

Learning Places Fall 2016

# Library / Archive REPORT

## The Central Library of The Brooklyn Public Library

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### INTRODUCTION

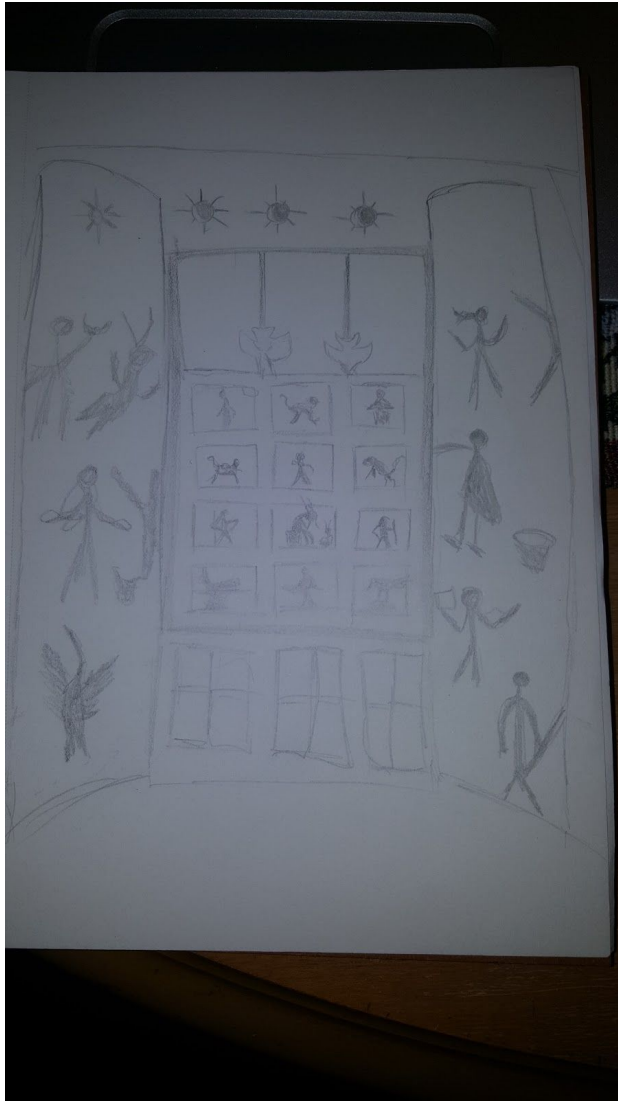
The class visited the Central Library in Brooklyn last Thursday. It was indeed a beautiful day as the sun was shining and the Library looked so grand and superior. It's located near Grand Army Plaza which is a public plaza near Prospect Park. For transportation, I took the 7 train and then transferred to the 2 train to Grand Army Plaza. The purpose of the trip was to be informed about research, specifically library research. We also learned about research questions and citations. Prior to the visit, I had never been to this specific library before. I don't travel much in Brooklyn, just to a couple of places such as for school. The library was different than I had imagined it to be. The exterior was so beautiful and monumental looking. The library's surroundings were pretty eye-catching as well. The nice weather further enhanced the aesthetics as well. The interior was really nice as well, and very clean. The reality of the library had exceeded my expectations.

### SITE OBSERVATIONS

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

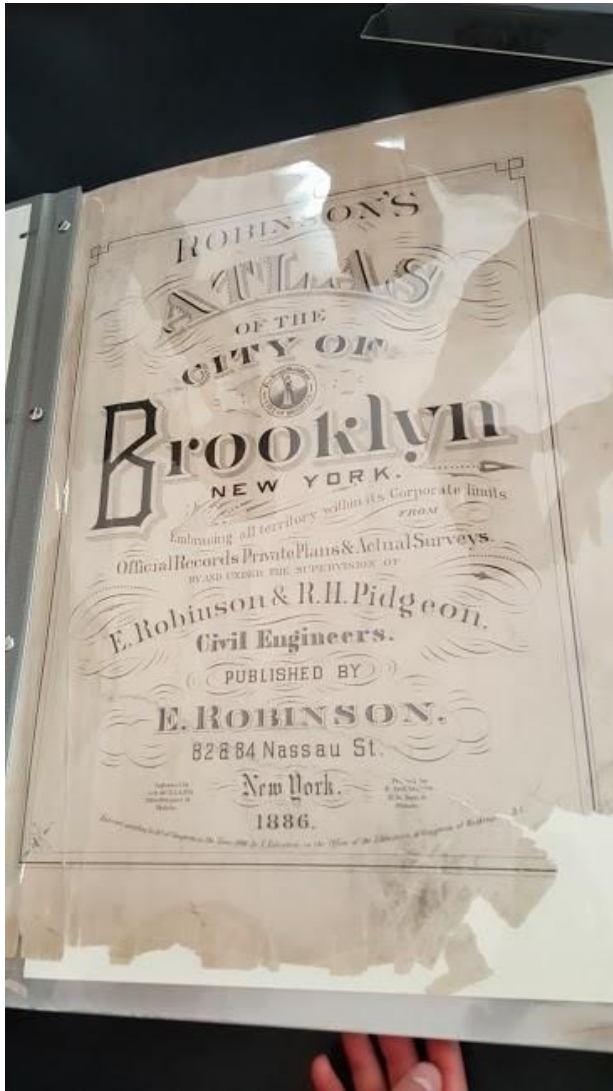
What is the Genius Loci, or spirit, of this place?

I believe the spirit of the place emits a wondrous feeling.



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

The Brooklyn Central Library is a public library. It has a collection of newspaper articles/clippings, books, pictures, photographs, fire maps, directories, atlas, manuscripts, and archived material. Most of the sources are secondary. There are a few primaries in the Collection which is very rare.



Who might use this collection and for what purpose?

Students would use these sources for further study of their topic of interest and/or for academic purposes. Historians might use the collections for research and to discover. Architects and developers might utilize some knowledge from there to work on their project, minimizing risks. Insurance companies might use the maps for when a client wants to ensure property.

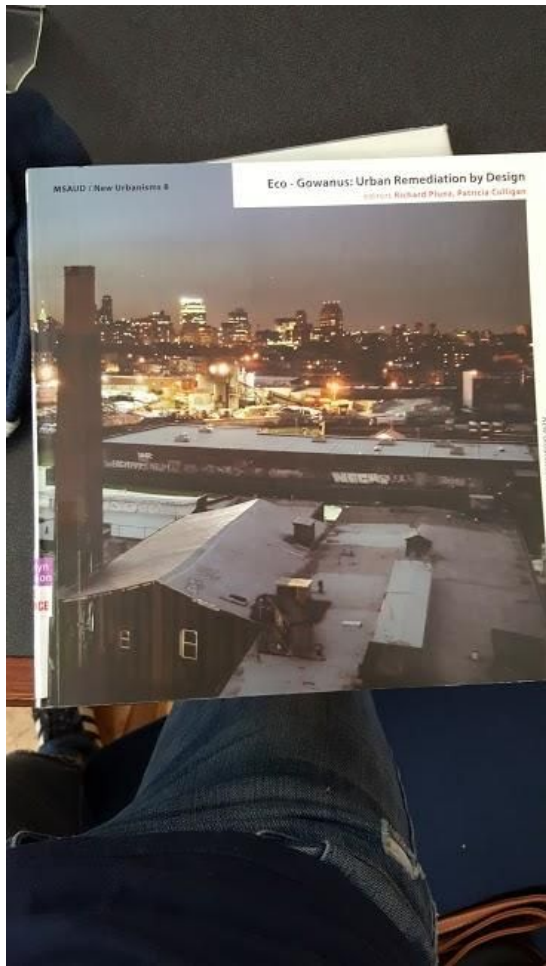


Are there any special rules for using or accessing material?

Some materials are in-library use only and can't be borrowed. The librarians recommend that the materials should be requested in advance for research purposes and the staff will help out, setting aside the materials for you.

## SOURCE ANALYSIS

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



**Plunz, R., Culligan, P. J., & Columbia University. (2007). *Eco-Gowanus: Urban remediation by design*. New York: Columbia University Urban Design Program.**

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

This source is a book. It informs people about issues dealing with watershed restoration, brownfields development, industrial recycling, and possible urban strategies with the Gowanus Canal. The authors research is compiled into this book from a span of 2 years.

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

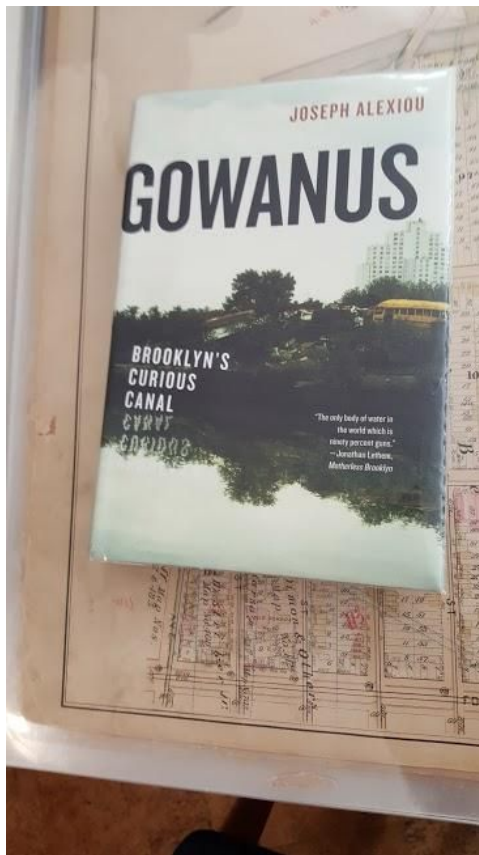
The book was created by Richard Plunz. It was created for developers & designers who are looking into Gowanus, to design and redesign spaces, for the benefit of society.

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

The source tells us that that Gowanus Canal is there is still hope in further improving the Gowanus Canal and it was a very optimistic viewpoint. The book deals with the themes of urban renewal, recycling, natural vegetation, and cleanup of contaminants.

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

The book might help explain some of the author's ideas and also use the abundance of images that comes with it. It can be used to answer how will the Canal be improved and in what ways.



**Alexiou, J. (2015). *Gowanus: Brooklyn's curious canal*.**

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

This source is a book. It's purpose is to inform people about the history of the Gowanus Canal and how it influences the present state. He also discusses how the city has long lost forgotten it's significance and

needs to remember.

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

This book is aimed towards the general public to become informed of the conditions in and around the Gowanus Canal and in hopes to influence them to be involved in its development.

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

The source tells us that the Gowanus has come a long way in history and hopefully we can prevent any further damage to the area. It relates to the topics of gentrification, preservation, urban infrastructure, urban decay and urban renewal.

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

This book can be utilized as a source of how history of society played a major role leading to the status of the Gowanus Canal currently. This can be used to answer how can the gentrification be utilized to help the lower income families.

## GENERAL NOTES:

- Before the Brooklyn Collection, it used to be called the Browsing Section.
- The long black cabinets hold entire maps of Brooklyn from the 1600s.
- The Brooklyn Public Library was established in 1896.
- It is the fifth largest public library in the U.S.
- An appointment is required in order to have access to the primary resources such as rare photographs and manuscripts.

## QUESTIONS for Further RESEARCH

1. What would be needed to fully decontaminate the surroundings and inside the Gowanus Canal?
2. What can the residents do to prevent gentrification from kicking them out of their neighborhoods?
3. How do we get people with power and money to invest in the development of the area?