

Learning Places Fall 2019

SITE REPORT #1

name of site report

NAMING PROTOCOL. When saving and posting your site reports on OpenLab, please follow the following format: SiteReport#.LastnameFirstname



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

STUDENT NAME: RAINBY KURIAN

PART 1: SITE OBSERVATIONS

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

One end of the neighborhood is a residential area, it is in the beginning border of the neighborhood, and as we go further down we can see the commercial area of the neighborhood. When I first entered into the neighborhood it was like walking through a small park and felt so relaxed. Later as I entered into the canal area it was disgusting and realized how much waste water is dumped into the water.

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?

Natural world is affected by many things by humans and the most damage we cause to this nature is by the dumping of waste and soap water into the canal destroying fresh water, fish and plants in the water. The area around the contaminated Gowanus canal is very toxic and the maybe due to lack of good air quality I didn't see much people in this neighborhood.

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

In the residential area I saw people going for a walk with dogs, taking kids back from school, some were going to work. Once we reached near the Gowanus canal it felt kind of empty, I didn't see much people, some of them were working and most of the elderly people were chatting each other or in a group outside the building.

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.



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

In this particular picture we can see the Carol Street Bridge which is located between Carrol gardens and Gowanus. We can see a clear view of the canal from this wooden bridge, it's a good spot for developers to take a look at the Gowanus Canals to refer for any future changes to make in the structure of the canal or even the pipes which dump waste water into the canal. The Carrol Street Bridge is still one of the oldest active bridges in America; the space is used as path of transport by people and vehicles to go over the canal. This is a good spot for people to see the intensity of waste that's being deposited into the Canal.

- 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.

Since it's an active bridge the best spot for any type of performance or activities are either the both ends of the bridge so it won't stop the passage of vehicles through the bridge. The residents of the Gowanus neighborhood and others can join or observe the performance from either from the Carrol Gardens , Gowanus and between the banks of third and fourth streets.

- b) What kinds of performance would work best (intimate or grand; processional or

stationary; text and/or music; interactive or passive audience; etc.)?

I think a grand stationary music performance is best for this space because if it's just a performance with banners and posters it might not be easy to get the attention of people from other boroughs on the other hand if it's a live music performance, there is a higher chance of other people from different boroughs to join. There are many people in New York who haven't heard or know about the Gowanus Canals and its necessity to clean the canal. As an awareness the live performance would be a great tool to spread the situation and more information of the Gowanus Canal to others.

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 is the significance of the Paulownia tree in Gowanus

2. Question?

How is the lives of residents affected by the Gowanus toxic water

3. Question?

4. What are the causes of toxic in Gowanus Canal.

PART 2: RESEARCH

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

Revised Research Question:

What are the causes of toxic in Gowanus Canal?

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

CITATION 1:

Gross, M. (2010, June 2). Celebration at the Edge of Decay. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/03/fashion/03gowanus.html>

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

The reason why I decided to select this source is because it has a clear answer to my question. The environmental protection agency proposed a plan to clean up the canal within 10-12 years but it will only clean the canals and the surrounding soil. They have to plan to improve or fix the sewage system of the surrounding neighborhood, when it rains the sewage from, the surrounding area runs in to the canal which includes the toxic industrial waste as well.

Is the source credible? Why or why not?

Yes, I believe this source is credible because the article is posted in New York Times and it is a New York based worldwide newspaper with a lot of readers. According to the 2019 survey a good percent of people believes New York Times news is very credible.

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

CITATION 2:

Williams, K. (2014, August 14). Forensic Hydrology at the Gowanus Canal. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/31/nyregion/forensic-hydrology-at-the-gowanus-canal.html>

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

The article is about the hydrologic research and findings of Mr. Eymund Diegel an environmental planner, according to him Gowanus Canal is one of the most polluted location in New York City. Toxic waste which takes a long period of time to degrade are in the bottom of the canal and the

environmental protection agency is not doing a good job in cleaning up this waste from the oil refineries and other industries.

Is the source credible? Why or why not?

This article is also from by in the New York Times which and the reasons for credibility are same as mentioned above in the first source. In addition to that the studies and researches are conducted by an Environmental planner who is good in his career.

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

Additional information that I needed to answer my question are scientifically proven evidences and numerically the degree of toxin contained in the canal. I have to do a lot of research based on the industries operate in the Gowanus and also information gathered from the environmental protection agency website can answer the question.

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?

For the third part of the site report we all must go meet at Thomas Greene Playground, and in this playground, we met Andrea, She's a professional performance agent. I was scared and nervous in the beginning to do the activity but eventually I started enjoying the performances and other activities. The first thing I liked most is when she taught us how to awake every cell in our body by tapping and rubbing and then we walked to the Gowanus from the park. On our way we were smelled private and public smells, I got more public smells like fresh air, green leaves, smell of gas from the car and finally the filthy smell of Gowanus canal. The experience of the second visit to the canal was totally different than the first one; I went so close to the bank of the canal and saw a lot of things that I didn't see in the first visit. I felt so bad for the duck and fish in the canal, saw a lot of dirty bubbly debris floating through the surface of the water and made me think about the importance of cleaning up the canal. Finally my group did a dance performance; each one of us represented sky, ground and water.