

Learning Places Fall 2019

SITE REPORT #1

name of site report Gowanus

NAMING PROTOCOL. When saving and posting your site reports on OpenLab, please follow the



following format: SiteReport#.Las

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

STUDENT NAME: ZAMBRANO, CESAR

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?

The observations about the Gowanus was pleasant and disturbing in different parts of the neighborhood. At first we saw the beautiful art that the houses have been implemented in, plants, trees and pleasant neighborhood to be a part of. Towards the end of the Gowanus trip I felt more like a home feeling because of the place ive had been raised in. Pretty dirty with the water from the sewers.

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 natural world in the Gowanus is contained because it's not really touched. We see that the trees are preserved around us as well as the plants and flowers that are flourishing in the neighborhood. In Carol Greens, where we went to first, the plants are protected by the neighbors and the community shaped into their homes. The natural world can be disruptive for the community in which it cant be taken down if the person living in front of the natural tree wants to make a driveway or an add on to their home. By the water we see that the amount of grass that have been growing in that area was taken out, all the way, and now it's just a dead end of the street but you can see the water flowing.

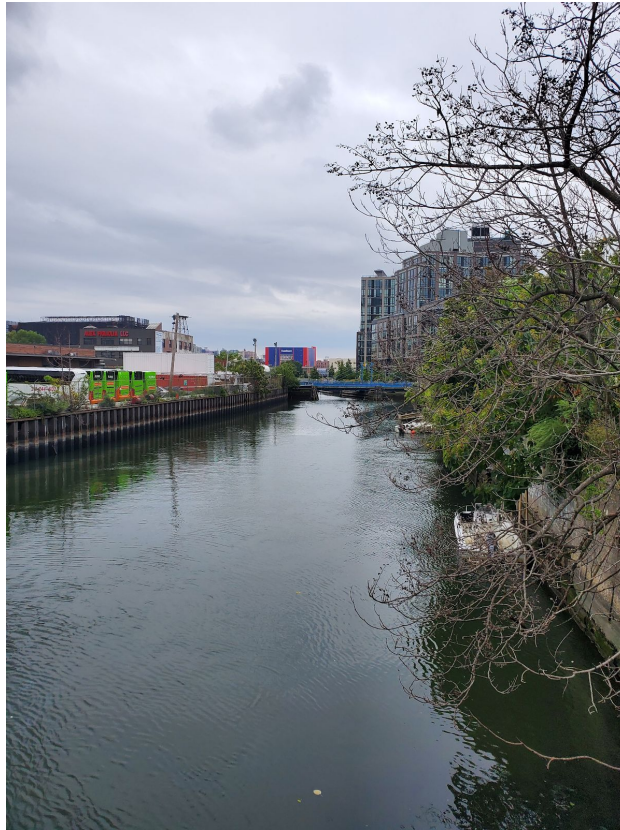
3. What people did you observe in the neighborhood and what activities are they engaged in?

We saw everyday average people walking by, a person walking their dog, FedEx delivery guy delivering around the neighborhood, and parents walking their kids from school. We also saw people that our licensed tour guide, Joseph Alexiou, knew and chatted with them.

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.

Caption- Where does all your sh%! go?



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

The program of this space is to dump sewage water to to it. People are meant to hate and feel disgusted when looking at this environment by the way it's treated. People are supposed to help as a community to fix this issue and possibly clean the water. Of course it's an enormous job to fix and clean this river but people can imagine.

- 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.

A creative reuse for this place would be ocean performances. Of course the water would have to be clean and not toxic but you can put performers or even dolphins to perform for an audience

by the bridge. The ocean would be the main focal point, the bridge and surrounding areas can be placed for an audience. The spaces would surround the ocean where performers are performing all from their view from the bridge, dead end street, streets and alongside the river.

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

A performance that can work best is also jet skiing in the water. Another creative idea is having a large boat in the river where performers can sing and dance with the audience appreciating everything from the boat or even outside of it.

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? Why not clean the river and make it a friendly view for spectators?
2. Question? Why was prostitution and child labor heavy in this neighborhood.
3. Question? Why are the building shaped in a way where there can be floods and disasters?

PART 2: RESEARCH

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

Revised Research Question: Why was there a heavy tolerance of prostitution in the Gowanus?

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

CITATION 1:

Fisher, Ian. *Promise and Despair Share Project*.
web.a.ebscohost.com.citytech.ezproxy.cuny.edu/ehost/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=93d74d68-8c68-4623-9934-0586383914b9%40sdc-v-sessmgr01&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWZWhvc3QtbGl2ZSzyY29wZT1zaXRI#AN=9304230331&db=bwh.

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

I chose this source because when I was skimming through sources, this source caught my eye with the title, 'Promise and Despair Share Project.' It addresses my question because with prostitution you have to account for the environment to do business and what type of people are in the given area. This addressed my question because we see that people living in housings are linked with prostitutes and dealing with them, tolerating their given actions.

Is the source credible? Why or why not?

Yes it is because I got it off the schools database and was written by an author of the New York Times. It was in the year 1993 and that was closest to the era of the Gowanus in its peak of poverty.

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

Further information I would need would be the income of the people living in Gowanus because this useful information would give us a sign to where it could have started first and then have spread. I would find this additional sources in the schools database or census.com.

CITATION 2:

Reporting, HuffPost Citizen. "Gowanus Prostitution Questions Emerge As School Looks to Move."

HuffPost, HuffPost, 25 May 2011

<https://www.huffpost.com/entry/gowanus-prostitution-ques n 478246>

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

I selected this source by searching for Gowanus and prostitutes on google and kept looking for a good article. It addresses my research question because it gives us a history about the crack epidemic in the 80's. Drug dealers and hookers were linked together in the Gowanus and was tolerated because of the non involvement of the police to stop this epidemic.

Is the source credible? Why or why not?

Yes it is a credible source because its Huffpost and their talking about a school moving which is a serious situation that would be messed with.

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

Further information that I would need would be history in the 80's and 90's for brooklyn and its crack epidemic. I would look for history in brooklyn and search back to the mid 80's.

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?

My interpretation of this second visit that we took to the Gowanus was more with nature. We spent a lot of time observing our surroundings and what we felt at a given time. The first time we went, I felt like there's two parts, a nice green neighborhood and a dirty green neighborhood. We learned to focus on smells around us by not talking in which we enhance our smelling focal points. We smelled the trees, dog poop, metal, grass, river water, and smoke from the locals smoking in the park. This visit made me worry even more for this space because it can be much more and be cleaned maybe once a week by the locals or the state. My relationship with nature remains the same, I know that nature is sacred and should be kept in order to survive. The performing exercise we made with our groups was embarrassing. Going out of our comfort zone to dance or make gestures was weird and uncomfortable. Moving my body and performing made me feel like I was a flowing water in the dirtiness that's the river, I was growing as a healthy plant in Gowanus, and telling the environment that whatever happened before, I can make better and forget the past that happened in this place.