

Columbia and Harlem: Contextualizing the History of Expansion with Administrative
Narrative and Student Interactions, *1896-1947*

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Introduction

On March 21st, 1935, towards the bottom of the front page, Columbia students could find the casual yet bolded headline “Frosh Walks Through Harlem During Riots, Returns With Battered Shoulder From Attack” in their copy of *The Columbia Daily Spectator*. Written by junior Andrew Khinoy, the article details how freshman Hector Donnelly, a “tall, bespectacled yearling” was caught in the “outbreak of some 3,000 Negroes” on Lenox Avenue and 135th Street. After being hit with a milk jug as part of a larger riot, he explains how some “husky Negroes” came towards him until a police officer “took him in tow” and saved him. Instead of fleeing, Donnelly recounts how he “hung around to watch the excitement” as there was “plenty to see” upon learning about the riot. After describing the “looting” almost casually, he explains how the living conditions in Harlem seem terrible. The byline “Scoffs at Talk of 'Race Riot'—'Just Having a Helluva Good Time'” is bolded. Khinoy concludes his article with a quote from Donnelly about policemen saving him from the rioters; according to him, “I was lucky the way those cops were all over Harlem last night just when I needed them most.”¹

Khinoy’s description provides little insight into the true context and events of the Harlem Riot of 1935. Here, the alleged murder of a young Puerto Rican shoplifter at a white-owned store in Harlem created massive uproar within the community. Protests and looting by Black Harlem residents were met with a violent police response—as casually detailed in Donnelly’s out-of-touch account.² The riot ultimately had larger consequences, including three deaths and hundreds of injuries. Further, it led to a fundamental shift in the white population of the city’s views of and relationship with Harlem; many historians consider the riot as the official end to the Harlem Renaissance. In fact, in response to the event, rates of “slumming”—in which white,

upper-class New Yorkers (including Columbia students) would voyeuristically explore Harlem nightlife—severely declined.³

This *Spectator* article supplies only one small glimpse into the larger relationship Columbia maintained with its surrounding community as time progressed. The University initially fled uptown to the Morningside Heights/Harlem area to preserve its elite character amongst a rapidly-developing city and influx of European immigration. Framing the move as an expansion of noble civilization onto the “acropolis” above the city, the administration sought to protect its financial interests and fully establish itself in New York. When attempts by the University, via the Morningside Protective Association, to prevent the mass development of residential and commercial real estate were unsuccessful—and Harlem began to develop as a flourishing Black community—the dynamic between Columbia and its surrounding area shifted.

This shift was further exacerbated by the University’s expansion efforts. The presidency of Nicholas Murray Butler brought with it an era of massive territorial acquisition. As Harlem began to grow as a center of Black American culture and society during the Harlem Renaissance, the Columbia administration came to fear and oppose its development. These sentiments maintained an explicitly racial overtone, in which Columbia officials repeatedly expressed their concerns surrounding the “encroachment of Harlem.” Here, public speeches veiled racist intentions. As time progressed, Columbia used its campus’ expansion as means to prevent the spread of Harlem’s Black community into Morningside Heights, gradually pushing the borders of “Morningside Heights” up against “Harlem” to maintain increasing control. While the Columbia administration expressed its fears regarding Harlem’s development and sought to control all territory within the area to “finalize” their initial move, white Columbia students pursued voyeuristic opportunities to use Harlem for their personal leisure via “slumming.” To Columbia

students—despite its proximity to campus—Harlem became an anthropological destination rather than an actual community threatened and displaced by Columbia’s expansion.

Here, Andrew Dolkart’s 1998 *Examining Morningside Heights: A History of Its Architecture and Development* provides thorough insight regarding the growth and development of the Morningside Heights area over time. While much of the work focuses on the specific architectural history of the area, Dolkart dedicates research to tracking the relationship between Columbia, the various other Morningside Heights institutions, and the surrounding residential neighborhood. Dolkart examines Morningside Heights as a product of its “elite” institutions, exploring how the Heights’ major institutional development impacted the local community. Dolkart examines how the residential community developed alongside the area’s institutions, as well as how the institutions worked together to maintain the prestige of the area and protect their financial interests.

In this paper, I analyze the history of Columbia’s ongoing expansion in the context of Harlem’s development. Beginning in 1896, with the initial move to Morningside Heights, I focus on how the administration presented its move uptown and fought large-scale development. Using Butler’s Presidency as a key turning point, I juxtapose public versus private narratives from the Columbia administration framing Harlem’s development and the University’s expansion. Further, I contrast student perceptions and interactions with the Harlem community with that of the administration, examining how students came to use Harlem for their own voyeuristic, leisurely, or exploratory purposes. I then conclude in 1947, with Butler’s “Confidential Memorandum” and the formation of Morningside Heights, Inc.—which led to the construction of two massive urban renewal projects in the area and the displacement of thousands of Morningside Heights residents.

Move to Morningside

It was John Pine—the Board of Trustees’ clerk at the time and wildly overlooked yet highly influential figure in Columbia’s history—who initially suggested the Morningside Heights site for the campus move.⁴ At the time, the land was occupied by the Bloomingdale Insane Asylum, for which the New York Hospital was intending to sell and relocate. Fearing an influx of residential development upon the city’s growth uptown, and intending to preserve its “elite” character, the hospital bought land in White Plains.⁵ Of the site, Pine wrote: “It is well within the city limits, and in a portion of the city likely to be well built up, and . . . it retains all of the advantage of a city university which our present site possesses, while infinitely superior in all other respects.”⁶ Other sites had been considered for some time; in 1872, the university even purchased property at 161st Street and Ridge Road with intentions to relocate, but the complexity of the process stalled efforts.⁷ After a difficult financing process, as well as conflict regarding Columbia’s Episcopalian rather than Presbyterian character within the neighborhood, the Board was able to officially secure a purchase of the site for \$2 million via secret negotiations with the hospital in April 1892.⁸

In the “Columbia” section of *Universities and Their Sons: History, Influence and Characteristics of American Universities* published in 1904, John van Amringe argues the institution had grown out of the Madison Avenue campus, which had always been designated as “temporary.”⁹ A prominent Columbia historian and the first official Dean of the Columbia College, he frames the need to relocate given the “cramped quarters,” and “noisy neighborhood of a great railroad.”¹⁰ Dolkart too emphasizes how the major institutions of the Heights initially moved uptown as their previous locations became increasingly populated and commercialized.¹¹ Both Dolkart and Van Amringe frame the expansion uptown with the consolidation of separate

institutions as the formation of a larger, unified “university” under Low. It was then in fact—in February 1896—that Columbia became formally known as “Columbia University in the City of New York” as its corporate title.¹² Up until that point, Columbia’s official title had been “Columbia College,” and other schools, such as Teacher’s College or the College of Physicians and Surgeons were not explicitly consolidated under the “University” title.¹³

To celebrate the 150th anniversary of King’s College’s founding, President Butler gave a speech in October 1904 praising the University’s history. Published the same year as the well-known *A History of Columbia University*, the speech provides important insight regarding the University’s characterization of its move uptown. Butler starts by explaining his intentions to “usher in a new era” of Columbia’s history upon the recent move and future expansion.

Celebrating the transfer to Morningside, he explains:

Twice in our history the pursuing city has driven us from our home. The King’s Farm seemed far away from the center of the small town in 1754. The Madison Avenue grounds were indisputably distant even from the resident section of 1857. But so rapid have been the strides of this metropolitan community that nothing less than the island’s crown would suffice for Columbia’s permanent need.

Here, Butler explains the University’s motivations for moving uptown, mainly to isolate the Columbia community from downtown development. Butler frames each successive move—from the original settlement to the Madison Avenue Campus to Morningside—as a safe progression from an increasing influx of people. Further, Butler stresses the position of Morningside Heights, being geographically higher than the city, as serving as the “island’s crown.” Butler dramatically recounts: “to this height shall come those impulses of need which the city sends to call out our responding service... Here in quiet and yet in activity, apart from the city and yet in it, shall be the home of that grateful growth from the early seed, a city’s mind and a city’s soul.” Butler sees Columbia’s position in New York City as means to contribute to and influence it, while remaining isolated above it. Butler argues: “no more will it seek to avoid a

city's embrace, but set upon a hill where its light cannot be hid, it will be to the city as its very mind and soul."¹⁴ The grand language contradicts itself; Columbia remains both integrated within and dramatically above the city of New York.

Dedication Ceremonies

After four years of planning, funding issues, and the beginnings of construction, on May 2, 1896, the Trustees of Columbia College held the official dedication ceremony for their new site in "Morningside Heights"—a name newly crowned for the "Bloomingdale" area by real estate developers and its approaching institutions. The event saw the presence of 5,000 of the "highest officers of state and city," with the laying of the first brick for Schermerhorn Hall representing the official designation of campus.¹⁵ The celebrations continued throughout the day with speeches from several prominent University officials. An official program from *The New York Times* outlines the prestigious guests and speakers, including Columbia President Seth Low, Harvard President Charles Eliot, and former Mayor Abram S. Hewitt—the narratives of which are particularly illuminating.¹⁶

Many of the speeches used rhetoric referring to the college's colonial beginnings and involvement in the Revolutionary War, connecting the University's founding with the nation itself. Low emphasizes patriotism as a key characteristic of the University, dramatically recounting its long history in New York City.¹⁷ He repeatedly praises Columbia's location in Morningside Heights, stressing the significance of the Battle of Harlem Heights occurring in this area. He also repeatedly mentions the other elite institutions of the area and highlights its natural, undeveloped landscape overlooking the city. He is quoted:

By this noble eminence, flanked to the east and west by parks and precipices, it would seem that we can continue to abide without fear of disturbance, at least until the

navigation of the air supersedes the roadways of the solid earth and until, for that reason, business chooses the lofty places of the earth because of their accessibility in preference to the plains.

Here, Low's "fear of disturbance," phrasing is compelling. Low positions Columbia against Manhattan's downtown development, furthering the idea that Morningside Heights serves to isolate the Columbia community from the expanding city. While not explicit, this language implies fears of growing lower-class, immigrant populations—which were increasing quickly. Like Butler's retelling, Low too positions Columbia above both the city and world as a whole. Imagining a beautiful view looking out from the Heights, he says "as she looks how can she fail to realize at once the vast continent behind her that she is set to serve, and the salt sea beyond her that washes the shores of many nations." Low frames Columbia on its plateau above the city, with both a position of superiority and need to "serve." He then explains: "Columbia cannot escape the observation of the city, nor can the city escape from it," a simple summation of a fundamental conflict throughout Columbia's expansion.¹⁸ To conclude, Low introduced Rear Admiral Mead of the US Navy for the official flag bearing. While Mead's speech was explicitly toned to emphasize the University's patriotism, the language he uses is exceedingly imperial. He even references Constantine's march to conquer Rome, directly quoting Constantine's vision in the sky of the words "by this sign—Conquer!"¹⁹

Later in the ceremony, Abram Stevens Hewitt's speech typifies many elite sentiments of the time. A Columbia alum, Hewitt was an incredibly influential figure who served as the Mayor of New York from 1875 to 1879.²⁰ He later became involved with philanthropy at Columbia and Barnard, serving as the President of the Alumni Association in 1883. In his speech, he contextualizes Columbia's history with the present issues facing the city, promoting many of the social causes he championed during his administration. Amidst this rhetoric, he explains "dangers" of foreign immigration and fears of universal suffrage. Hailing Columbia's efforts as

an elite educational institution, he denounces the masses of illiterate foreigners “diluting the franchise” with potential for “societal ruin.” He then proceeds to emphasize Columbia’s patriotism.²¹ Explaining his philanthropic efforts, Hewitt sees the need for a “new and nobler civilization,” arguing Columbia will “perform its teacher and exponent of the best results of civilization.” He frames New York’s “imperial destiny” in its municipal expansion. He deems the new campus as a “citadel of last defense against the perils of ignorance, of superstition, and of false doctrine.” Like many social reformers of the time, his seemingly progressive politics are met with nativism and white supremacy. Similar to Low and Mead, Hewitt’s dedication speech relies on American patriotism and empire building. He frames Columbia’s expansion with an imperial tone, praising the “elite civilization” it will spread.²²

Press coverage of the initial move and position of the university in the city relied on similar narratives. Papers across the country heralded the arrival of the grand Columbia University to the pristine heights uptown. Repeatedly referred to as “America’s Acropolis,” Columbia’s move was dramatically framed as bringing “civilization” to an undeveloped plateau overlooking the city.²³ A *Sun* article announcing the dedication of the site argued the campus would “overlook the superb Riverside Drive, and the grandeur of the Hudson and the hills beyond.”²⁴ Further, a *New York Times* article dramatically emphasized the area’s Revolutionary War history, arguing that the institutional development of the Morningside Heights plateau “has been reserved as by a special providence” for the pursuit of knowledge.²⁵ A New Years letter from the Dean of Columbia College claims “the site on Morningside Heights is the most beautiful on the Island of Manhattan.”²⁶ Explaining Columbia’s location, Van Amringe is quoted: “a noble and commanding site, worthy of its honorable past and significant of its future as the

crowning glory of the cosmopolitan city with which it has always been closely identified and which is the gateway of a Continent.”²⁷

Here, a full page spread from *The New York Times* published in 1895 titled “Reasons for Living on the Heights” offers insight into the perceived potential of the area. Subtitled “No More Beautiful Places Anywhere Than the Morningside and Washington Hill Tops,” the piece repeatedly refers to the area’s elite character given the arrival of its many prestigious institutions. Emphasizing the area’s location, beauty and serenity, the article outlines the upcoming prestige and “eminence” of the area. Also referencing the area’s Revolutionary War history, the piece argues that Morningside Heights will become an incredibly attractive area for speculative real estate development upon the introduction of the railway. It argues that this area’s possibilities are “greater, perhaps, than of any other part of the city.”²⁸ Given this potential, the language reflects the Columbia and other institutions of the Heights’ elitist fear of large-scale residential or commercial development. Ultimately, the area did succumb to a massive population and real estate boom upon the turn of the century—but not without a significant fight from the powerful interests who most feared it.

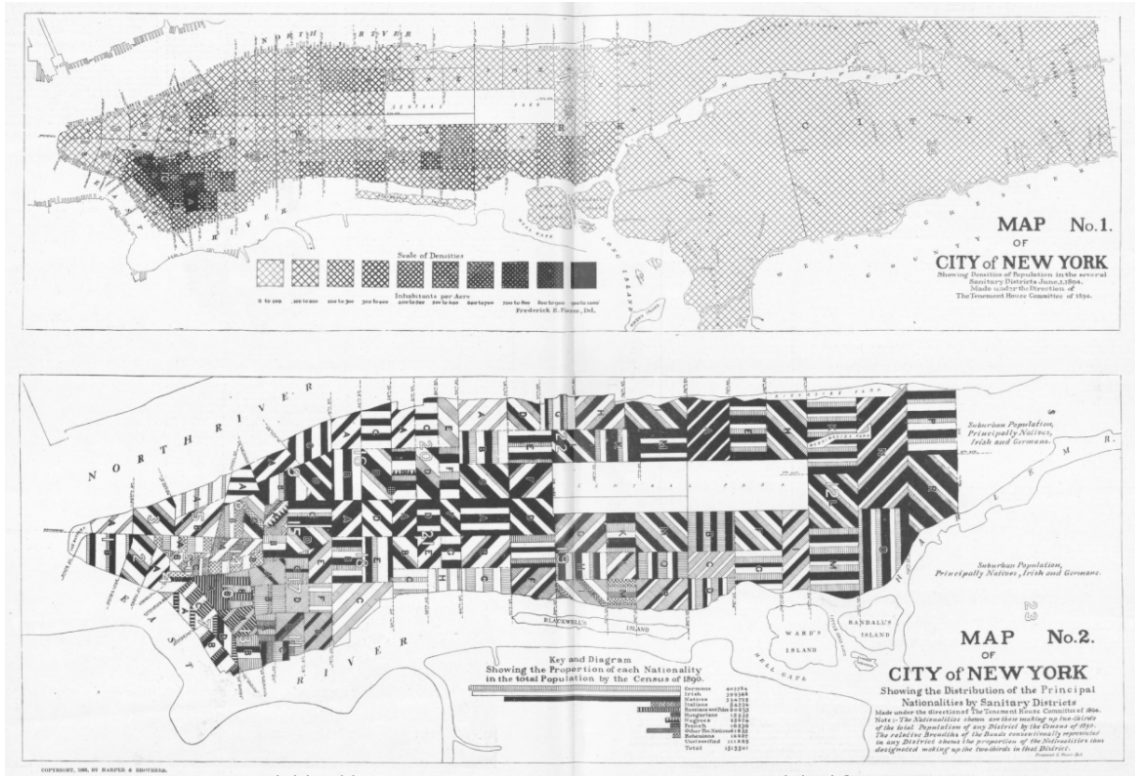
The Growth and Development of Morningside Heights

It is important to note that the name “Morningside Heights” was never officially designated. The area was referred to by many different titles over time, including Bloomingdale Heights, Vandewater Heights, or Harlem Heights.²⁹ Upon arrival, the major institutions of the area campaigned for different names depending on their vested interests. The term “Cathedral Heights” was supported by the Cathedral of St. John the Divine and St. Luke’s and was used as late as the 1920s. In contrast, the Columbia Trustees adamantly supported the “Morningside

Heights” terminology. In 1897, the New York City Common Council even designated “Cathedral Heights” as the area’s official name—but this was largely ignored. Over time, “Morningside Heights” became more widely used.³⁰

While much of the larger narrative surrounding Columbia’s move uptown—particularly from within the Columbia administration—framed the area as completely desolate farmland purchased by the Board of Trustees in 1892 under one title, Columbia’s expansion was an ongoing process (and still is). Despite the remoteness of the area in the context of the rest of New York City’s development, a modest community existed on the Heights prior to Columbia’s move beyond solely the Bloomingdale asylum lot.

Here, an 1895 edition of *Harper’s Weekly* illustrating the demographics of the city with data collected by the Tenement House Committee provides important insight. The two maps detail the “density of the inhabitants by acre” and “distribution of the principal nationalities,” by sanitary district. On the map the area is sparsely populated, at 0-100 inhabitants per acre, with a majority of the population being referenced as Irish, German and “Native.” In this context, “Native” presumably means native-born European American, an interesting look at conceptions of ethnicity and immigrant assimilation in the 19th century. Therefore, a population—mainly white and not very large—did exist in the Heights prior to Columbia’s move uptown to replace the Bloomingdale lot.³¹ In fact, several dozen rowhouses, mainly unsuccessful, were built in the area in the 1890s.³²



The aforementioned *New York Times* article details the Morningside Heights’ community’s apprehensions and excitement regarding the impending surge of housing development. The author is quoted: “there is every reason to believe that there would be a large influx of buyers into this most attractive part of the city if the means of transportation were better,” predicting a 50% increase in property value. The piece explains how the area’s landowners would like the rail connection to occur as quickly as possible, in order to benefit their financial holdings.³³ Given the earlier development patterns of other parts of upper Manhattan, many real estate speculators saw immense potential in the opening up of Morningside Heights.

In contrast, the Columbia administration—while intending to find opportunities to profit off of the area’s development—did everything to prevent the arrival of large-scale, lower-class housing stock into Morningside Heights. Dolkart explains how Columbia and the other institutions of the area feared the “noise” and “cramped” circumstances that had originally motivated them to move. He is quoted: “in order to ensure that their investments in land and buildings would not be wasted... the institutions sought to prevent major commercial development and the construction of tenements or other types of housing that might diminish the prestige of the neighborhood.”³⁴ Dolkart also emphasizes how the institutions that came to Morningside Heights were not well-established or flourishing at the time. Most of them were recently founded and still fully establishing themselves in New York. He explains how Columbia specifically was seeking to redefine itself “in a rapidly changing, highly competitive urban context.”³⁵

The Morningside Protective Association

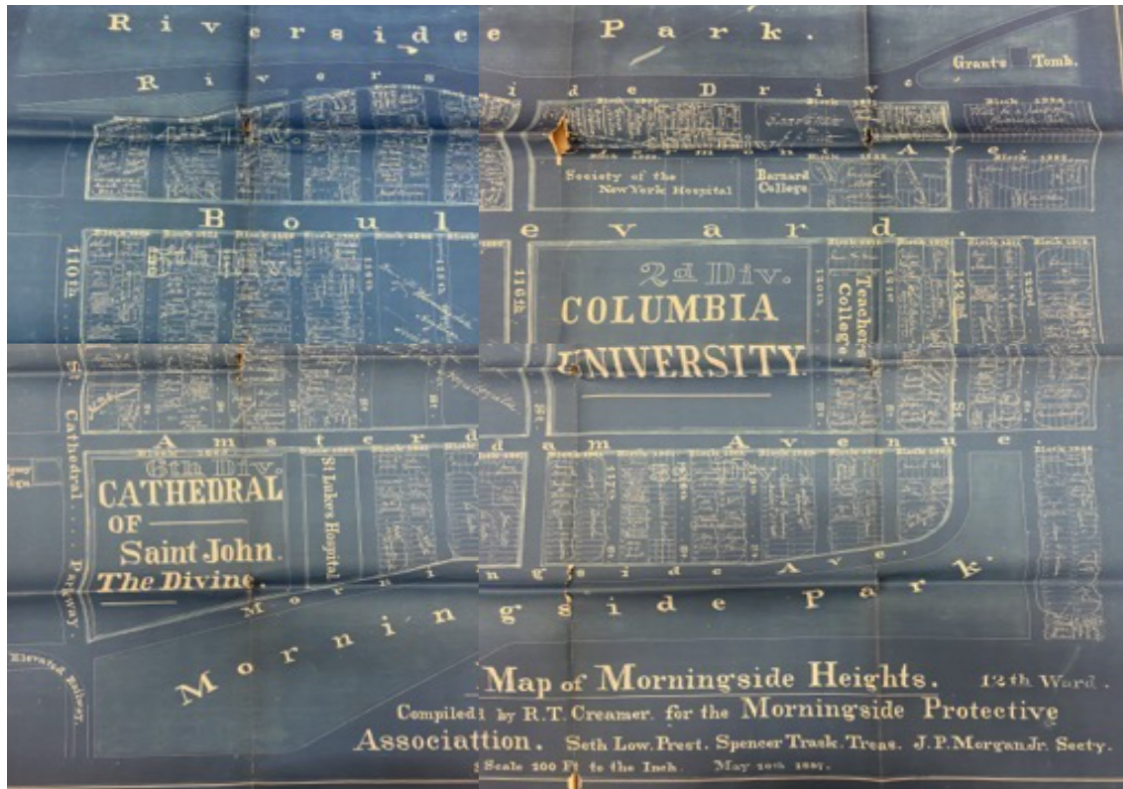
In 1896, the major institutions of the Heights—including Barnard College, the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine, Columbia University, Saint Luke’s Hospital, and Teachers’ College—officially formed the Morningside Protective Association.³⁶ According to the Association’s Certificate of Incorporation Constitution and By-Laws, their central objective was to guarantee “the social and material improvement” of the area officially defined as: “lying between Morningside Drive and 122nd Street on the east and north, and Cathedral Parkway and Riverside Drive on the south and west.”³⁷ The document details the present members, including notable figures such as JP Morgan and George W. Vanderbilt, and explains the goal of “bringing together the residents of the district for their better acquaintance and mutual benefit.”³⁸

The Association initially included just the area's major institutions, but soon local real estate owners were added to increase capacity and potential for control.³⁹ The organization fought a series of development projects they deemed "undesirable" for the area—including an elevated railway on Amsterdam avenue—and sought to create restrictions preventing multi-family development on the land between 110th Street and 122nd to restrict density.⁴⁰

Dolkart later claims that the speculation that Columbia—acting with the New York Hospital—intentionally worked to prevent the transformation of Morningside Heights into a lower-class district and "affirm the long-term hegemony of the elite" lacks evidence. While perhaps this direct conspiracy is overstated, the motivations of the Morningside Protective Association and language in their constitution is clear. In Article II, the Constitution emphasizes the need to keep "out of the district what is objectionable." Further, minutes from a meeting dated March 27, 1896, emphasize the main objective being "protection" of the area.⁴¹ They are quoted: "that it is important to protect from undesirable buildings the tract of land bounded by Morningside Drive, Cathedral Parkway, and Riverside Drive."⁴²

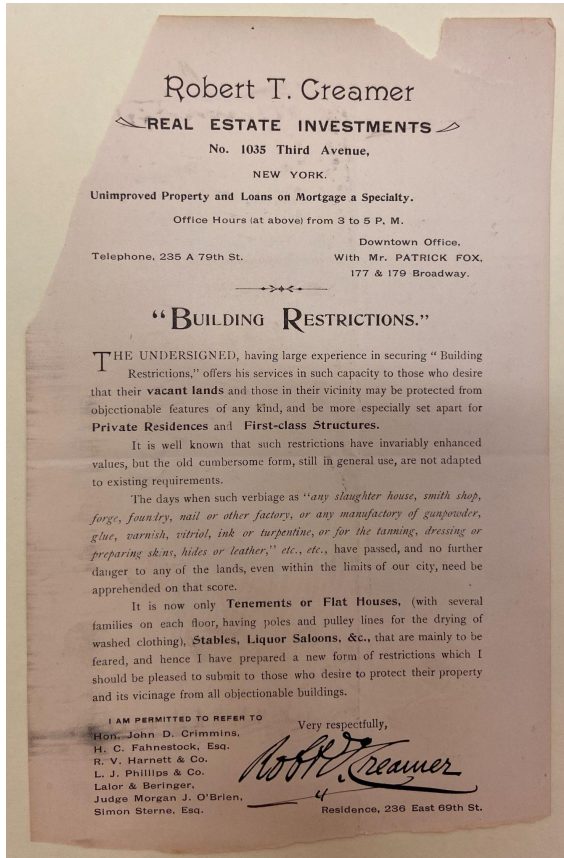
Interestingly, it is a map recently discovered in Columbia's Rare Book and Manuscript Library created by the Morningside Protective Association that provides the most insight regarding the population and land ownership that existed prior to Columbia's major expansion and during its early development. Titled "Map of Morningside Heights," the massive, foldable map lists the property owners in the Columbia area with surprising detail; it has block-by-block sections with a scale of 100ft to the inch. Published May 10, 1897, the map details a Morningside Heights dramatically different from the present day—Columbia University only makes up the 116th to 120th Street land parcel, between Amsterdam and "Boulevard."⁴³ Published by Robert T. Creamer of the Morningside Protective Association, it contains compelling insight regarding

who lived on the Heights when Columbia moved there and how Columbia acquired more property over time. While many notable family names and New York estates are included as property owners—such as the de Peyster or Livingston families—the map also includes smaller land parcels and property owners lost to history.⁴⁴ This suggests how Morningside Heights potentially included a more economically diverse or larger population than originally assumed.



While little documentation provides insight regarding Creamer’s life or work with the Morningside Protective Association, a letter from his company focusing on “Building Restrictions,” from the Rare Book and Manuscript Library is particularly illuminating. The letter—presumably some sort of advertisement—published by Creamer’s “Real Estate Investments,” company explains their services to create building restrictions to protect areas like Morningside Heights from “objectionable features,” to enhance property values. In blatantly elitist phrasing, the document argues that it is “tenements or flat houses (with families on each

floor having poles and pulley lines for the drying of washed clothing), stables, liquor saloons &c., that are mainly to be feared.”⁴⁵



Here, the language is much more explicit. It is clear that the Morningside Protective Association was founded with the main intention of preventing large-scale lower-class development to bolster property values and prestige for the institutions of the area. The area’s major institutions saw the impending development of the Heights and worked alongside each other to protect their interests. While other parts of Manhattan—lacking the presence of such wealthy influences—offered opportunities for lower-class New Yorkers to acquire property, the Morningside Protective Association sought to keep the

neighborhood strictly for the elite populations they served.

Ultimately, the Association’s efforts were unsuccessful—but their legacy remained. It is no secret that Columbia and the other major institutions of the Heights maintained a varying degree of control and influence over the area decades after the Association disbanded. To this day, the residents of Morningside Heights remain overpowered by the elite institutions they host; the dynamic remains. This notion is only reinforced upon a deeper look into Columbia’s history and expansion process. Despite the official dissolution of the Morningside Protective

Association, the exact same language, influence, and overall positioning can be found in Columbia's continued expansion and relations with Harlem.

Era of Expansion

The turn of the century brought two major developments that had lasting physical changes on the Morningside Heights area: a vast expansion of residential development with the connection to the subway and the presidency of Nicholas Murray Butler. Ultimately, as the University sought increased territorial expansion, the two came to clash.



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With the failure of the Morningside Protective Association to prevent large-scale development, an influx of real estate and a population boom occurred in Morningside Heights upon the opening of the subway in 1904. Morningside Heights became New York City's first middle-class apartment house neighborhood—with an increasing population of upper-class New Yorkers.⁴⁷ Here, despite the repeated praise and grandeur of the area's institutions, the speculative boom that occurred in Morningside Heights was mainly motivated by its new transit connection to the rest of the city. Dolkart emphasizes Morningside Heights' unique development pattern due to its isolation prior to the subway's construction, as well as its upper-class

demographics in comparison to other areas of Manhattan. Here, Dolkart explains, Columbia students and professors lived among a mainly upper or middle class population that was primarily born in the US.⁴⁸

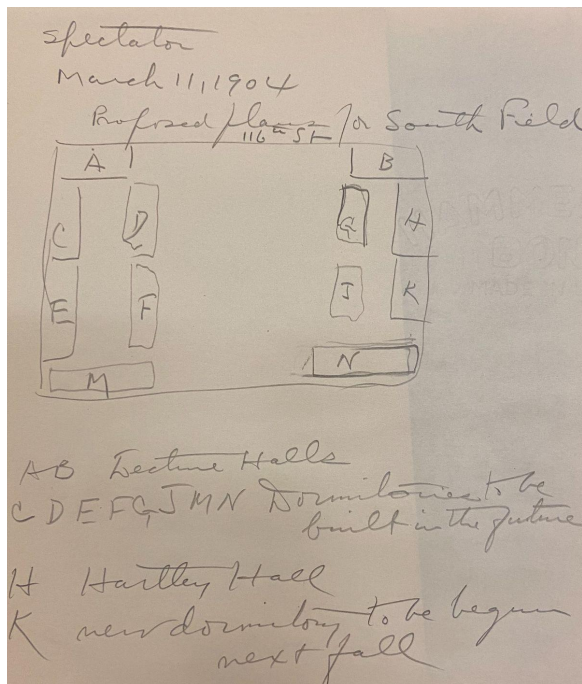
On the other side of Morningside Park, Harlem was also met with large-scale residential development upon connection to the subway. While during the nineteenth century the area was primarily composed of Jewish and Italian immigrants, the Great Migration brought an influx of Black Americans into Harlem. Here, speculative construction outpaced the market for new housing; Black Americans were able to establish a significant community in the first decades of the 20th century. According to census data, in 1910, Harlem was only 10% Black—by 1930 that number reached 70%.⁴⁹ Harlem became well-known as a thriving Black neighborhood within the city. With the Harlem Renaissance, the area became a hub of Black American art, community, politics, and culture.

Eventually, Columbia began to fear this development along racial lines. As Harlem grew, Columbia continued to expand across Morningside Heights and came to view its position as threatened. While the large-scale growth of Harlem as a majority Black community did not proceed until the Great Migration, the Columbia administration anticipated future conflict. Examination of the administrative documentation and narrative shows a shift upon this demographic change. Columbia's growth became not solely about expansion for its own sake, but explicitly to prevent development or push against the development of the surrounding community.

The Butler Presidency

The Butler presidency was transformative for the University; Butler's tenure is well-regarded as an era of immense expansion and land consolidation. Butler officially took

office in 1902, and his time at Columbia through 1945 saw an extensive growth of the University's physical presence in Morningside Heights. After the initial dedication of the Bloomingdale lot and construction of the Low Library plaza, the Trustees officially purchased South field in 1903. As time persisted, more buildings were added and the land holdings of the university were developed to create a cohesive campus. In fact, according to the Columbia



Historical Justice Initiative, during Butler's initial time at Columbia each year averaged the construction of one new building.⁵⁰ While the early decades of the 20th century saw the direct expansion of campus on the former Bloomingdale and South Field lots, Columbia gradually began to purchase nearby apartment buildings in Morningside Heights for institutional use.⁵²

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Over time, Columbia's presence in the Heights dramatically expanded, and the Columbia administration became concerned regarding their location as the area became more economically and racially diverse. Columbia initially fled the Madison Avenue campus and isolated itself uptown due to perceived fears of "disturbance," "noise," or "cramped quarters." Even the Morningside Protective Association—allied with some of the most powerful financial figures and institutions of the city—could not prevent the advances of development.

Here, it is Butler's language surrounding campus' expansion and Columbia's position as an "urban" university that is particularly revealing. Examining administrative documents, speeches, interviews, and official communications, it is clear that Butler feared the growth of Harlem and sought to maintain Columbia's hegemony over the area.

Public Narrative

A 1902 interview with Butler published in the *New York World* entitled "Columbia's Place as a City University," contains some insight. Throughout the interview, Butler contextualizes Columbia's expansion and growth as a formal "University" with the development of other larger American universities. He argues that Columbia's place as an urban university provides a "superiority of the city's opportunities and environment." He sees cities serving as a "natural university," and claims that Columbia "typifies the earnestness, the strenuousness, the practicality and catholicity of New York City." He argues that Columbia "aims to keep always in close touch with the community of which it is so important a part... its needs are enormous but the capacity of New York to meet them is even greater."⁵³ Here, Butler saw New York as directly serving the University. He describes New York as providing for Columbia, with its place as a "city university" depending on its continued expansion. It is also interesting to note Butler's characterization of the city. When Columbia's admits mainly came from the city's very upper classes, how exactly was the institution "typifying" the city's "earnestness" or "practicality?"

That same year, in an Annual Report to the Trustees, Butler outlined his plans for expansion—explaining: "the area of the site now occupied on MH will be entirely insufficient for the work of the University in the very near future." He argues that the purchasing of such land is "essential to the future development of the University," claiming that the administration

will “endeavor by all means in their power to obtain the funds needed.”⁵⁴ Additionally, minutes deemed “confidential” from a University Council Meeting labelled “The Building of Columbia University and its Next Problems” find Butler requesting for “breathing space,” claiming the University was “suffocating from a lack of room.” Here, Butler dramatically stakes territorial expansion on the very future of the University. Butler hints at the University’s struggles to expand given financing or local pushback but does not fully address them.⁵⁵ To Butler, everything must be done to get proper funding for expansion, it is the most crucial goal.

Butler’s address at a commencement luncheon a year later further contextualizes the University’s financial position and plans for expansion. Butler makes it clear that Columbia severely lacks the funds needed to fulfill his ambitious plans. He is honest about the University’s dire financial position; the initial move to Morningside Heights left them severely in debt.⁵⁶ He focuses on the donations of the Hartley family in the construction of new dormitories on the recently-acquired South Field—which cost two million dollars. He sees the opening up of South Field for campus development as bringing upon a “new era” for the University, offering opportunities for students to live on campus and access a true “University experience.”⁵⁷

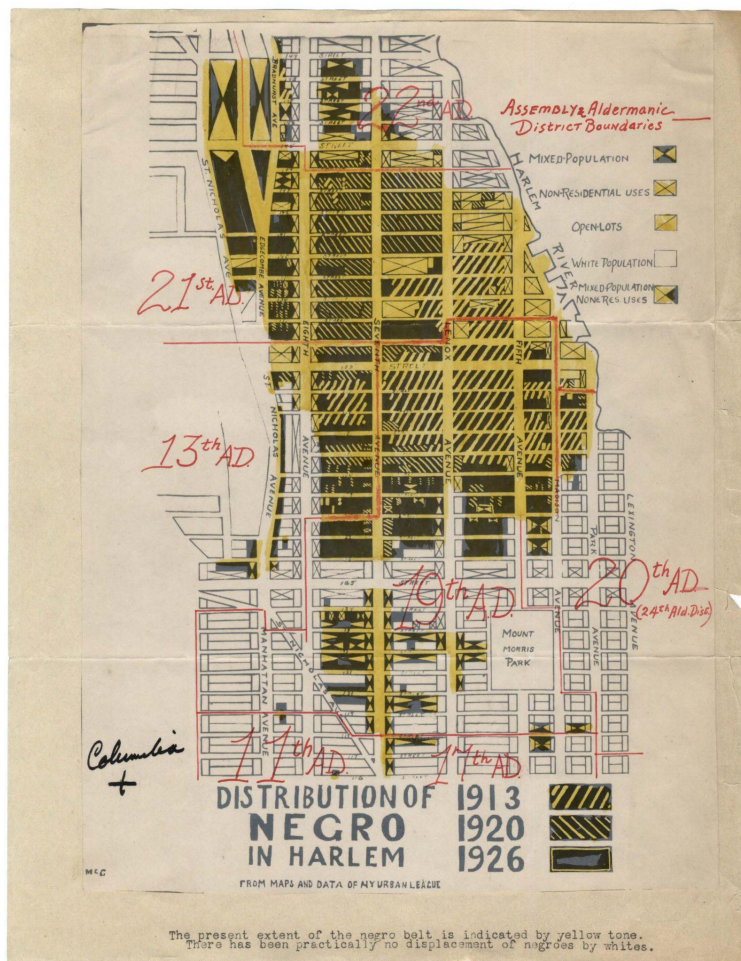
It is important to note how Columbia University severely lacked on-campus housing opportunities for students when compared to other major universities.⁵⁸ Butler saw expansion as an opportunity to increase the geographic diversity of students via housing, as mainly students from the New York area attended Columbia. Historians have seen this as an attempt to limit the number of Jewish attendees; here, there was no defined quota, but rather a hidden process to cut back on local admission. Further, Dolkart argues that the construction of the John Jay, Livingston (now Wallach) and Hartley dorms served to segregate the largely Christian residential students from the local commuting students who tended to be more religiously and ethnically diverse.⁵⁹

Deeper Intentions

As the demographics of the area shifted, Butler’s language became even clearer. While earlier public speeches or interviews hide true intentions for expansion, private sources provide more insight. Unlike the veiled language and elitist phrasing of Butler’s speeches regarding expansion, later—confidential—documents explicitly show the University’s larger motivations.

A private correspondence between Butler and John J. Coss is perhaps most direct. John J.

Coss a prominent philosophy professor who was involved in the founding of the Core Curriculum, wrote to Butler in 1926 describing the expansion of the “Negro population in Harlem,” attaching a map detailing the racial demographic changes of Harlem from 1913-1926. The map, using data from NY Urban League, classifies different blocks as “Mixed population,” “Non-residential,” “Mixed non-residential,” “White,” or “Open lots.” In the letter, Coss warns of the expansion of the population into



the Morningside Heights area via Morningside Park. Given the perceived threat of Harlem’s

growth, Coss explains that Butler should consider controlling all property “opposite the existing University holdings on 116th Street and Amsterdam Avenue.”⁶⁰

Here, the letter clearly shows the Columbia administration’s intentions for expansion. Butler explicitly sought expansion as a means to isolate Columbia University from Harlem’s growing Black population. While public speeches may subtly hide this rhetoric, the administration expressly feared Harlem’s racial demographics and sought all means to prevent Harlem’s “encroachment.”

Years later, one of the last major documents of Butler’s time at the University offers an even deeper look at his explicit prejudices. In January 1946, Butler wrote a “Confidential Memorandum” to Marcellus Hartley Dodge to be distributed to the entire Board of Trustees. The document details several of Butler’s plans for the University after he retired and was eventually distributed in 1947. Among his ideas such as expanding the library system or constructing a new engineering lab, Butler—notably his second point—explains his plans for property acquisition. He emphasizes the need to “shut off forever the greatly feared invasion from Harlem” by buying all property between Amsterdam and Morningside Drive - from 114th Street to 122nd.⁶¹

Unlike Butler’s dramatic yet vague public speeches, the document provides a stark look at Butler’s prejudiced views against Harlem’s development with explicitly racial overtones. Butler later describes his fears of property near Columbia “falling into the wrong hands,” framing it as the “completion of Morningside.” He later explains the need to purchase property on the other side near Riverside and Claremont, explaining how it must be “thoroughly protected,” and “under our control.”⁶² He then frames the “acquisition of Morningside” as completing the initial plans for the University upon the purchasing of the site in 1892. He

describes how Columbia must purchase as many apartment houses in this area as it would be both profitable and “fatal to allow any portion of this property to fall into other hands than our own or to pass out from our control.”⁶³

Thus, private correspondence between University officials provides their deeper motivations. It is clear that Butler and other top administrators held deep racial prejudices against Harlem and its development. While in public speeches Butler was able to subtly hide such viewpoints, private documents reveal outright biases. Expansion served to both increase Columbia’s presence in the area and explicitly ensure the elite, wealthy, white character of the neighborhood was maintained in the context of a diversifying city.

“Voyages” to Harlem

On February 29, 1928, *The Amsterdam News*—the city’s oldest Black newspaper—reported a story titled “Columbia Sociology Class Visits Harlem.” In the article, the reporter describes the trip, recounting how “about fifty or sixty students of Sociology from Columbia University, including white Americans, Europeans, Asiatics and two Negroes, made a tour of parts of Harlem and Washington Heights last Saturday afternoon, visiting various Negro businesses and social enterprises.” The article explains how the group toured Black press offices, the New York Urban League for a lecture on “how the various social problems affect Harlem Negroes,” as well as a “rare collection of Negro art and literature,” among other stops. They had dinner, visited a church, and, at the end of their long day, “the group divided into small parties and visited night clubs and shows in Harlem.”⁶⁴

A 1923 *Columbia Spectator* Article recounts a similar story. Five years earlier, an article titled: “Society Will Travel Through Colored Section,” was published. The article describes a trip

arranged by the Fellowship of Reconciliation—a Christian organization on campus—to explore Harlem. The article details students meeting up at the 116th and Broadway station and proceeding to visit several Harlem-based organizations such as the NAACP. The article is quoted: “the first stop will be made at the New York Urban League. James H. Hubert, Executive Secretary will present facts about colored Harlem.” After dinner at the “Colored YMCA,” the “Renaissance Casino, cabarets, and dance halls will be visited later.” When discussing the purpose of the trip and the work of the Fellowship, Bishop Paul Jones explained that by these trips the organization hopes to bring about a better understanding among groups that today are to a degree estranged from other groups.” According to the author, they intend to go to Chinatown on another occasion.⁶⁵

On both “voyages,” Harlem was seen as deeply foreign or unfamiliar, as if it required academic study to comprehend. Despite being a couple of blocks from campus, these planned trips seem no different than that of an anthropological tour. However, this was not the first time Columbia students went on an expedition to visit Harlem—neither the only one in a strictly “academic” context. Columbia students had been doing that for years. Like the groups of “small parties,” described at the end of both articles, Columbia students used Harlem for both academic and leisure purposes.

“Slumming” and Other Student Interactions

While the Columbia administration privately expressed their racialized fears of Harlem’s development and increasing Black population, the student body used Harlem for its nightlife opportunities. “Slumming,” as it is often referred to, was a common practice of New York’s white upper classes in this era. Here, groups would “explore” lower-class neighborhoods such as

Harlem, Chinatown, the Bowery or the Lower East Side and visit local nightclubs or concert venues. With extreme undertones of voyeurism, “slumming” in Harlem reached new heights during the Harlem Renaissance. Wealthy, white New Yorkers used Harlem as their playground to explore new freedoms of sexual promiscuity or racial interactions.

In Chad Heap’s *Slumming: Sexual and Racial Encounters in American Nightlife, 1885-1940*, he chronicles the rise of slumming in American cities, centering the ways in which slumming practices came to challenge and complicate dynamics of race, class, gender, or sexuality. Heap explores how slumming came to establish or solidify new conceptions of racial hierarchy, explaining the rise of a new “increasingly polarized Black/white axis.”⁶⁶ For example, the people from lower-class, white immigrant neighborhoods that were previously “slummed” in, eventually began to participate in “slumming” of their own in Harlem in the 1920s.⁶⁷

For example, Edgar Grey, also writing for *The Amsterdam News*, deemed Harlem an “easy prey for depraved, joy-seeking whites.” Grey explains how Black New Yorkers are “canned up into a prescribed area,” and how their nightlife or “right to enjoyment,” are exploited and abused by white New Yorkers. In an insightful and scathing critique, he is quoted:

The complaint which this discussion bears, therefore, is not predicated upon any presumption of prudery or even conventional morality. It is based, rather, upon the theory that whenever the diversions of a group are regulated by and financed by the capital of the exploiting group, untold dangers, social, economic and political, will ensure to the detriment of the sumptuary group.

Grey explains the larger racial and class dynamics at hand. New York’s white upper classes used Harlem to challenge their own sexual or racial dynamics and engage in intense voyeurism—often in nightclubs owned and promoted by exploitative white businessmen.⁶⁸ Grey sees no issue with Black Harlemites enjoying urban nightlife, it is the exploitative financing and revelry from white patrons that is the true danger.

Many mentions of slumming or similar phenomena can be found in Columbia student literature—mainly the *Columbia Spectator*. Given their popularity, it is oblivious to assume these practices did not occur among the incredibly white and wealthy student body of Columbia. From direct advertisements of slumming parties to articles detailing nightlife in the city, it is clear that Columbia students frequently participated in such activities.

As early as 1895, Frederick Hale, Columbia student and son of Senator Eugene Hale, was caught in a *New York Times* article to have successfully requested a police officer to accompany him and a group of friends on a “slumming expedition in Chinatown.”⁶⁹ A later *Spectator* article

from 1909 about summer programming mentions slumming with casualty. After

detailing how summer school programming is no different than that of the proper term-year,

the author explains how, among rigorous

coursework, theater programs, and classical concerts, “slumming expeditions are organized as well as journeys to museums.”⁷⁰ Emphasizing the “many plans for amusement,” for students,

such trips are mentioned offhandedly. Slumming expeditions are no different than a class field trip.

Further, a 1922 list of “Today’s Events,” reveals a “Bowery Slumming Party” in Livingston Hall.⁷¹

As late as 1945, the *Spectator* published a piece in which Proctor Ted Kramer offered his

“helpful hints.” He explains his duties and responsibilities with some claimed advice; he is then quoted: “I get calls from all over the University every day—day and night—from students in

Senator Hale's Son Goes Slumming.
 Frederick Hale, son of United States Senator Hale of Maine, called on Col. Grant and Acting Chief Conlin at Police Headquarters yesterday. He told the Chief that he wanted to take a party of friends on a slumming expedition through Chinatown last night, and he asked to have a policeman accompany them. Mr. Conlin directed Acting Captain Young of the Elizabeth Street Station to detail a detective to show Mr. Hale and his friends around the Chinese quarter.

3:00—Frosh Fencing Practice, Fencing Room.
 7:00—Bowery Slumming Party, Livingston Hall.
 7:30—Meeting, Band, Band Room.
 8:00—Visit, T. C. Grad Club to Times Plant.
 8:15—Intercollegiate Glee Club Contest, Carnegie Hall.
 8:30—Basketball, Princeton vs. Co.

125th STREET APOLLO Near 8th Ave. HARLEM'S HIGH SPOT	Today and Thursday TEDDY HILL and HIS ORCHESTRA The Charioteers — Teddy Hale One Week Beginning Friday April 9 '37 CHICK WEBB and Ella Fitzgerald PIGMEAT — MASON — BASKETTE Produced by Clarence "Cotton Club" Robinson	Amateur Night To-night 11:00-12:00 P. M.
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HARLEM'S HOT SPOT



Walter Winchell
 SAYS
 "It's Harlem's Ball
 of Fire"

★GLADYS BENTLEY
 ★BROMFIELD & GREELEY
 ★50 CREOLE STARS
 ★ELABORATE REVUE

UBANGI
 club



TI 5-9418—9366 · 131st STREET and 7th AVENUE
 3701 Moore & Hamm · 2P · 3-13-37

difficulty or in any sort of trouble in a strange city... Don't go slumming in Harlem. Don't go sightseeing in Greenwich Village alone.”⁷²

But beyond direct quotes including “slumming” phrasing, student interaction with Harlem’s Black population is almost hidden in plain sight. The Cotton Club, a prominent night club located in Harlem from 1923-1936 that showcased popular Black talent—for an exclusively white audience—is repeatedly cited in *Spectator* archives. The Cotton Club is perhaps one of the most egregious examples in the era of slumming;

at the whites-only club, upper-class white people “discovered” some of the most famous Black artists of the Harlem Renaissance. In fact, the club was so popular that reservations for one of its 700 seats were often recommended.⁷³ Interestingly, it is not until the official relocation to Midtown occurred that the venue is referenced as a location for student social events in the *Spectator*.⁷⁴

Additionally, official advertisements for venues like the Cotton Club crowd *Spectator* archives. Amongst advertisements for nearby bookstores, stationery supply providers, or restaurants in the area, advertisements highlighting Harlem’s nightclub offerings abound.

From the Ubangi Club to the Savoy Ballroom, it is clear that Harlem nightlife flourished among the Columbia student body. A 1931 advertisement asks Columbia students “What’s the Lindy Hop?” urging that they “come watch Harlem’s agile dancers compete for the ‘Lindy Hop’

championship” at the Savoy Ballroom, or the “showplace of Harlem.”⁷⁵ A later article explains how five couples from the same “famous Harlem hot-spot,” have been “brought in to give a demonstration of the ‘Big Apple,’” a popular dance craze of the time that originated in the Black community.⁷⁶ Another advertisement highlights the presence of famed Black lesbian performer Gladys Bentley and “fifty Creole stars.”⁷⁷

While the overall occurrences of white slumming in Harlem severely diminished with the Riot of 1935—as Khinoy detailed in his peculiar *Spectator* piece—the larger repercussions of the phenomenon provide important context regarding Columbia’s relationship with its surrounding community. Ultimately, slumming was essentially the only attempt most white Columbia students made at interacting with Harlem. As Harlem served solely to entertain Columbia students, slumming became emblematic of the Columbia student body’s larger perceptions of Harlem’s residents.

Perceptions of Harlem

In addition to “sociological” visits to study Harlem or descriptions of slumming, other records detail how Columbia students interacted with Harlem and its inhabitants. Notably adjacent to an advertisement labelled “Tonight! See Harlem at Bamboo Inn,” a *Spectator* review from 1929 details a student’s experience seeing William Rapp and Wallace Thurman's play “Harlem – a Drama in Three Acts.”⁷⁸ The review characterizes Harlem as “little known” to inhabitants of New York. Critic “M.J.W.” explains the issues facing the play’s characters represent the plights of the “American Negro.” They are quoted: “in one spot, however, one is made to feel the spirit of unrest and malcontent which seems to be the general conceptions of the colored race.”⁷⁹ While the article mainly praises the play, it is interesting to see how Columbia

students interact with subject matter depicting Harlem and its inhabitants. Despite its proximity to campus, the reviewer's formal, curious description of Harlem and its people suggests they seem foreign to him.

Lastly, a retrospective *Spectator* article written by Douglas Eldridge entitled "Harlem's High Spot: Lion About Vaudeville," from 1957 is quite arrogant. Eldridge, who served as the Editor-in-Chief of the paper and went on to have a significant career in journalism, recounts a visit to the Apollo Theatre in an attempt to experience "an almost exclusively Negro institution." He is quoted:

Perhaps we were spurred on by some of the ambitions of the chic Gothamites who used to flock to the Savoy Ballroom back in the '20's; we hope not. Frankly, we had always regretted that we had never become acquainted with any Negroes. But then there is a mere handful of them in the College, and we've heard of only one Negro on a faculty which totals several thousand. Oh yes, We'd encountered them mopping our floors and putting new rolls of toilet paper into our lavatories, but we wondered if they had not some higher purpose in life than Columbia seemed largely content to assign to them.

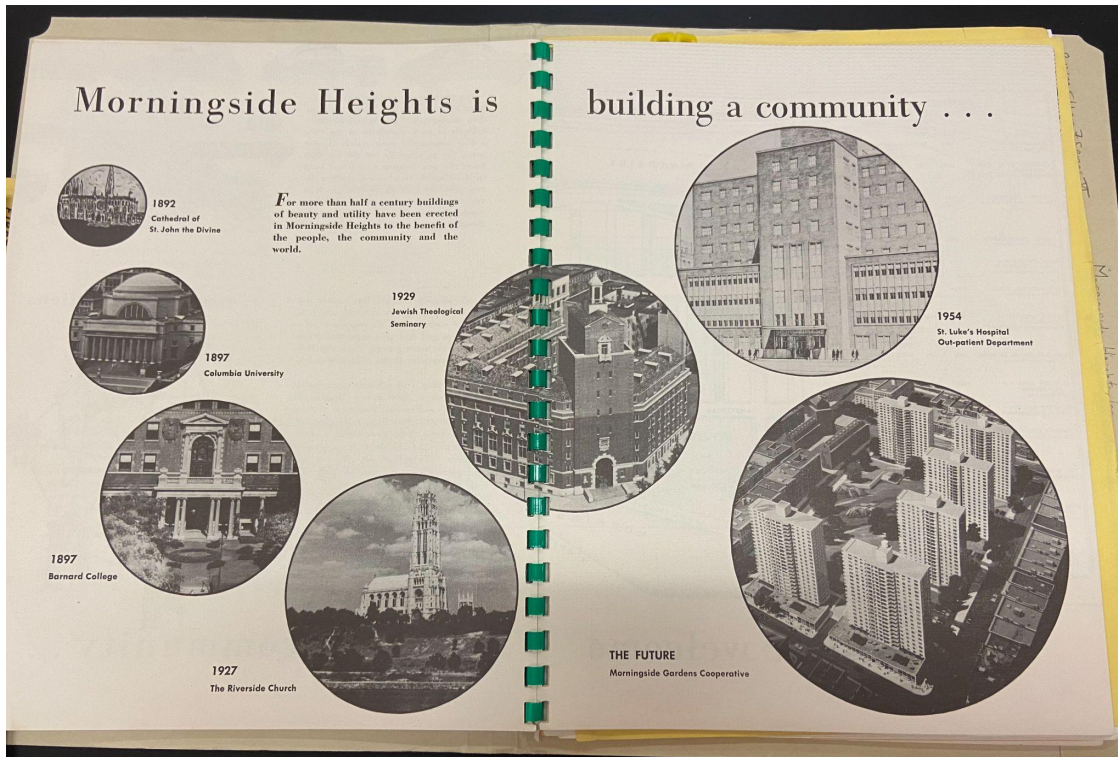
Praising the contents of the show and recounting his generally positive experience, Eldridge urges other students to experience the performers' "joie de vivre." He explains, "if you're honestly ashamed to admit that such a show would appeal to you, then dignify your visit if you must as an anthropological expedition."⁸⁰ Past his generally positive review, his account of the show is deeply patronising. Here, Eldridge's perceptions of Harlem as a Columbia student are solely through how Harlem's Black population serves him. No matter how close Harlem in proximity may be to campus, Eldridge—seemingly like many Columbia students—scarcely interacts with Black New Yorkers. Ironically, his incredibly offensive and ignorant language is much more direct than student accounts of Harlem in the 1920s or 1930s. Eldridge sees Harlem as an opportunity to enjoy some amusement, not a dynamic community of human beings. Further, it is interesting to note how Eldridge refers to the "chic Gothamites," who used to

participate in Harlem nightlife in the 20s—suggesting a decline in the practice of slumming among the Columbia community.

Thus, from slumming advertisements to play reviews to accounts of “trips” to Harlem, Columbia student interactions with Harlem served to pique the voyeuristic interests of the student body and satisfy their attempts to “study” a different group of people. Accounts of Harlem, as Eldridge bluntly mentions, retained an anthropological overtone. Harlem became an exoticized other world—for sociological exploration or recreation—rather than a neighborhood just blocks away.

Conclusion

In 1947—the same year as Butler’s “Confidential Memorandum” was sent—fourteen major institutions of Morningside Heights joined together to officially form Morningside Heights, Incorporated. Highly concerned about the neighborhood’s increasing “slum character,” the group sought to “improve educational and recreational opportunities for neighborhood residents,” “increase public safety,” and, most importantly, safeguard their property interests.⁸¹ In the proceeding decade, the group worked with the city to develop the Morningside Gardens slum clearance project, the first housing project built under Title I of the National Housing Act in New York City, and later, the General Grant Houses.⁸²



The actions of Morningside Heights Inc., which explicitly included the displacement of thousands of mainly Black and Puerto Rican residents of the area, serve as a key moment amidst a larger pattern. Columbia University, with its fellow institutions, sought to preserve the neighborhood's "character" and protect its financial interests to the detriment of the surrounding area.⁸⁴ This remains only one of many examples in a long history of Columbia's underhanded relations with the populations of Harlem and Morningside Heights.

Here, it is crucial to contextualize Columbia's long standing tensions with its neighboring community. In addition to the "Gym Crow" protests of the 1960s or the immense local opposition to the recent Manhattanville expansion, Columbia has repeatedly come into conflict with the surrounding Harlem/Morningside Heights area as early as the 1920s. Once the Morningside Protective Association failed to prevent large-scale development and Harlem's population boomed, Columbia's expansion served to protect the University against the growth of

the area's Black population. Ultimately, rather than a proper neighbor, Harlem became a disregarded community for Columbia students to "explore" rather than respect.

Endnotes

- ¹ Andrew Khinoy, “Frosh Walks Through Harlem During Riots, Returns With Battered Shoulder From Attack,” *Columbia Spectator* (New York, NY), Mar. 21, 1935.
- ² Chad Heap, *Slumming: Sexual and Racial Encounters in American Nightlife, 1885-1940* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 179.
- ³ *Ibid.*, 93.
- ⁴ Upon Pine’s death in 1922, Butler wrote: “it may be doubted whether in all the long history of Columbia any of her sons has loved her more ardently or has served her with more tireless devotion.” In: Nicholas Murray Butler, “John B. Pine, ’77, ’779L, Lover of Columbia,” *Columbia Alumni News* 14 (November 10, 1922).
- ⁵ David Rosner, *A Once Charitable Enterprise: Hospitals and Healthcare in Brooklyn and New York, 1885-1915* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 181. Note: interesting how this mirrors Columbia leaving Midtown to come to Morningside Heights.
- ⁶ John B. Pine, “Report of John B. Pine, Clerk to the Special Committee on the Change of Site of the College,” in “Report of the Committee on Site,” Minutes, Aug. 22, 1891, 11.
- ⁷ John Howard Van Amringe, “Book One: King’s College and Columbia College,” in *A History of Columbia University* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1904), 160.
- ⁸ Andrew S. Dolkart, *Morningside Heights: A History of Its Architecture and Development* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 110.
- ⁹ Interestingly, another volume of this work also includes an individual listing of all prominent alumni of Harvard, Princeton, Yale, and Columbia and their family lineages—a true testament to America's thriving meritocracy.
- ¹⁰ John Howard Van Amringe, “Columbia” in *Universities and Their Sons: History, Influence and Characteristics of American Universities*, ed. Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain (Boston: R. Herndon Company, 1898), 717.
- ¹¹ Dolkart, 285.
- ¹² Van Amringe, 716.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, 715.
- ¹⁴ Nicholas Murray Butler, “From King’s College to Columbia University: 1754-1904,” *Educational Review* (Reprint of oration), December 1904, Unprocessed Files, Nicholas Murray Butler Papers, Columbia University Archives, Box 60.
- ¹⁵ Van Amringe, 720.
- ¹⁶ “Great Day for Columbia,” *The New York Times*, (New York, NY), May 2, 1896.
- ¹⁷ The University and area’s connection to the Revolutionary War is repeatedly emphasized in many accounts of Columbia’s history. In Van Amringe’s Columbia section in *Universities and Their Sons: History, Influence and Characteristics of American Universities*, he claims the Morningside Heights “ground was fitly consecrated to high purposes by the blood of early martyrs,” referring to the Battle of Harlem Heights.
- ¹⁸ Seth Low, “Dedication Address,” in *Dedication Proceedings*, May 2, 1896. Morningside Heights Campus, Buildings and Grounds Collection, Columbia University Archives, Box 27, Folder 2.
- ¹⁹ Rear Admiral Mead, “Presentation of the Flag Address,” in *Dedication Proceedings*, May 2, 1896. Morningside Heights Campus, Buildings and Grounds Collection, Columbia University Archives, Box 27, Folder 2.
- ²⁰ In fact, during his campaign, Hewitt was frequently accused of being “too rich.” In: “A Scrap of History,” *Harper’s Weekly*, 30, Nov. 20, 1886, 751.
- ²¹ In one line Hewitt even argues that Southern secession was a representation of the “American spirit.”
- ²² Abram Stevens Hewitt, “Dedication Address,” in *Dedication Proceedings*, May 2, 1896. Morningside Heights Campus, Buildings and Grounds Collection, Columbia University Archives, Box 27, Folder 2. Note: Hewitt Hall at Barnard is named after him.
- ²³ “Reasons for Living in the Heights,” *The New York Times*, (New York, NY) Apr 7, 1895, 20-21.
- ²⁴ “A Great Public Benefaction,” *The Sun*, (New York, NY) May 8, 1896.
- ²⁵ “Are on Historic Ground: New Columbia College Buildings at Morningside Heights,” *The New York Times* (New York, NY), Nov. 10, 1895.
- ²⁶ John Howard Van Amringe, “New Years Letter from the Dean of Columbia College,” *Columbia Spectator* (New York, NY), Jan. 5, 1898.

²⁷ Van Amringe, 731. Many sources praised the campus' architectural significance; it is important to emphasize that Columbia's campus served as the first monumental urban ensemble designed in the US following the famous World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893 (Dolkart, 134).

²⁸ "Reasons for Living in the Heights," *The New York Times*, (New York, NY), Apr. 7, 1895, 20-21.

²⁹ The name "Morningside Heights," to refer to this area remains justifiably contested. The Columbia administration repeatedly relies on the "Morningside Heights" framing to intentionally separate the area from Harlem and its Black population. The borders between the neighborhoods were never officially set—and what is now designated as "Harlem" or "Morningside Heights" was created on Columbia's terms. Alternatively, the area can be referred to as West Harlem, or simply Harlem; aside from Morningside Park, there is no real physical boundary except for the artificial ones intentionally constructed by Columbia.

³⁰ Dolkart, 5.

³¹ Frederick T. Pierce, "The Tenement House Committee Maps," *Harper's Weekly*, 39, Jan. 5, 1895, 58.

³² Dolkart, 8.

³³ "Reasons for Living in the Heights," *The New York Times*, (New York, NY), Apr. 7, 1895, 20-21.

³⁴ Dolkart, 285.

³⁵ Dolkart, 8.

³⁶ Morningside Protective Association Meeting Minutes, March 27, 1896, Morningside Heights Campus, Buildings and Grounds Collection, Columbia University Archives, Box 29, Folder 1, 1.

³⁷ Morningside Protective Association, "Certificate of Incorporation Constitution and By-Laws" (1896), Morningside Heights Campus, Buildings and Grounds Collection, Columbia University Archives, Box 29, Folder 1.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Dolkart, 286.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Morningside Protective Association Meeting Minutes, 1.

⁴² Ibid., 2.

⁴³ Here, it is interesting to note how such names were changed to encourage speculative real estate development. In fact, titles like Columbus, Amsterdam, West End Avenue or Riverside Drive, rather than 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th Streets, were given to encourage real estate growth.

⁴⁴ Robert T. Creamer, "Map of Morningside Heights," May 10, 1897, Maps and Plans, Morningside Area Alliance Records, Columbia University Libraries, Box 100. Given the map's size, four photos of the map are joined together.

⁴⁵ Robert T. Creamer, "Building Restrictions," Robert T. Creamer Real Estate Investments, Morningside Heights Campus, Buildings and Grounds Collection, Columbia University Archives, Box 29, Folder 1.

⁴⁶ "Columbia University, 1898," Van Amringe, 697.

⁴⁷ Dolkart, 8.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 319.

⁴⁹ Heap, 72.

⁵⁰ "Butler Library," *Columbia University Historical Justice Tour*, Columbia University, <https://www.cuhistorytour.com/tour-stops/butler-library>.

⁵¹ *Columbia Spectator*, "Proposed Plans for South Field," Mar. 11, 1904, Morningside Heights Campus, Buildings and Grounds Collection, Columbia University Archives, Box 4.

⁵² Dolkart, 10.

⁵³ "Columbia's Place as a City University: An interview with Nicholas Murray Butler," *New York World*, (New York, NY), Feb. 23, 1902, Unprocessed Files, Nicholas Murray Butler Papers, Columbia University Archives, Box 245.

⁵⁴ Nicholas Murray Butler, "From the Annual Report of President Butler Made to the Trustees," Oct. 6, 1902, Unprocessed Files, Nicholas Murray Butler Papers, Columbia University Archives, Box 60.

⁵⁵ Nicholas Murray Butler, "The Building of Columbia University and its Next Problems," Minutes of University Council, Feb. 15, 1921, Unprocessed Files, Nicholas Murray Butler Papers, Columbia University Archives, Box 60.

⁵⁶ In fact, a letter dated October 6th, 1898 finds former President Low directly requesting financial assistance given the costs of "site removal" from John Jacob Astor IV, one of the richest men in the world at the time. Sourcing: Seth Low to Colonel John Jacob Astor IV, Oct. 6, 1898, Buildings and Grounds Collection, Morningside Heights Campus, Columbia University Archives, Box 16.

- ⁵⁷ Nicholas Murray Butler, “From the Address of President Butler at the Columbia University Alumni Luncheon on Commencement Day,” Jun. 10, 1903, Unprocessed Files, Nicholas Murray Butler Papers, Columbia University Archives, Box 60.
- ⁵⁸ Housing was not fully guaranteed for all Columbia students until 1988.
- ⁵⁹ Dolkart, 194. A note on naming—the Livingston name refers to an incredibly influential New York family with deep connections to the slave trade. Additionally, the Hartley dorm was funded by donation of Marcellus Hartley Dodge and was to be named after his grandfather. Upon further inspection, in addition to philanthropy, he and his family were highly involved in American weapons manufacturing. At one point, their company, the Remington Arms Company, was the oldest and one of the largest weapons manufacturers in the US. Sourcing: *Columbia University Historical Justice Tour* and Marcellus Hartley Dodge Obituary (New York Times, Dec. 26, 1963).
- ⁶⁰ John Coss to President Butler, memo on “The Negro in NYC,” and map of Harlem. Central Files, Office of the President, Columbia University Archives, Box 343.
- ⁶¹ This expansion plan was ultimately mostly successful with the development of the East Campus/Columbia Law School complex.
- ⁶² Nicholas Murray Butler to Marcellus Hartley Dodge, “Confidential Memorandum to the Board of Trustees,” January 7, 1947, Arranged Correspondence, Butler Papers, Columbia University Libraries, Box 116.
- ⁶³ Ibid.
- ⁶⁴ “Columbia Sociology Class Visits Harlem,” *New York Amsterdam News* (New York, NY), Feb. 29, 1928, 3. Interestingly, the tour was led by Milton Wright, a Black sociology masters student at the time. Originally from Georgia, Wright went on to have an impressive academic career in the US and Germany as an economist. In fact, in 1932, his work was presented to Adolf Hitler, who bitterly criticized Wright’s entire race as being “docile about their oppression.” According to historian Robert Fikes of Black Past, Wright was the only person of African descent confirmed to have had a face-to-face conversation with Hitler.
<https://www.blackpast.org/global-african-history/milton-s-j-wright-1903-1972/>
- ⁶⁵ “Society Will Travel Through Colored Section,” *The Columbia Spectator* (New York, NY), Aug. 6, 1923, 3.
- ⁶⁶ Heap, 10.
- ⁶⁷ Ibid., 104. Here, it is important to note how the idea or phrasing of “slumming” can have varied connotations along racial or class lines. At different points in the city’s history, “slumming” or “slum tourism,” occurred in a myriad of dynamics—from Jewish neighborhoods, Harlem nightclubs, Italian tenements to Chinese restaurants. In this paper, the explicit phenomenon of white, upper-class New Yorkers experiencing Harlem nightlife is explored.
- ⁶⁸ Edgar M. Grey, “THE DEVIL’S PLAYGROUND: Harlem an Easy Prey for Depraved Joy-Seeking Whites Soul Vendors Becoming More and More Brazen,” *The New Amsterdam News* (New York, NY), Jul. 6, 1927.
- ⁶⁹ “Senator Hale’s Son Goes Slumming,” *The New York Times* (New York, NY), Sept. 12, 1895.
- ⁷⁰ “Advance in Scope of Summer Session,” *Columbia Spectator* (New York, NY), Jun. 2, 1909.
- ⁷¹ “Today’s Events,” *Columbia Spectator* (New York, NY), Mar. 4, 1922.
- ⁷² Phil Savitsky, “Columbia Proctor Kramer Releases ‘Helpful Hints,’” *Columbia Spectator* (New York, NY), Nov. 2, 1945.
- ⁷³ Heap, 192.
- ⁷⁴ “Few Tickets Remain For Pharmacy Affair,” *Columbia Spectator* (New York, NY), Dec. 20, 1937.
- ⁷⁵ Savoy Ballroom, “Saturday Night: What’s the Lindy Hop?” *Columbia Spectator* (New York, NY), Feb. 13, 1931.
- ⁷⁶ “Kelly Planning Variety Show At Joint Hop,” *Columbia Spectator* (New York, NY), Oct. 20, 1937.
- ⁷⁷ Ubangi Club, “Harlem’s Hot Spot,” *Columbia Spectator* (New York, NY), Apr. 7, 1937.
- ⁷⁸ Interestingly, the Bamboo Inn was a famous Chinese restaurant known for hosting grand, upper-class events in Harlem (Heap, 193).
- ⁷⁹ M.J.W., “Rapping the Negro,” *Columbia Spectator* (New York, NY), Nov. 6, 1929.
- ⁸⁰ Douglas Eldridge, “Harlem’s High Spot: Lion About Vaudeville,” *Columbia Spectator* (New York, NY), Feb. 11, 1957.
- ⁸¹ Dolkart, 330.
- ⁸² According to Dolkart (Page 460), the act allowed cities to acquire “slum” properties and resell them at a low price to private developers—with the federal government paying two-thirds of the property’s price and the city paying one-third.

⁸³ How the Morningside Gardens Cooperative development plan framed the history and benefits of living in Morningside Heights. Sourcing: Morningside Heights, Inc., "Morningside Gardens Cooperative Plan," 1955. Urban Renewal 1949-1977, Morningside Area Alliance Records, Columbia University Archives, Box 99.

⁸⁴ Dolkart, 332.