

Learning Places Fall 2016

# Library / Archive REPORT

name of site report

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## INTRODUCTION

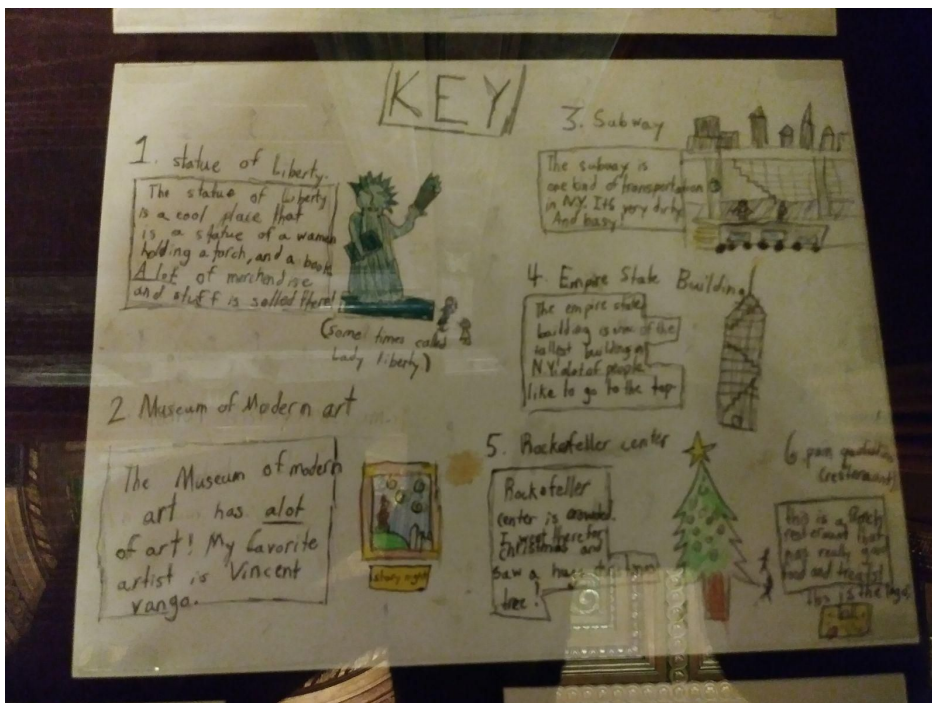
In this occasion, we will be visiting The Stephen A. Schwarzman located by 5th avenue between 40th and 41st street. The main goal of this visit is getting more insight in the area around the Gowanus canal. Something that I personally look forward is to be able to see a map of a document that can show me, the changes that Gowanus had gone through since the old times. This library has a very rich collection of history through the years and I will be able to get a good insight in the physical changes that there were before and how have they changed now at days. In fact, by looking at the old Gowanus physical aspects, knowing the present and also have an idea of the proposed future gives, not only me but, every one to formulate a solution for such problems the Gowanus is facing now at days. Furthermore, this insight can also open the mind to the future developers in the way that, they might not only concentrate on the profit their pocket will be getting but more in the place itself and how to make it better.

## SITE OBSERVATIONS

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



The library map collection. In this room the people that can be seen in the picture are either reading from the map collection, doing research or updating maps such as the lady in the far right.



Map of the new york attraction to visitors and tourists.

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

This place gives you the sense that you are in a place full of the most valuable information that you can find about a topic. The most intriguing place I found was the map room, Such variety of old and new maps are very valuable. Something I thought when I walked into the room and looked at the maps, is that maps are way more important than just written, you can create history through maps and really perceive the physical characteristic of that certain place as it is instead of having to create an idea in your mind.

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

This library has a huge variety of collection but, the most they have is their map collection. They have dedicated people updating those maps with the most current and valuable information.

Who might use this collection and for what purpose?

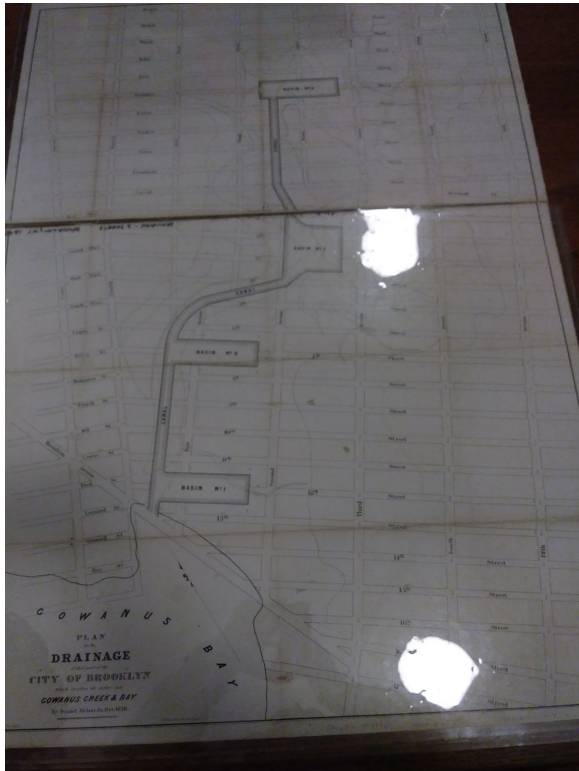
Since this library has a huge variety of archives from a wide range of subjects and topics that almost anyone wanting to do a research New York History can use their archives. They even have original manuscripts and books that only one copy might exist around the globe.

Are there any special rules for using or accessing material?

There are different ways to access the collection of this library. If anyone wants to such collections as the RARE BOOK DIVISION, ARENTS COLLECTION, MANUSCRIPT, AND ARCHIVE COLLECTION, that submit an application access through the website or in person. In the other hand for any other collection such as the PHOTOGRAPHY collection, they must submit an access application at the collection room.

## SOURCE ANALYSIS

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



**Lionel Pincus and Princess Firyal Map Division, The Stephen A. Schwarzman Building, New York Public Library. (1818). Plan for the drainage of that part of the city of Brooklyn which empties its water into Gowanus Creek & Bay.**

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

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

This map shows the different basins along the Gowanus canal. The main purpose of this map is to show where the largest concentration of toxic waste is. Since a basin is a bowl shape surface, the most concentration and layer of waste could be found in there. Although the city was not really at its industrial boom the canal is already polluted.

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

This map was created by Daniel Richards to show the heaviest condenses parts along the canal where the most waste existed.

2. What does this source tell us about the place we are studying? What themes or subtopics does

it relate to?

As we all know as time passes things changes, in this case, the canal. In the past there were some places in the canal where there was a bigger concentration of waste while know it's not the same, in general, we can say that we have almost the same concentration along the whole canal since it has been such amount that those basins might not even theoretically exist.

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

Anyone who might be interested in the changes of the canal over time and the pollution might find this map very helpful because it's not only giving you the most heavily polluted areas, it's giving you an approximation of how big is the layer of pollution found in there by knowing the approximate size of one of the basins.

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



**Lionel Pincus and Princess Firyal Map Division, The Stephen A. Schwarzman Building, New York**

## **Public Library. (1776). Plan for The City Of New York In NORTH AMERICA.**

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

This map dates back to the Dutch settlements America. It basically shows the old New York which was actually named by the Dutch. It can be perceived that there is no man-made nature manipulation, every single thing is as it originally is including the important stream of water where oysters were grown.

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

The map was created by many different people( Ratzer, Bernard (Cartographer) Faden, William (1750?-1836) (Publisher), Kitchin, Thomas (d. 1784) (Engraver), Jefferys and Faden, London (Publisher). This map was mostly created for everyone wanting to take a look at very early New York when the Dutch settled in such land.

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

Here we can clearly see the canal as a natural stream of water which then became one of the most important man made canal by the mid 19th century. If we were to look at maps from the present and this specific map, they are two very different things and even hard to recognize that that is the surrounding parts of the Gowanus canal, which the industrial era environmentally destroyed.

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

Here we can see that the Gowanus Canal was not always a canal instead it was a natural stream of water. This map answered a wide range of questions: Questions can go from how did the humans managed to build the canal all the way to very complex questions in regard to the few first historical event in the Gowanus

## GENERAL NOTES:

- Books need to be reserved prior to use and some must be reserved prior to visit.
- Transition from the past to the present just by looking at the maps.
- One of the richest library in term of collection in New York
- Library documents display on the hallways.
- List general information you learned about the place or themes we are studying

## QUESTIONS for Further RESEARCH

1. Do we really know the future of the Gowanus? There has been so many ideas and things changing that there is an uncertainty among everyone involved in the gowanus from cleaning the canal to making it a residential place.
2. In the past the Gowanus was nothing more but a place full of landscape with few residents. In the revolutionary era it was environmentally destroyed, if we are ever able to bring that environment stability back, how can we prevent it from not going back to this very polluted and smelly place?
3. Gowanus residents are used to living around and deal with anything that happened to occur such as flood, the smell from the water. One the canal and all other social and environmental problems get fixed, will they still have the same love for their neighborhood?