

Learning Places Fall 2017

SITE REPORT #1

Understanding the City: The Gowanus Canal



Right along our walk there was a dock

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INTRODUCTION AND PRE-VISIT REFLECTIONS

This was the first time that the class and I took a trip to see the Gowanus Canal. From what I've been told and also from just skimming through the internet I've read about the pollution and certain plans for it to be cleaned. I've never been to that part of Brooklyn before, so I had an extremely hard time finding the area. So unfortunately, I was late but I ended up meeting with the class on Bond Street and being there for the rest of the tour. I didn't know what to expect being that it was my first time visiting the area but I was very open minded as both professors informed us that we should wear comfortable shoes and bring our cameras to take pictures of all the things we would see.

SITE DOCUMENTATION:

- (1) PHOTOS AND SKETCHES: Provide a minimum of 4 photos and 2 sketches of places, elements, processes, people or anything else that you found significant and meaningful during the walk. Focus on scenes that relate to ecology, the environment and public spaces. Feel free to include IN ADDITION other “findings” that you found intriguing. For each photo provide captions and explanations – why is the image shown significant for your exploration.



These are pictures of residents' homes the buildings look older.



Painting that was seen along Bond Street, it looked pretty cool and showed that many artists of the Gowanus had the freedom to draw what they wanted.



"NO MORE POLLUTION PLEASE"

Being that pollution is a major problem in the area it shows that many people are aware of the problem and that it needs to stop.



Right behind Whole Foods where we ended our walk and this painting stood out to me as it was so bright and was right near the water.

ANALYSIS:

After exploring the Canal with my classmates I was able to learn a lot about the Canal and this part of Brooklyn that I didn't even know existed. My very first impression of the area was that it was a very cool space for artists and that they also had the freedom to draw whatever they wanted. Another major thing that I noticed about the Canal was that it was extremely dirty. Although it obviously hasn't been kept up and cared for it has a lot of potential to become very popular. The residents who currently live in the Gowanus don't live directly close to it but instead one to two blocks away from it, most things around the canal are just industrial businesses. I believe the Genius Loci of the Gowanus area was change which represented gentrification and also the past which would represent the canal also the soon to be past since many things are being done to work on the area. Some places were poorly kept while others were more taken care of. One thing that was unavoidable around the area was the smell and how strong the odor was. The smell eventually began to subside as we got closer to the end of our tour around Whole Foods.

KEYWORDS/ VOCABULARY (these must be words you learned on this walk such as specialized vocabulary, city agencies, names of businesses or significant people – they must be specific to the topic of the walk) *5 keywords required per site visit

1. Gentrification
2. Superfund
3. Gowanus Canal
4. Pottery
5. Zoning

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; do not include questions you can answer with a quick google search)

1. Why wasn't anything done to clean the Gowanus sooner?
2. What will be the difference between the Old Gowanus and the newly built Gowanus?
3. Are the residents involved in the cleanup of the Gowanus?