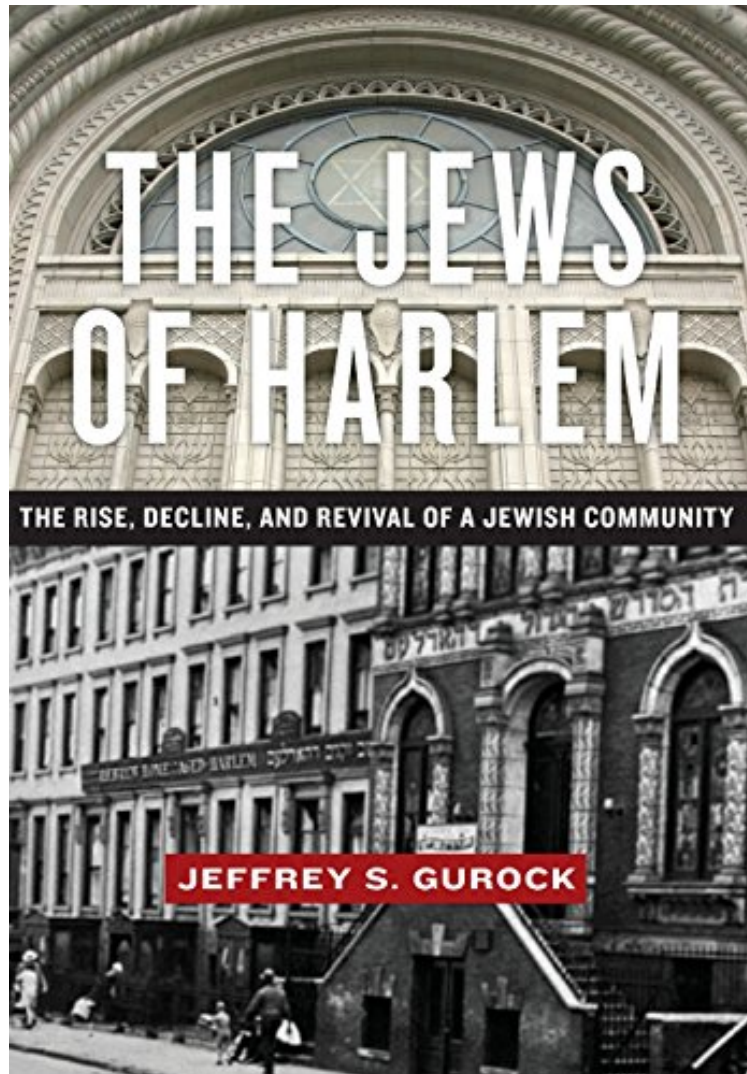


# The Jews of Harlem: The Rise, Decline, and Revival of a Jewish Community

Jeffrey S. Gurock

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**Jeffrey S. Gurock : The Jews of Harlem: The Rise, Decline, and Revival of a Jewish Community** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Jews of Harlem: The Rise, Decline, and Revival of a Jewish Community:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A good book, well written and worth the time spent ...By Sheldon LazarowitzAny one interested in the Jewish Immigration to the US should read this book. It not only covers Harlem

but it shows how the Jews were active in many parts of New York City. The immigration problem today and those of the Jews in Harlem were different yet very much the same. A good book, well written and worth the time spent with it; 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A good case study of contrasts of two communities in Harlem, NYC! By Customer An interesting book about the once populous Jewish enclave in Harlem, NYC and its relationships with African-American, who moved into the area, lived with the Jewish population, moved out, and are beginning to return there! 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A fascinating history of Harlem Jewish life By Glenn Richter I was tantalized by the ghosts of Jewish Harlem past. My wife's late mother, from a Sephardic Turkish Jewish family, recalled that they had lived in East Harlem before moving to the Bronx. As a public school teacher in East Harlem in the 1970s, my wife had seen buildings which had clearly been Jewish institutions, including a Yeshiva of Harlem. Working in a Harlem New York City Housing project in the early 1990s, I'd walked around the corner and found the Temple Baptist Church, whose building at one time had been Congregation Ohab Zedek, which my wife and I now attend on Manhattan's Upper West Side. In the 1980s, I had interviewed a very elderly member of the synagogue, Israel Resnick, who painted a vivid verbal image of Jewish life in Harlem in the 1910s and '20s. For instance, he recalled that when famed cantor Yossele Rosenblatt appeared monthly at OZ, so many people vied to enter the synagogue police had to maintain order. And I still have treasured video footage that I shot of Prof. Jeffrey Gurock, this book's author, leading members of our synagogue one Sunday morning in the 1990s on a bus tour of the echoes of Jewish life in lower Harlem. Dr. Gurock's initial book, "When Harlem Was Jewish" was an instant classic, sold out, and unavailable for years. So the publication of "Jewish Life in Harlem" was welcome news to me, fulfilling a curiosity to learn more of this Jewish community just north of our vibrantly Jewish Upper West Side which came, prospered, then petered out -- and now has begun to revive -- in the past 100 years. And I'm finding many friends who also are curious about Harlem Jewish life who'd find the book most interesting. Dr. Gurock moves through the beginnings of Jewish Harlem in the 1870s to its heyday in the 1910s and '20s, weaving fascinating stories from documents, quotes and recollections. My only regret is that the book ended. I would have liked to learn more about the Jews who remained in Harlem when their synagogues moved or closed down. I also would have hoped that Dr. Gurock would have detailed more about the Old Broadway Synagogue, just off West 125th Street, built in 1923. It's gallantly clinging on by dint of hardworking volunteers. As a scholar, Prof. Gurock explains that the synagogue is "three blocks west of Jewish Harlem" and more in the Columbia University neighborhood -- but really, to the rest of us, it's Harlem, without the distinctions.

The complete story of Jewish Harlem and its significance in American Jewish history New York Times columnist David W. Dunlap wrote a decade ago that on the map of the Jewish Diaspora, Harlem is Atlantis. . . . A vibrant hub of industry, artistry and wealth is all but forgotten. It is as if Jewish Harlem sank 70 years ago beneath waves of memory beyond recall. During World War I, Harlem was the home of the second largest Jewish community in America. But in the 1920s Jewish residents began to scatter to other parts of Manhattan, to the outer boroughs, and to other cities. Now nearly a century later, Jews are returning uptown to a gentrified Harlem. The Jews of Harlem follows Jews into, out of, and back into this renowned metropolitan neighborhood over the course of a century and a half. It analyzes the complex set of forces that brought several generations of central European, East European, and Sephardic Jews to settle there. It explains the dynamics that led Jews to exit this part of Gotham as well as exploring the enduring Jewish presence uptown after it became overwhelmingly black and decidedly poor. And it looks at the beginnings of Jewish return as part of the transformation of New York City in our present era. The Jews of Harlem contributes much to our understanding of Jewish and African American history in the metropolis as it highlights the ever-changing story of America's largest city. With The Jews of Harlem, the beginning of Dunlap's hoped-for resurfacing of this neighborhood's history is underway. Its contemporary story merits telling even as the memories of what Jewish Harlem once was warrants recall.

"This well-written volume makes clear that the Harlem Jewish community significantly influenced American Jewry as a whole . . . This is a must-read for anyone interested in the history of American Judaism." -Publishers Weekly Jeffrey Gurock offers an evocative account of the evolution of Jewish Harlem. This book is a "must read" for anyone interested in race, religion, and culture in New York's ever-changing neighborhood. -Beth S. Wenger, Professor of History, University of Pennsylvania "A thoughtful and comprehensive history of Jewish Harlem." -American Jewish Archives Journal "The Jews of Harlem skillfully traces Jewish Harlem from its tentative beginnings to the years when Jewish life there rivaled that of the Lower East Side, and from the massive migration elsewhere to the community's even more tentative reemergence today. It's an important piece of American Jewish History." -Segula Magazine Jeffrey Gurock is the historian of Jewish Harlem, but he is also its anthropologist and sociologist. He chronicles the fortunes of this storied neighborhood treasured by blacks and Jews and now home to both groups with the fresh-eyed relish of an explorer discovering a new land yet with the authority of an old-timer intimately familiar with every block and alley. He has populated his fascinating tale of Jewish Harlem's development, decline, and resurgence not just with events and institutions but with flesh and blood people who bring the community to vivid life. -Joseph Berger, author of

The Pious Ones: The World of Hasidim and Their Battles with America" What stays with you long after you have finished [The Jews of Harlem] is Gurock's steadfast devotion to his subject. Not too many of us have either the opportunity or the inclination to turn things over and over again. We would do well to follow his example." -Jewish of Books  
No one knows the history of the Jews in Harlem as well as Jeffrey S. Gurock, and this latest book recounts in wonderful detail not only their move uptown from the Lower East Side early in the 20th century, but their important role in the revival of the neighborhood in the 21st century. The Jews of Harlem is engagingly written and persuasively argued, and it will soon be recognized as a classic account of community change in a contested environment. -Kenneth T. Jackson, Barzun Professor of History, Columbia University  
About the Author Jeffrey S. Gurock is Libby M. Klaperman Professor of Jewish History at Yeshiva University. A prize-winning author, he has written or edited fifteen books in American Jewish history. Gurock has served as chair of the Academic Council of the American Jewish Historical Society and as associate editor of American Jewish History. He lives with his family in the Riverdale section of the Bronx.