

hLearning Places Summer 2019

SITE REPORT #2

Newtown Creek site report



“Proof that nature finds a way to live, even after we covered it up”

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SITE OBSERVATIONS

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

Something I've noticed when I was at the site was how it felt as though I was walking through some modern community space designed by an architect, given how they gave a lot of thought about the design. Parts of the entrance looked like a boat, and the design of the steps that lead down to the water have cut outs that allow plants and some sea life to live in them. The short time we spent on this nature walk really reminded me of the times I'd run along the Flushing Bay Promenade, Seeing the water crashing onto the Barry and all the trees growing on the side. Personally seeing that there are plants and some kinds of animals capable of living there, it makes me feel genuinely happy, like not all hope is lost for this site.

2. Historically, what are some of the important developments that have created the current environmental situation at Newtown Creek area. Refer not only to the reading and Prof. Spellane's lecture, but also what you learned on the Newtown Creek Alliance tour (hint... estuaries, for instance)?

In terms of History, Given its location and how it has access to a running stream of water people saw it as the perfect place to set up factories away from the city, Where they can just dump whatever pollutants at their factories were pumping out into the water and just have it stream down into the ocean, not giving any thoughts as to how that may affect the environment in the future. Not to mention the invention of kerosene, which only made things worse. Just as long as you always look before they leap one should always consider the consequences of their actions and how it can harm others.

3. In what ways is the natural environment contained or shaped by the architecture of the Newtown Creek Nature Walk? In what ways is the natural world repossessing, interacting with, or invading spaces that have been over-polluted or industrialized?

It seems that most of the natural environment is rather contain to where the site touches the water seeing as how it's only there that we see any plant life and wildlife connected to the site. In terms of how it interacts with the space, one example would be how be steps leading towards the water we're design with cutouts to allow plants and marine life to inhabit them. It's surprising that any plants and actually grow their given how their water sources from the polluted Creek, And the fact that some of that plant life is growing so fast they may actually overtake some of the steps.

4. Discuss the program of the nature walk. How are people meant to interact with one another and with the environment?

In terms of people interacting with one another in the site, it doesn't seem like the place that would host parties or big events. Given the type of place and how you get there, it feels more of a private area, a quiet place for people to interact with one another while surrounded by plant life. From an architect's perspective the plant life there really feels like it's for show if we're talking about how people interact with it when they take this nature walk.

5. If you were to stage a performative intervention in a *specific* site (i.e., a single structural aspect of the walk or industrial remains) where would you stage it and why (how does the environment add meaning to the performance)?

If I were to Stage performance that would most likely stage it directly where the site first touches the water as to garner the most amount of attention from those currently in the site and anyone passing by on their boats see as how the creek isn't so wide that people from the other side could see us. Given the performance would most likely have to do with how the creek is pretty polluted and how and how just a little bit of rain can cause pollution to increase by a lot, any performance we do would be related to that.

6. What message would your performance convey and who needs to hear this message?

The message that the performance would try to convey would be how just a little bit of rain is able to cause pollution in the water to go up by a significant amount and how dangerous that can be for the surrounding neighborhood. The people who would really need to hear this message would include any local residents, any local city representatives in the area, the mayor, DOB, the department of sanitation, and possibly any news stations in order to get the message spread through social media.

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?

Are there architectural design strategies that can be used to reduce the amount of pollution that

enters the creek when there's an excessive amount of rain water?

2. Question?

Are there any negative effects to any of the local residents who live near the creek and the water treatment plants located close by?

3. Question?

What would be the amount of time and money required in order to restore Newtown Creek?

FURTHER RESEARCH

Choose and **revise** one of your research questions for further research. Refine your question following from examples that we've discussed in class.

Revised Research Question:

Given the amount of toxicity in the plant life and Wildlife with in Newtown Creek is there been any noticeable negative effects on the local residents?

Find and cite 2 sources that address your question in [MLA format](#). Respond to the questions below.

CITATION 1:

Public Health Assessment . 24 Feb. 2014,
https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/investigations/newtown/docs/pha_final.pdf.

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

Since this Source was released by the New York State Department of Health which deals with any health threat to the people of new york it makes sense that they would have researched the creek. With their research, I should be able to find any health issues affecting the neighborhood surrounding the creek, the amount of contamination in the creek itself, and the number of people that have been affected by it.

Is the source credible? Why or why not?

Given the fact that this is a government website means that they aren't trying to sell me anything, they're not going to make any money off of me visiting their site, or persuade my opinion in any way. This article was written and released by the New York State Department of Health So this source should

be credible.

CITATION 2:

The Old Timer. "The Dirty Yet Important History of the Newtown Creek: Our Neighborhood, The Way It Was." *QNS.com*, Mar. 31AD, 2018, qns.com/story/2018/03/31/dirty-yet-important-history-newtown-creek-neighborhood-way/.

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

I believe that knowing the history of the creek can help in understanding how all is contamination started and by knowing this we know what is being dealt with and how it can affect it's around the area. Article that's a lot about how many factories dumped a lot of different chemicals into the creek, and knowing what type of chemical they were dumping, we can determine what effects they can. To be more specific, the impact they have on anything living in or near the creek.

Is the source credible? Why or why not?

Though this source is not a government or College runned site, the information seems to be only for informing readers of the history of the creek, making it more educational than persuasive. Since its history that's being talked about in this article, there isn't a lot of room for persuasion.

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

Additional information I need to answer my question will probably be the actual medical records of anyone who has been affected by the creek, possibly any information about someone who's tried eating fish or mussels from it and has gotten sick because of it. Anything beyond that I'll just need to look in the Department of Health documents pertaining to the Newtown Creek .