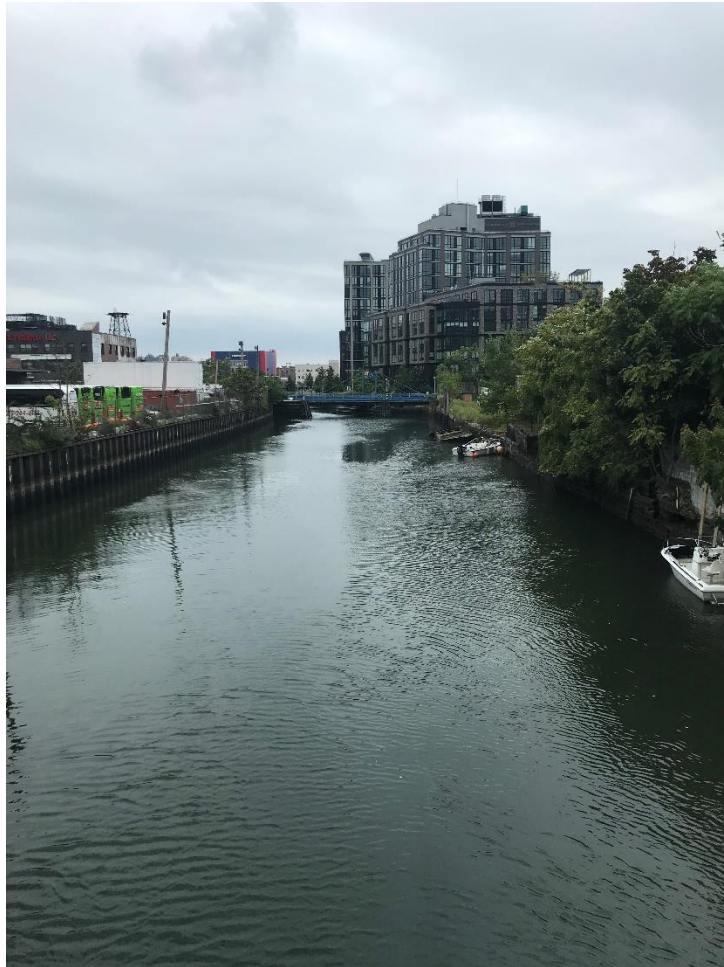


Learning Places Fall 2019

SITE REPORT #1

Gowanus#. GurungJatin



Select a meaningful image that captures your perception of the site we visited.

STUDENT NAME: Jatin Gurung

PART 1: SITE OBSERVATIONS

On the day of the site visit, we walked through a neighborhood of South Brooklyn aka Gowanus. The community is now a mix of old brownstone houses lined up along the streets and some old industrial buildings that have been changed into residential buildings as well. Once you reach the intersection of President Street and Bond Street you will witness the more gentrified version of this area. Once we were on the Union street bridge which was undergoing renovation, we got the opportunity to witness the state of the water that fills up the Gowanus Canal. The water is polluted by combined sewer outflows that runs along the canal which was initially constructed to relieve the sewage and storm water when the sewer treatment plant got overwhelmed.

1. What are some general observations about the character of this neighborhood? What does it remind you of? How does it make you feel?

On the way to the Gowanus the block was lined with beautiful brownstone houses. Some old warehouses were modernized into new loft style buildings. You get the old western town kind of vibe walking in the neighborhood.

2. How is the natural world contained or shaped by human activity or architecture? In what ways does the natural world invade or disrupt human activity, planning or architecture?

The water in the Gowanus is contaminated with PAHs (Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbon), VOCs (Volatile Organic Compound), PCBs (Polychlorinated Biphenyl), pesticides and metals. Human plays a major role in creating these contaminants and are also responsible for dumping it in the water. The life that are present in the water is affected by this. The nature is also disrupting the architecture by some invasive plants such as Paulownia tree which is growing very aggressively in the surrounding neighborhood.

3. What people did you observe in the neighborhood and what activities are they engaged in?

Since it's an industrial district and still has lots of factories. People here are mostly people working in those factories. There are people who also reside in this community.

4. Reflect on a **specific** place you viewed in this neighborhood. A specific place means a single building, or an intersection, or an individual built structure, etc.

- a. Insert 1 photograph and/or sketch and provide a *creative* caption for the image. The caption should be a word or short phrase that suggests a theme or conceptual association related to the photo or sketch.



“SIGN GONE UNNOTICED OR SIMPLY IGNORED”

- b. What is the *program* of the space? How are people meant to interact with one another and with the environment?

This sign was posted on the Carroll Street bridge. When it first caught my attention, it was kind of funny but then in reality none of the drivers I saw during my time at the bridge was driving at the pace of fellow walkers. The drivers were just zooming out of the bridge.

- c. describe a possible creative reuse of this **specific** space for a performance:
- a) Which areas are best for performers/activists and which areas are good for observers? Do these spaces overlap? Mention specific objects and structures in your answer.

The area on the bridge is a perfect place for performers/activists because the bridge would be a perfect place to hang loud banners or signs. It will definitely catch attention of passerby whether it be on the bike, car or just strollers.

- b) What kinds of performance would work best (intimate or grand; processional or stationary; text and/or music; interactive or passive audience; etc.)?

The type of performance that would work best in my opinion is stationary; text and/ or music.

QUESTIONS for FURTHER RESEARCH. These should follow directly from your analysis section and be complex and specific enough to serve as the basis of a research project.

Questions might relate to architectural or environmental observations, socio-political problems and/or solutions, demography, history, zoning, civic processes, performance strategy, etc.

1. Question? What kind of initiative is being taken from both public and government sector to control the pollution in the Gowanus?
2. Question? Will Gowanus canal water ever be cleaned?
3. Question? What kind of life is being bred in the waters of Gowanus Canal?

PART 2: RESEARCH

Choose and revise one of your research questions for further research.

Revised Research Question:

1. What kind of initiative is being taken from both public and government sector to control the pollution in the Gowanus?

Find and cite 2 sources that address your question in MLA format. Respond to the questions below.

Gowanus Canal Conservancy. 2018, <https://gowanuscanalconservancy.org/initiatives-post/>. Accessed 23 September 2019.

“Lighten Up Brooklyn on Gowanus Canal.” *Gowanus Dredgers*, 22 Sept. 2019, <https://gowanuscanal.org/lighten-brooklyn-gowanus-canal>.

CITATION 1:

Why did you select this source? How does it address all or part of your research question?

I selected this source because it is a registered 501 © (3) nonprofit organization that is working towards enabling a better and safe haven in the Gowanus neighborhood.

Is the source credible? Why or why not?

I believe the source is credible because it is a nonprofit organization and there’s no intention of benefiting financially by providing fabricated information.

What further information would you need to answer your question? Where would you look for additional sources?

The website has a lot of content regarding their vision and agendas.

CITATION 2:

Why did you select this source? How does it address all or part of your research question?

I selected this source because they are also a nonprofit organization that has been educating people and providing access to the waterfront in the Gowanus.

Is the source credible? Why or why not?

Yes, the source is credible because this organization is also a registered nonprofit that has been raising awareness by operating many programs.

What further information would you need to answer your question? Where would you look for additional sources?

Further information could be available in different government and public agency websites.

PART 3: Performance Reflection (after second site visit)

Write a 200-word reflection about how you felt during the second visit to the space and during the performance activities. How did this visit change your perception of the place and your relationship to the natural and built environments? Did the experience of 'performing' in the space (i.e., moving your body) teach you anything new about the landscape or architecture?

I had a very creative experience during my second visit to the Gowanus. We started off at the park. Miss Andrea, the EPA aka Environmental Performance Agency's agent had an awesome educational plan for us that day. In the park after a brief introduction we got to the performance part right away without wasting any time. We were all acting as a matter such as water, tree, dust, leaves etc. we were all brought together and were dispersed by the hurricane. It was kind of a funny experience as no one had any clue about what was going to happen. After this short performance we stepped out of the park trying to find personal and public smell. We found personal smell in human body odor and public smell in the grass, car engine, pungent smell of the water. After this we stood in front of the Gowanus Canal and quietly lost in our thought observing the nature. We were divided into groups and each group were to discuss about what they had thought about. Following this thought share we did a small dance performance in front of the agent and she gave us her thoughts by performing our dance for us. This was an end to this unexpected performative day.