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LINDA – Fieldnotes – March 1, 2007

Subject: Walk around in Harlem

Location: 126th and 127th Streets, between Lenox (Malcolm X Blvd) and Madison

Time: Approx 12:30-2:30

Walkaround to look for churches within the districts we want: 208, 206, 212, and 210, from Lenox (Malcolm X Blvd to Park Ave?, 126th to 135th). Today: 126th and 127th Streets, from Lenox to Madison, approx 4 blocks

W. 126th, from Lenox to 5th

Sylvia's Also, NE corner of 126th and Lenox
Catering facility for Sylvia's on Lenox
Cream-colored building, chairs stacked on tables inside

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A lot of construction on this block. Bags of trash on street. Most buildings have boarded-up windows, not clear if there are people living there. Graffiti on boards and buildings. Four Latino men hanging out on steps of building across from the Baptist House of Prayer, talking in Spanish and laughing.

The Baptist House of Prayer

32 W. 126th Street near Lenox, on south side of 126th
Tan building, hasn't been painted in awhile
Building looks like others, not particularly church-like in structure, "small church"
Enclosed glass case with services and Pastor Henry Harrison
We rang bell on door, all three as instructed, nobody answered

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Transfiguration Lutheran Church

74 W. 126th Street, on south side about 2 buildings down from the Baptist House of Prayer
Building painted yellow, hasn't been painted in awhile, "small church"
Building looks like others, not particularly church-like in structure
Enclosed glass case with services and Pastor Faith Ballenger
No answer

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New Hope Community Church

New Hope for the World Ministries
63 W. 126th Street, on north side of street about 1/2way down block
Nestled in with other buildings, "small church"

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Brightly colored poster next to door indicating that it is a church (no enclosed glass case)
Terrence L. Kennedy Pastor
(212) 996-0876
Eckson called, reached voicemail, didn't leave a message

Lots of uncomfortable jokes between Eckson and I about taking notes and pictures, that we are tourists, CIA. The men definitely noticed us and watched as we milled around each church.

Buildings across from New Hope also boarded up

We run into an acquaintance of Eckson's walking down the street, a young woman working on a film set in South Africa (?). "This is my neighborhood," she tells us, and Eckson tells us that she should bring him there.

Royal Orleans Hotel

Bed and Breakfast a few doors down
35 W. 126th Street
Cloth awning

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Townhouse for sale (2), recently renovated
2 other buildings for sale

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Pilgrim Cathedral of Harlem

15 W. 126th Ave
North side of 126th, near 5th Ave
On sign outside: Bishop Charles Leed, Pastor; Archbishop Roy Brown, Chief Prelate
Freestanding building painted white, looks church-like, "larger church"

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I tell Eckson he can do the talking "since I'm sick"
When we walk in there is a spacious interior, brightly lit with natural light
Two women in a small room to the side

An older man asks if he can help us
Eckson tells him we are from Teachers College, that we want to talk to somebody about education
He asks an elderly gentleman if Minister Hopkins is here, disappears into a room off to the side
While we wait I see that they are painting a large radiator (about 5 feet tall) in the hallway
He returns to say that Minister Hopkins is busy but we can leave our information

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Directs us to one of the women in the front room
She comes out with a pad of paper and Eckson gestures for me to leave my name and number

Across the street from the church there is a Laundromat and a Deli Grocery

W 126th Street, from 5th Ave to Madison

Boma Cafe, 2037 5th Ave, Southeast corner
Upscale coffeeshop and furniture store

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Once off 5th Ave, more of the buildings on this block seem freshly painted. No trash on the streets. No boarded windows on this block, no visible graffiti. Several buildings for sale. Eckson and I wonder who is able to buy.

Eluzai Pentecostal Temple, Inc.

24 126th Street

Painted sign that reads Pastor and Founder Rev. Harold A. Taitt
Building is painted off-white, otherwise blends into surrounding buildings
Eckson rings a doorbell at the bottom of the stairs, wonders aloud if this is a residence.
An old man opens the door, with his pants unzipped. He is holding a cordless telephone.
Eckson tells him we are from Teachers College, looking for the church. He tells us he is sick, is trying to reach someone. We thank him and leave.

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W. 126th Street at Madison

Association of Black Social Workers (Varenne took a picture)

Metropolitan Community United Methodist Church

Reverend Dr. Luonne A. Rouse

“large building” brick and stone, with four sets of doors along Madison
We enter on 126th following the signs for “office”

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An older woman meets us at the door, asks if we are looking for Yvonne Hartnett
No, I tell her, but we’re looking for somebody to talk to
I tell her we’re from Teachers College, looking to do a project on education in Harlem
She says she can give us a couple of minutes,
Looks for a piece of paper she can give us
And hands us a small printed program that lists Sunday worship, Christian education (Sunday School, confirmation classes, etc.), prayer ministries, and social ministries.

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She tells us that she is Program Director of the Wellness Center, that they deal mostly with substance abuse and HIV/AIDS. They partner with the Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center.

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The church, she tells us, does a lot “education-wise” and “health-wise,” Christian education, the storefront school uses their facilities, the youth group led by Jay Williams, community ??, a welcome table that serves 50 to 60 people daily. A woman comes in to meet with her, she asks us to wait while she seats her. Eckson uses the bathroom. I ask if we can come back and talk with somebody. She returns and gives us her card, as well as that of the pastor. She explains that they are having a funeral and she forgot and scheduled a meeting with a service provider.

Eckson and I are tired, and it is already 1:30, so we decide to head back.

W 127th Street, between Madison and 5th

Walking back on 127th we do not see much. A lot of residential-looking buildings, again with construction. 127th is also called Langston Hughes Place. Is his house on this street? We pass a house with posters in the windows, of Langston Hughes, Marcus Garvey, Harriet Tubman, Thurgood Marshall, and Malcolm X “By Any Means Necessary” (the famous rifle in the window photo), plus a couple of pamphlets picturing MLK, Jr. The posters are helpfully labeled by name. A young man who appears to be working with somebody on a construction project looks at us. When we stop to look at the house he drives by in a maroon van, looking hard at us. More jokes about our discomfort and about people noticing us.

5th Avenue, between 127th and 128th

St. Andrews Episcopal Church

The Rev. T. Allan Jackson

Northeast corner

Large, stand-alone church

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Construction across the street—same as what Varenne photographed
“Rhapsody on 5th” promising residential space
Significant construction, with blue scaffolding on building

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5th Avenue, between 126th and 127th

Mount Moriah Baptist Church

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2050 5th Ave, on West side of Street
Rev. Dr. Edward Johnson, AT 9-9408
Elizabeth Smith, Funeral Director

Free-standing, large church

127th Street, between Lenox and 5th Ave

A house with a bright saffron flyer in the window:

Put the public back in public education! CEJ

What does this stand for? CEJ is the Coalition for Educational Justice in Los Angeles, what about here? Some kind of grassroots organization?

Sanctuary of Peace Tabernacle of Deliverance for All People

26 127th Street

(Varenne took the picture of this place)

White painted brick building

A heavy set man outside, asking us if we are looking for someone in that building

Eckson says no, the church

Later Eckson jokes about the man, imitating a gruff voice

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This church has many pastors listed in the glass-enclosed case

Associate Pastor

Edward Johnson

Mike Nino

Timothy Wells

Essie Williams

Katherine Norman-Davis

Cassandra Longers

Pastors

Charlotte M. Holley

Jermaine L. Blanding-Youth

Bishop Carl E. Holley Sr.

Major construction w/ scaffolding on building

Another building for sale at 64 W 127th st

Money gram

Deli/grocery

Today:

The Baptist House of Prayer

Transfiguration Lutheran Church

New Hope Community Church (212) 996-0876 (poster)

Pilgrim Cathedral of Harlem (large) 212-426-2888 (Halstead property listings online)

Eluzai Pentecostal Temple, Inc.

Metropolitan Community United Methodist Church (large) 212 289-6157

St. Andrews Episcopal Church (large) 212 534-0896

Mount Moriah Baptist Church (large)

Sanctuary of Peace Tabernacle of Deliverance for All People