

Learning Places Fall 2017

Library / Archive REPORT

Our Visit to the New York Public Library



Ajay Pothuri

10.30.2017

INTRODUCTION

The scope of this visit was to get familiar with the New York Public Library, specifically the Map room and learn how to examine and read the various maps that are available in the library. I expect there to be more maps than the library that we visited in Brooklyn, mainly because it's a bigger library.

SITE OBSERVATIONS

(include photographic documentation and visual notes—at least 2 photographs 1 sketch required)

What is the Genius Loci, or spirit, of this place?

The Genius Loci of the library was interesting. It had a very classical look to it with the way the library was constructed, and to how it is still maintained to the day. It has a great feel to it, and makes you just want to sit down, relax, and read a book.



What kind of archive or library is this? What kinds of materials / sources does this place collect?

The NYPL, specifically the Schwarzman building contains all types of resources to be used to write a paper and also it has a lot of historical resources. It contains maps, photographs, actual documents, etc.





Who might use this collection and for what purpose?

You could use it if you wanted to learn about a specific topic from the past, or if you needed to work on a project or paper that requires research about historical events.

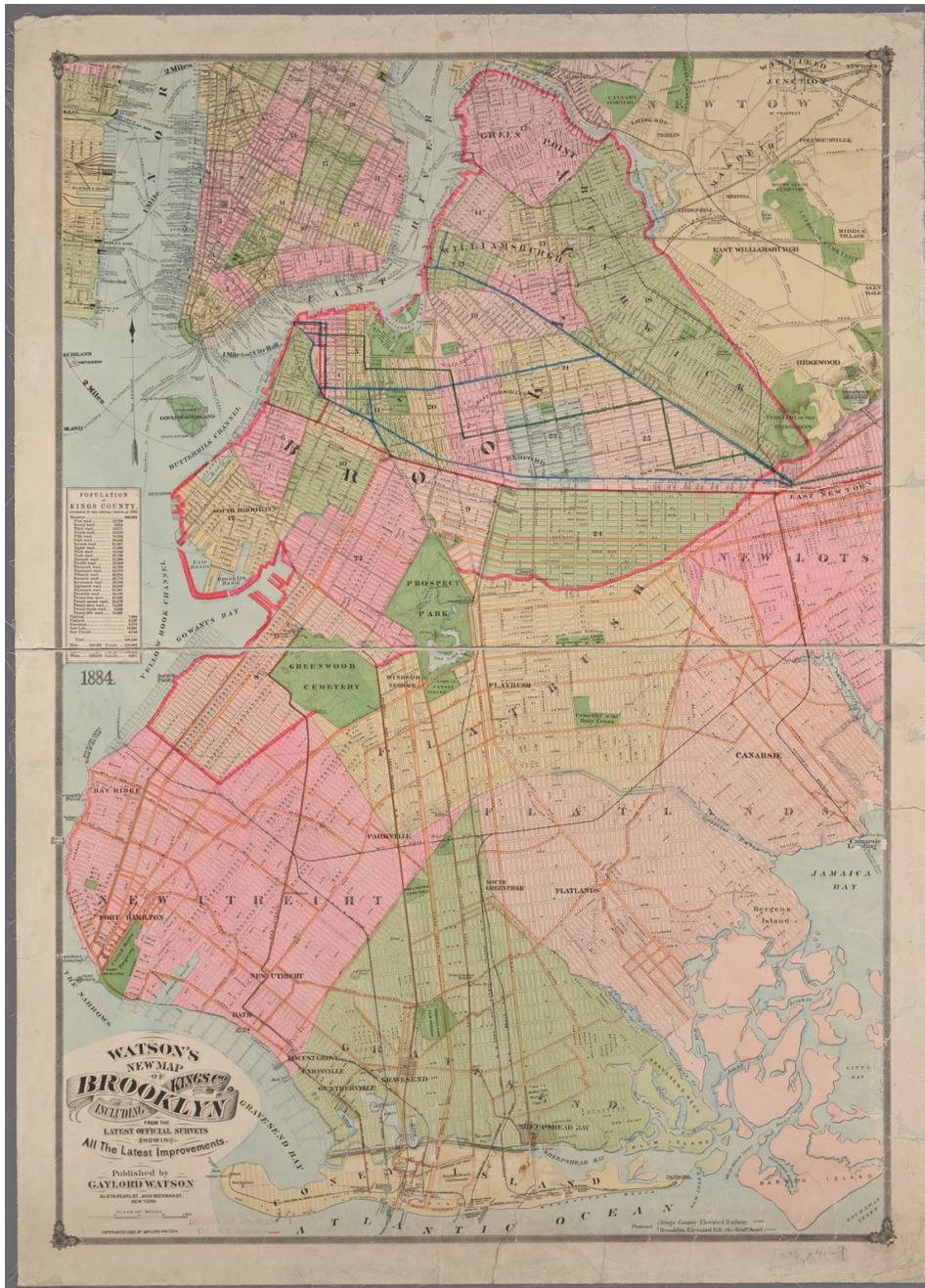
Are there any special rules for using or accessing material?

You need to be very careful handling some of the documents and maps, since they are very old and also have things attached to them (like the map of the Gowanus) that was updated each time the buildings in the area changed, and what they are made up of.

SOURCE ANALYSIS

(2 citations of sources found and a brief analysis of each source—photos optional)

CITATION for ARCHIVAL SOURCE #1 (consult this [website](#) for help with citations)



Lionel Pincus and Princess Firyal Map Division, The New York Public Library. (1884). *New Map of Brooklyn including Kings Co. from the latest official surveys*. New York Public Library, New York, NY

1. What is this source and what is its purpose?

This map is from Lionel Pincus and Princess Firyal Map Division, and it shows how many people live in each area of Brooklyn, and also shows you what race each is.

2. Who created it and who was it created for?

It was created from surveys, most likely equivalent to our current Census surveys, and it can show you the population of an area and what people live in the numbered area. It is from the year 1884.

3. What does this source tell us about the place we are studying? What themes or subtopics does it relate to?

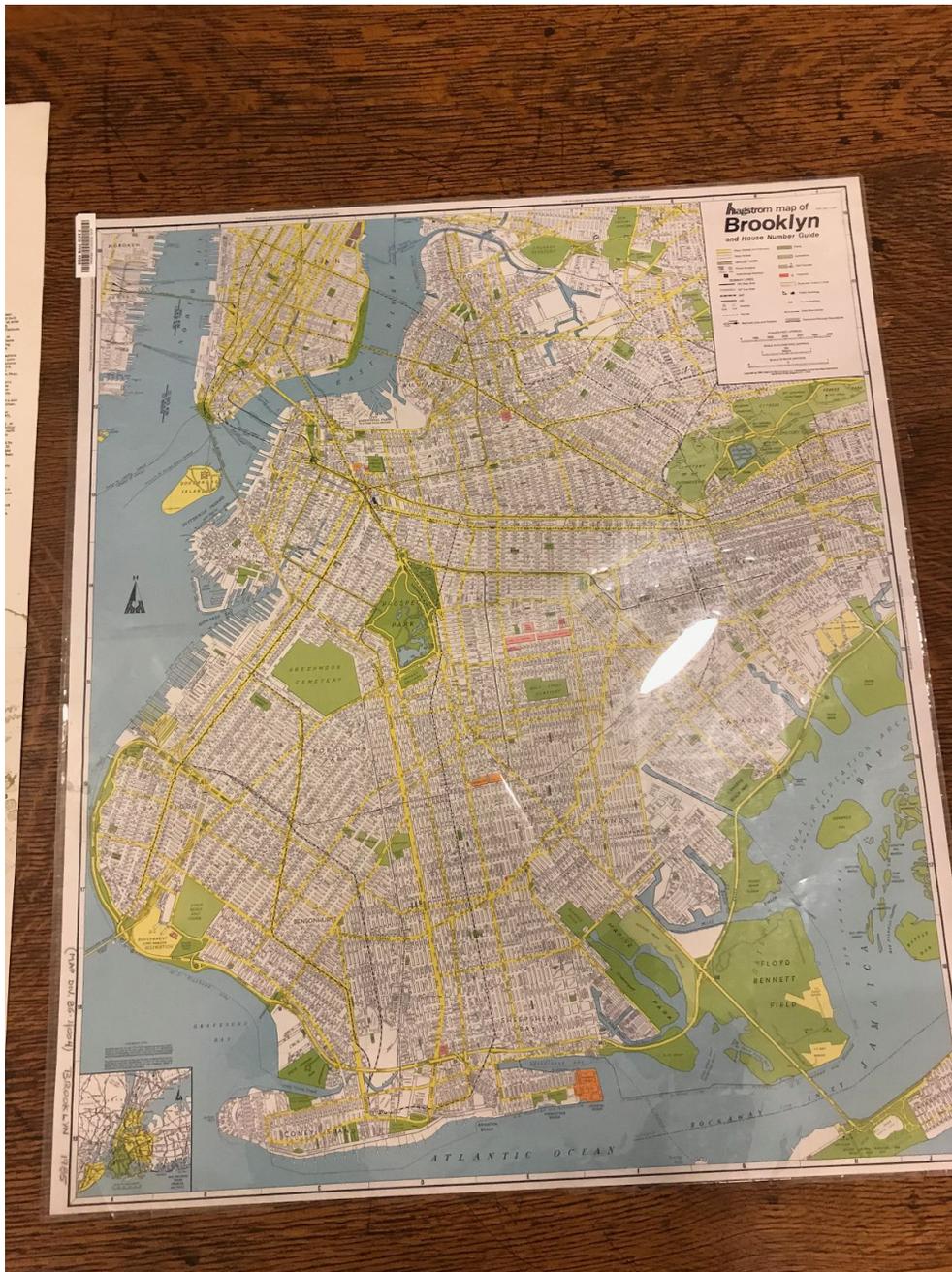
It can tell us that certain areas of Brooklyn have more to offer, such as better parks, bigger public spaces. This can be true even though the more populated areas have less options sometimes.

4. How might it be integrated into a research project? What question could it be used to help answer?

Since our topic was public spaces, we could show how certain areas of the borough of Brooklyn always had more parks and playgrounds and we could see if there is a link to race. Would race make an impact on the number of parks in a certain area?

CITATION for ARCHIVAL SOURCE #2 (consult this [website](#) for help with citations)

Hagstrom Map of Brooklyn. The New York Public Library. (2016). *Hagstrom map of Brooklyn including House Number Guides*. New York Public Library, New York, NY



1. What is this source and what is its purpose?

Hagstrom map of Brooklyn. It can be used to get directions, find a street or house number or compare to past maps to see how the area has changed.

2. Who created it and who was it created for?

Hagstrom, and it was created for house number guides and to show Brooklyn with all the street names

also.

3. What does this source tell us about the place we are studying? What themes or subtopics does it relate to?

It depicts all of Brooklyn, and also the Gowanus in the current state that it is in. It shows how much things have changed around the surrounding areas of the Gowanus.

4. How might it be integrated into a research project? What question could it be used to help answer?

We could compare it to the public places that existed in the maps before, such as the one from the early 1900's or even the 1884 one. We could compare them and see how they changed.

GENERAL NOTES:

- The businesses in the surrounding areas of the Gowanus Canal still remain mainly industrial based.
- The map of 1884 shows that there was less diversity in Brooklyn than there is now.
- There was much more green or agricultural land in 1884.
- The library itself has a very "classical" look to it, reminding me of the 1700's and 1800's. The Map room also has this feel.
- Compared to the map from 1884, Brooklyn has changed a lot and developed more toward Southern Brooklyn.

QUESTIONS for Further RESEARCH

1. Does race place an affect on the amount of public spaces in an area?
2. How much more can Brooklyn develop with space running out in most parts of the borough?

3. How has the Gowanus affected the development of the rest of Brooklyn, for good or bad?