

Learning Places Fall 2016

Library / Archive REPORT

name of site report

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INTRODUCTION

Going to the Lionel Pincus and Princess Firyal Map Division in The New York Public Library, I was not quite certain what to expect. I had expected a remarkably large storage room filled with maps and notes; while I didn't get that, the place was majestic in a different sense.

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?

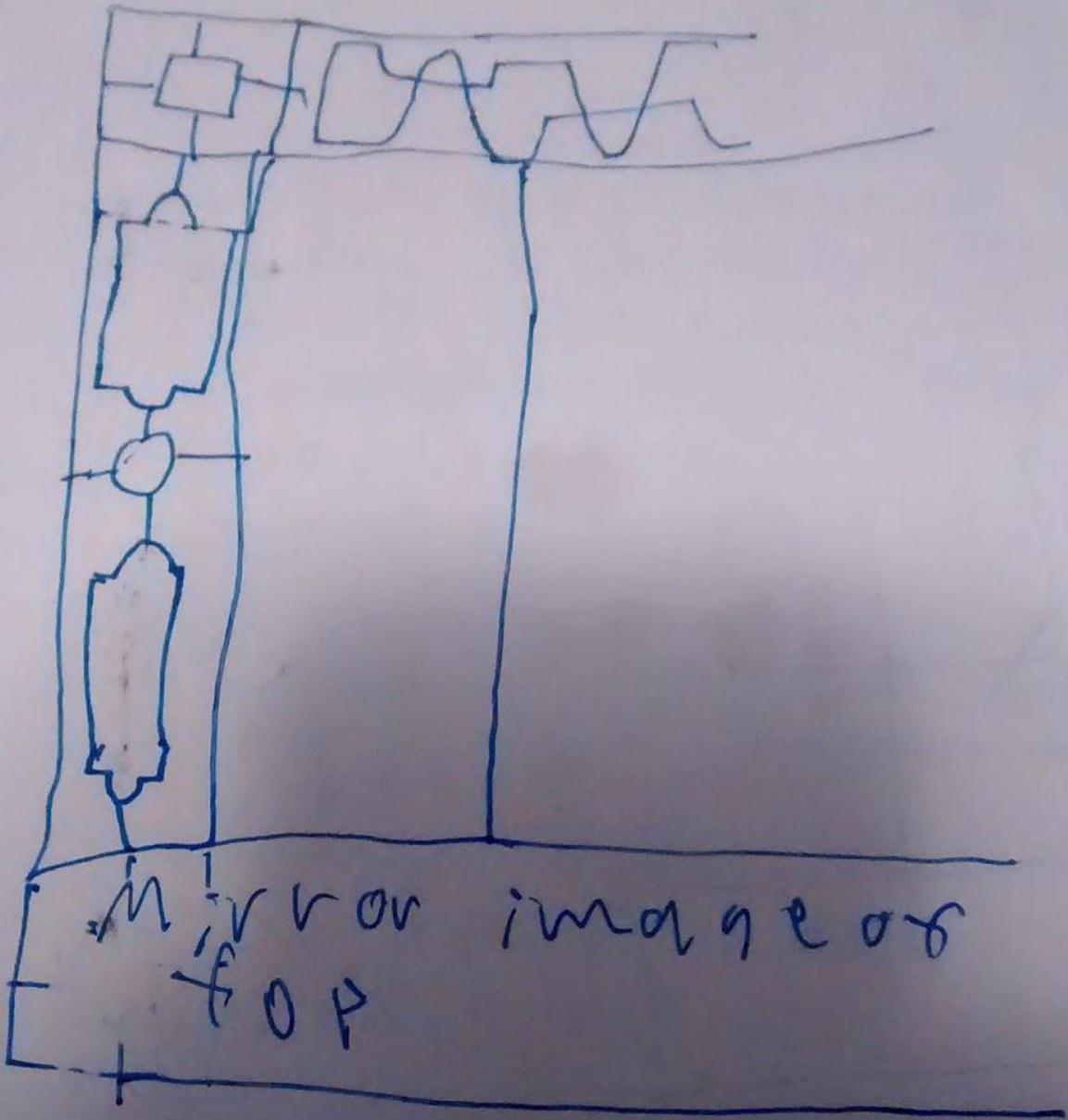
The Genius Loci of the New York Public Library as a whole definitely seems to be much more in the spirit of keeping the old spirit in place instead of focusing in the new. While it is possible to see exhibits with some modern touches to them, they feel eclipsed in importance to the surrounding architecture. The entire outside is made of stone and marble with little visible glass, so gives the impression of a greek building.



The interior's most notable feature was definitely the ceiling. With the grand designs made out of gold, they are both hard to ignore and very impressive. The one for the Map Division Room itself was impressive.



Even the reading room undergoing renovations had an interesting design to it, with a complex pattern that The overall air was an magnificent and influential place. There was almost nothing that did not give an air of elegance or classical architecture that failed to impress on an aesthetic level.



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

Lionel Pincus and Princess Firyal Map Division is a format archive, which means that it specializes in collecting a type of material of study instead of focusing on a subject. This archive specializes in maps of any sort.

Who might use this collection and for what purpose?

Maps are useful to see any changes that occur over time. They can also serve as a “snapshot” of a particular moment in time. As such, anyone looking to find what has changed about the area, or how an area used to be.

Are there any special rules for using or accessing material?

Many of the materials are now too old and fragile to be regularly handled. As such, handling many of the older materials is discouraged. Changing the page of these materials also requires the use of a supervisor. While there isn't exactly a restriction on reviving materials, it is recommended to request them in advance so there is less time spent waiting on searching for them.

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. (1916). Board of Estimate and Apportionment Use District Map.

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

The source is one of the earliest districting maps of the Gowanus Area. It is an attempt to show what streets are available for what use.

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

The archive was created by Board of Estimate and Apportionment, for future city planning.

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

This is one of the first attempts at zoning that New York City has performed. As a result, it is useful to see how zoning might have affected the city.

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

If we can find out more about the zoning, we can compare how the area has developed in response to the zoning.

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

Lionel Pincus and Princess Firyal Map Division, The New York Public Library. (1969). Map Div. 80-680. New York City Planning Commission 3: Brooklyn 1969.

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

This source is an overview of the Gowanus area, after Jane Jacob's attempts to humanize city development by focusing on citizens on the ground. It is a catalogue of what is in Gowanus, with an emphasis on human utilities, such as subways, schools, emergency services, and so on.

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

It was created by the New York City Planning Commission, and was created for future reference to the city's use, mostly its builders and planners. It was made to show what notable services existed at the time, and what could be created forward.

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

This source tells us that the Gowanus, at least at this point in time, held a surprising amount of residential areas inside it. This gives an idea about how the development of the Gentrification that has occurred due to the recent developments.

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

This gives statistics about things that have given in. We can use these statistics to compare how many schools, for example, have been removed or added compared to today, and see if how the land that has used really been changed.

GENERAL NOTES:

- According to the Board of Estimate Map, the majority of the roads surrounding the Gowanus area is listed as “Unrestricted District.”
- This suggests either they did not care about the area, were still considering its use, or did not see a problem with leaving the Gowanus area to itself.
- The New York City’s Planning map division showed that there were a large number of schools within the Gowanus Area, with no less than 4 schools within 3 or so blocks of the canal.
- This map also showed remarkably little in the way of Parks, both existing and planned, near the canal.
- At this point in time, the Carroll St. Bridge was considered for reconstruction.

QUESTIONS for Further RESEARCH

1. Were “unrestricted districts” have any restrictions whatsoever?
2. How has the schools fared since they were put on the map?
3. How has the Carroll St. Bridge’s reconstruction impact the community?