3
130	organization history	history of the community based organization	8	3
131	organization role	role of the community based organization	15	4
132	organization services	services of the community based organization	46	4
133	organization values	values of the community based organization	14	3
134	organizational capacity	capacity of the community based organization	3	2
135	other residential experience	person's residential history	3	2
136	ownership of Harlem	thoughts on who owns Harlem	18	7
137	past employment	where did person work prior to current employment	4	1
138	patronize the new	does the person patronize any new Harlem establishments	42	3
139	personal history	any mention of the person's background information during interview	25	9
140	personal motivation	mention of personal goals and attainment	22	4
141	physical culture establishment proposal	proposal to build a new establishment other than housing	1	1
142	political transition	talk of change in political power and elected office	1	4

143	preservation of old Harlem/culture	specific mention of strategies taken to preserve Harlem's traditional Black culture/population	8	5
144	private housing selling price	asking price for house	5	4
145	private housing units	amount of market rate units	7	2
146	project funding	which mechanisms will fund the project	18	5
147	prompt for gentrification	what led to unprecedented development in Harlem	25	2
148	proposal history	any sort of background information or details on the project itself	14	1
149	proposed new street lighting	proposal to install new street lighting	2	1
150	public housing units	amount of public housing units in a development	1	2
151	reasons leave Harlem	reasons why former residents left Harlem	2	2
152	redevelop	proposal to redevelop housing	2	2
153	rehabilitation proposal	proposal to rehab building	1	1
154	relocation	residents relocated temporarily so building can be rehabilitated	6	2
155	rent assistance programs	programs to assist with rent	14	3
156	rent control	mention of rent control	12	2
157	rent increase	mention of whether rent has increased	8	3
158	residential plans	future plans as to where the person will live	20	2
159	residential/commercial	mixed residential/commercial developments proposed at cb10 meeting	7	2
160	resistance to change	behaviors residents demonstrate not wanting the neighborhood to change to the new or back to the old	19	5
161	role of politics	mention of the role politics play in neighborhood change	2	0
162	rooftop proposal	proposal to make changes or to grant access to the roof	3	1
163	selling/redevelopment NYCHA	any mention of selling or redeveloping NYCHA developments	13	4
164	senior services	mention of services specific to seniors	4	1
165	shelter proposal	proposal before cb10 for a shelter	2	2
166	shelter units	amount of units in a development dedicated to shelter residents	2	3

167	sidewalk cafe new	new applications to open a sidewalk café	11	5
168	sidewalk cafe renewal	applications to renew sidewalk café licenses that have reached or are nearing the 2 year license expiration date	8	6
169	single mothers and poverty	mention of poverty issues specific to single moms	3	1
170	site control proposal	request to get site control of property from NYC Housing and Preservation Development	3	2
171	SM career specific	details on what the single mother does for a living	7	2
172	SM community involvement	indicates whether the single mother is engaged in the community	48	4
173	SM employer description	background information on the single mother's employer	16	4
174	SM employment	SM employment	13	5
175	SM length of present employment	length of time SM is employed in present job	8	3
176	SM name	name of single mother	8	7
177	SM place of origin	where born	11	3
178	SM place raised	where raised	13	4
179	SM residence	where live	18	9
180	SM residential street	specific street lived on	8	3
181	storefront alterations proposal	proposal before cb10 to make changes to the storefront	2	1
182	tenant association	mention of tenant association by moms and discussion on their involvement	7	3
183	thoughts of new residents	single mom's personal thoughts on new residents	22	4
184	type of child school	mention of the specific type of school the mother's child attends--private, public, charter, religious	4	3
185	violence/crime	change in crime in the community noticed along with neighborhood change/developments	22	4
186	we let it happen	view that long-time residents of Harlem didn't take appropriate steps to stop the rapid community change over	3	4
187	woman's race	how the woman self identifies	5	3
188	woman school	schools attended by single moms	26	3
189	workforce development services	specific accounts of how organizations and businesses prepare residents for jobs or provide jobs for community residents	8	1

190	zoning change proposal	proposal to change zoning or extend zoning borders	5	1
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Explanation of abbreviated codes: ec=Economic Development Committee, econ dev comm= Economic Development Committee, EL=elite leader/community leader, JLULHC=Joint Land Use, Land Mark and Housing Committee, lulm=land use and land mark committee, SM=single mother

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