



The New York Public Library  
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,  
Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division

Guide to the

**Harlem Neighborhoods Association records**

1941-1978

Sc MG 364

Processed by Andre Elizee.

## Summary

**Creator:** Harlem Neighborhoods Association

**Title:** Harlem Neighborhoods Association records

**Date:** 1941-1978

**Source:** SCM 89-103 Papers salvaged by Schomburg Center Staff on the grounds of a building under renovation located at 200 West 135th Street in Manhattan. The larger part of the records located there had already been discarded by the construction crew, and much of the present materials were strewn among the rubble and demolition heap.

**Abstract:** The Harlem Neighborhoods Association records chronicle the deteriorating quality of life in Harlem from the 1940s to the late 1970s. The collection consists of correspondence and memoranda, board of directors and committee minutes, financial reports, publicity and outreach materials, membership lists and printed matter. The committee and program files document an ongoing organizational concern for chronic social dysfunction and urban poverty in Harlem. The most substantive files are the Day Care Committee, 1952-1956; the Housing Committee, 1952-1956; the Recreation Committee, 1948-1958; the Parents Committee, 1952-1968, and several youth related programs spanning from 1948 to 1963. Other substantive issues include: school decentralization in Harlem, urban renewal, drug prevention and family planning. Frequent correspondents include James H. Robinson who served as chairman of the West Harlem Council of Social Agencies, Harriet Pickens and Mildred Fisher, respectively chairperson and executive secretary of the Central Harlem Council for Community Planning, and committee chairpersons Exie Welsch, Eugene Houston and Gertrude Tanneyhill. Also included is a scrapbook of articles and other printed matter documenting local efforts in 1963 to raise funds for the construction of a two-hundred bed hospital in Mount Morris Park.

**Preferred citation:** Harlem Neighborhoods Association records, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library

**Language of the Material:** English

**Processing note:** Processed by Andre Elizee; Machine-readable finding aid created by Apex Data Services; revised by Terry Catapano.

## Creator History

The Harlem Neighborhoods Association (HANA) was launched in 1937 as the West Harlem Council of Social Agencies. Its mission was to serve as a clearinghouse for various social agencies operating in Harlem. Membership included churches and schools, community groups, social agencies and individuals. The organization began with an informal group of social service professionals which met in 1934 to deal with relief problems caused by the Depression. The West Harlem Council of Social Agencies gained affiliation with the Welfare and Health Council of New York City in the early 1940s, and subsequently changed its name to the Central Harlem Council for Community Planning. Its board of Directors included officers and administrators of local schools, libraries, hospitals, banks, welfare and youth organizations, child care centers, and local branches of the Urban League, the Salvation Army, the American Red Cross and the Office of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. The Council had a paid staff which included an executive secretary, the Council's long time chairperson, Harriet Ida Pickens and several committees.

The Welfare and Health Council was reorganized into the Community Council of Greater New York in 1956, and ended its affiliation and funding programs with regional councils. As a result, the Central Harlem Council discontinued its exclusive relationship with social agencies and became a community and social planning group, with a new emphasis on grassroots participation. A membership drive was launched to enlist local community groups and individuals. A Founding Community Meeting was held in 1959 and the organization renamed itself the Harlem Neighborhoods Association (HANA). The new group received partial operating funds, as well as office space and some staffing, from the Community Services Society, a former member of the Central Harlem Council. HANA attracted more than 150 individual members and some twenty-four agencies during its first year of existence. For the next fifteen years, it organized public campaigns in Harlem around such issues as drug prevention and rehabilitation, housing renovation and preservation, community control in the area's public schools, better day care facilities for children, and health and youth services. HANA was one of the initial sponsors of "Harlem Youth Day" and the Haryou-Act project during the 1960s, and was instrumental in setting up a mental health clinic at Harlem Hospital. The organization lost its momentum in the late 1960s due partly to funding difficulties, and faded out of existence after 1976.

## Custodial History

Papers salvaged by Schomburg Center staff on the grounds of a building under renovation at 200 West 135th Street in Harlem.

## Scope and Content Note

The Harlem Neighborhoods Association Collection is a segment of that organization's records, salvaged from the rubble during renovation of the building where HANA was located. The collection has been divided into two series: *RECORDS OF THE CENTRAL HARLEM COUNCIL FOR COMMUNITY PLANNING* which span from 1941 to 1958, and *RECORDS OF THE HARLEM NEIGHBORHOODS ASSOCIATION*, 1958 to 1978. Each series is in turn divided into two subseries: *Board of Directors Records*, and *Committee and Program Files*. The collection chronicles the deteriorating quality of life in Harlem over three decades, along with the often ill-adapted responses of social agencies and municipal bodies.

The *Board of Directors Records* are arranged chronologically and consist of correspondence and

memoranda, minutes, agendas and reports, publicity and outreach materials, financial records, membership lists and printed matter. The *Committee and Program Files* in both series document an ongoing organizational concern for chronic social dysfunctions and urban poverty in Harlem. The most substantive files are: the Day Care Committee, 1950-1956; the Housing Committee, 1952-1956; the Recreation Committee, 1948-1958; the Parents Committee, 1952-1968; and several youth related programs spanning from 1948 to 1963. Other issues and projects documented in the collection include: the desegregation and decentralization of public schools in Harlem, urban planning and racial segregation, the Haryou-Act project, drug prevention, and family planning. Also included is a scrapbook of articles and other printed matter documenting local community efforts to raise funds for the construction of a new two hundred bed hospital in Mount Morris Park in 1963.

**Arrangement:** I. Records of the Central Harlem Council for Community Planning, 1941-1958; II. Records of the Harlem Neighborhoods Association, 1958-1978

## Key Terms

### Subjects

African American youth -- Services for -- New York (State) -- New York  
African Americans -- Hospitals -- New York (State) -- New York  
African Americans -- Housing -- New York (State) -- New York  
Community development, Urban -- New York (State) -- New York  
Community organization -- New York (State) -- New York  
Day care centers -- New York (State) -- New York  
Schools -- Decentralization -- New York (State) -- New York  
Slums -- New York (State) -- New York  
Social service and race relations -- New York (State) -- New York  
Urban renewal -- New York (State) -- New York

### Geographic Names

Harlem (New York, N.Y.) -- Archival resources  
Harlem (New York, N.Y.) -- Social conditions

### Names

Harlem Neighborhoods Association  
Fisher, Mildred  
Houston, Eugene  
Pickens, Harriet  
Robinson, James H  
Tanneyhill, Gertrude  
Welsch, Exie  
Central Harlem Council for Community Planning  
Mount Morris Tuberculosis Hospital  
West Harlem Council of Social Agencies

## Container List

### Records Of The Central Harlem Council For Community Planning 1941-1958

#### Board Of Directors

- b. 1 f. 1 West Harlem Council Of Social Agencies 1939-1945
- b. 1 f. 2 1945-1949
- b. 1 f. 3 1950-1951
- b. 1 f. 4 1952
- b. 1 f. 5 1953
- b. 1 f. 6 1954
- b. 1 f. 7 1955
- b. 2 f. 1 1956
- b. 2 f. 2 1957-1958

#### Committees

##### Day Care Committee

- b. 2 f. 3 1947-1950
- b. 2 f. 4 1951-1955
- b. 2 f. 5 1956

##### b. 3 Education Committee

- b. 3 f. 1 Minutes 1951
- b. 3 f. 2 1950-1953
- b. 3 f. 3 P.S. 90 1954

##### Housing Committee

- b. 3 f. 4 1951-1953
- b. 3 f. 5 1954
- b. 3 f. 6 1955-1958

##### Minutes

- b. 3 f. 7 1952
- b. 3 f. 8 1953-1955
- b. 3 f. 9 Rev. Eugene Houston Testimonial Dinner 1954
- b. 3 f. 10 Questionnaires 1955

- b. 3 f. 11 Membership Committee 1958-1959

- b. 3 f. 12 Parents Committee For Better Education 1955-1958

- b. 3 f. 13 Harlem Parents Committee 1952

- b. 3 f. 14 Planning Committee 1951-1952

- b. 3 f. 15 Program Committee 1947-1958

- b. 4 f. 1 Program Planning Institute (Robert Ake, Jean Blackwell) 1952-1961

- b. 4 f. 2 Countee Cullen Library 1954-1955

- b. 4 f. 3 Race Tensions Committee 1945

##### Recreation Committee

- b. 4 f. 4 1948-1955

Records Of The Central Harlem Council For Community Planning (cont.)

Committees (cont.)

Recreation Committee (cont.)

- b. 4 f. 5 1950-1956
- b. 4 f. 6 Salvation Army Red Shield Club 1955
- b. 4 f. 7 Spanish-American Youth Bureau 1943-1945
- b. 4 f. 8 Advisory Committee On Street Class 1947
- b. 4 f. 9 Conference On Vocational Needs Of Harlem 1948  
Project Files
- b. 4 f. 10 Youth Board Project Correspondence 1961
- b. 4 f. 11 Youth March For Integrated Schools 1958-1959

Records Of The Harlem Neighborhoods Association 1958-1978

Board Of Directors

- b. 4 f. 12 1959-1960
- b. 4 f. 13 1961-1962
- b. 4 f. 14 1967-1972
- b. 5 f. 1 1973-1974
- b. 5 f. 2 1975
- b. 5 f. 3 1976-1978  
Reports
- b. 5 f. 4 1961-1965
- b. 5 f. 5 1964-1967
- b. 5 f. 6 Annual Reports, Operation Total Family 1972
- b. 5 f. 7 Financial 1975-1976
- b. 5 f. 8 Financial 1976-1978
- b. 5 f. 9 James Soler's Report On The High School Of Commerce Replacement Issue
- b. 5 f. 10-11 Lists
  - b. 6 Committees
    - b. 6 f. 1 Community Relations
    - b. 6 f. 2 Family Planning Project
    - b. 6 f. 3 Harlem Teams For Self-Help
    - b. 6 f. 4 Mental Health Committee 1963
    - b. 6 f. 5 Parents Research Project June 27, 1963
    - b. 6 f. 6 Committee On School Suspension
    - b. 6 f. 7 Parent Guidelines For Student School Suspension
    - b. 6 f. 8 Parents Action Committee For Equality 1963  
Harlem Parents Committee
      - b. 6 f. 9 June 1963 - July 1963
      - b. 6 f. 10 August 1963 - 1965
      - b. 6 f. 11 Parents Action Committee For Equality (Interracial Parents Committee) 1963
    - b. 7 Project Files
      - b. 7 f. 1 Parent Research Project 1963
      - b. 7 f. 2 Jewish Youth Board - Youth Board Project 1961

Records Of The Harlem Neighborhoods Association (cont.)  
Project Files (cont.)

- b. 7 f. 3 Harlem Youth 1961
- b. 7 f. 4 Harlem Youth Day, (Sinclair, T) 1963
- b. 7 f. 5 Harlem Youth Day 1963
- b. 7 f. 6 Youth Services Luncheon 1961
- b. 7 f. 7 Haryou- Hana Proposal 1962
- b. 7 f. 8 Youth Services
  - b. 8 New Mount Morris Park Hospital Fund Scrapbook 1963.