

**The Power of Student Potential:
Uncovering the History of Harlem Preparatory School, 1967-1974**

Updated Dissertation Outline – February 23, 2018

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Introduction

This chapter will introduce Harlem Prep and provide necessary historiographical context for the dissertation (i.e., literature review, etc.). Furthermore, this chapter will outline my primary arguments through an overview of the three main themes of this dissertation.

Part I: The Origins of Harlem Prep, 1966-1968

Chapter 1: The Need for a Harlem High School [*est. 20 pages*]

This chapter provides historical context about school conditions in Harlem and the broader Harlem community. This chapter also explores why there was a crucial need for a school in Harlem, placed with greater context of the educational strife in New York City at the time. What were the conditions that allowed for an alternative school like Harlem Prep to emerge?

Chapter 2: The Founding of Harlem Prep, 1966-1967 [*~55 pages*] (*Draft #1 complete*)

This chapter explores Harlem Prep's origins via the New York Urban League, with particular attention to the "Street Academy" program led by Dr. Eugene Callender. This chapter includes a detailed description of how Harlem Prep emerged out of the NYUL, as well as a biography of Headmaster Edward Carpenter and other important staff members.

Chapter 3: The First Year, 1967-1968 [*~33 pages*] (*Draft #1 complete*)

This chapter describes the first year at the Harlem Armory, including foundational principles, pedagogical strategies, and other key elements that set important precedents for Harlem Prep's later growth and development. This chapter includes student stories about those who attended and graduated this first year, as well as a recap on the first graduation.

Part II: The Rise of Harlem Prep, 1968-1972

Chapter 4: Harlem Prep and Carpenter's Multicultural Vision [*~37 pages*] (*Dft. #1 complete*)

This chapter describes in detail Harlem Prep's educational philosophy, based on Carpenter's "multicultural" vision (author's term), situated within secondary source readings and the historiographical works of Black alternative schools of the era. Why was Harlem Prep so unique and what did this multiculturalism mean and look like each day?

Chapter 5: Teachers, Students and Administrators [*~55 pages*] (*Dft. #1 complete*)

This chapter attempts to depict, during Harlem Prep's "prime years," the people of Harlem Prep: its teachers and their pedagogical strategies (focusing on the three overarching teaching themes), administrators and their roles, and most of all, relying on oral history interviews, its students—who they were and their powerful stories of struggle and success.

Chapter 6: The Supermarket Space and Educational Program [~43 pages] (Dft. #1 complete)

This chapter explores Harlem Prep's open-space classroom and the supermarket space, plus educational program and the day-to-day workings, such as: information of the admissions process, descriptions of classes, overview of the block schedule, after-school life (i.e., extracurriculars) and other programs, the humanistic culture, and lastly, a look at the outside graduation.

Chapter 7: Building a Community Coalition [est. 60 pages] [working]

This chapter examines the creation (and sustenance) of the school's diverse community coalition of supporters, ranging from Black activists and celebrities to white-owned businesses and philanthropies across racial and ideological lines. "What is the philosophy which holds together the unlikely mix of students, staff, alumni, sponsors, fund raisers and other friends that constitute 'the Harlem Prep community'?" This chapter will also include secondary source analysis about what it meant—and did not mean—for Harlem Prep to be seen as a "community school."

Part III: The Descent of Harlem Prep, 1972-1974 and Beyond

Chapter 8: A Changing America, A Changing Harlem Prep [est. 45 pages] [April/May]

This chapter focuses on Harlem Prep's financial duress, and how changes in the national environment (i.e., turn toward conservatism) and political landscape affected the school's ability to raise money. This chapter also discusses Harlem Prep in relationship to the broader alternative school movement, small school movement, and free school ideology. Finally, this chapter will also discuss changes in Harlem Prep as it began to downsize in population.

Chapter 9: The Final Year and Absorption into the Board of Education [est. 40 pages]

This chapter explores the final year at Harlem Prep as an independent school—including student stories, and teacher and administrators' fight to keep the school afloat—as well as a description of the school's contentious (i.e., why and how) merging with the NYC Board of Education. This includes an analysis of the local educational politics of the city (with an emphasis on racial politics) and an argument that the school's "success" hindered its future.

Conclusion [est. 10 pages]

This chapter will provide a summary of the main arguments of the dissertation, recapping how it adds to the history of education sub-fields discussed at the beginning of the dissertation and what we have learned through the history of Harlem Prep.

Epilogue [est. 15 pages]

The dissertation will close with a brief recap of Harlem Prep from 1974 to 1982, a discussion of Harlem Prep's legacy through its students. Finally, this chapter ends with a discussion about Harlem Prep's impact today: what can students, educators, parents, community members, and administrators learn from Harlem Prep in the present? Can Harlem Prep inspire us all to re-think education? And, making connections to contemporary scholarship, how does it relate to current movements in the field of education (i.e., reframing Black success or debates about charter schools)?