Learning Places Summer 2019

SITE REPORT #2

name of site report

NAMING PROTOCOL. When saving and posting your site reports on OpenLab, please follow the following format: SiteReport#.LastnameFirstname. Here's an example: SiteReport2.SwiftChristopher

This is a picture of newtown creek water front

Select a meaningful image that captures your perception of the site we visited and provide a caption explaining what the image is.

STUDENT NAME: Genesis Aguirre

SITE OBSERVATIONS

Insert 3 photographs and provide a *creative* title for each image. The title should be a word or short phrase that suggests *a theme or conceptual association* related to the photo.

General instructions:

Glacial Erratic

Cool map of water conection of Newtown Creek   **7 stoons with names of Native Indians**

a. Do not try to anticipate an answer the instructors "are looking for". We want you to write truthfully about your own observations.

b. Be sure to draw meaningful connections between what you observed and the purpose of the performative intervention. In other words, how does the performative intervention respond to, or integrate directly with, the specific material conditions of the site.

c. Finally, your research question should respond directly and specifically to your site observations.

1. Historically, what are some of the important developments that have created the current landscape of the Newtown Creek area. Refer not only to the reading and Prof. Spellane's lecture, but also what you learned on the Newtown Creek Alliance tour (hint… estuaries, for instance)?

Newtown Creek is an estuary that unites Brooklyn and Queens. Which has a major industrial water way. This waterway has many years of historic industrial pollution, raw sewage and oil spills. Some of the new developments that create the current landscape of newtown creek is the new pavement steps that lead into the entrance of the water. There are also blueprints on the table of a plan for a future reconstruction of Newtown Creek that they want to implement. There is also a new administration building right in the middle that has a microbiology lab. The development of the estuary is also an important factor of the creek it is part of the Hudson Creek and is connected to other small branches like Dutch Kills, Maspeth Creek, Whale Creek, the East Branch, and English Kills. However, it wasn't always like this. Before the creek water would flow between wooden elevations and along lowlands until it eventually intertwined with the salty water of the East River. When the two waters meet they would overflow the tide. The tour guide gave us a nice demonstration with the marble table map and the way she poured water on it that shows how the water over flo connects to the other branches of creeks and the East Husdon.

2. Discuss the historical remiants that you observed in the current landscape.

Some of the historical remnants that I observed in the newtown creek is the name of the indigouns people that were native to that land like the Mespaethes, which means great brook with tides. There were seven round stones with the names of indigiuonus people. Some of the things I noticed was that even though the creek is highly toxic the efforts that they have made to restore Newtown creek is showing. In the way vet no you can see blue crab and fish in the water. In fact, when we were there we saw how a bird or pelican came and snatched a crab while we were on the steps. there was also a guide close to the steps where it listed the plants and sea life that they currently have and has had since before; like evergreen trees, deciduous trees, lobster, catfish and so on. Also, by the entrance there is a glacial erratic, that was transported by the Laurentide Ice Sheet 17,000 years ago from the Adirondack to Greenpoint, Brooklyn. It was discovered during the installation of a new waterline under McGuiness Blvd.

3. In what ways is the natural environment contained or shaped by the architecture of the Newtown Creek Nature Walk designed by George Trakas? In what ways is the natural world repossessing spaces that have been over-polluted or industrialized?

The natural environment in Newtown Creek is shaped in the way that it harmonises with the new landscape, meaning that it feels more like people intentionally placed certain plants or trees in areas where it serves a better purpose or just for simple aesthetics of the design. For example, the tree that was in the middle of the seven stones or the small rectangular plants place at the edge of the wall of the creeks water front. Another way the natural environment intertwined with the architecture in Newtown Creek is how George Trakas designed the steps going into the water. Almost like he's inviting you into

nature itself. In addition the way he incorporated the seven stones also seems like he's paying respect or sharing awareness to the land that once belonged to the Mespaethes native indians.

4. Discuss one instance of architectural semiotics. **Choose *only one* building or built structure.** If the building or designed structure could talk, what would it say?

The building that I notice at Newtown Creek was the building that was in the middle right behind the steps that go into the water, where the microbiology lab is. If the building could talk in would probably say that even though we choose this space to settle in, we are going to take care of you (Newtown Creek). The reason why is because since inside they have a microbiology lab they might be concerned or aware of the harm humans have done to this creek and are civilized enough to not hurt it but to help maintain it in any way that they can.

5. If you were to stage a performative intervention in a *specific* site (i.e., a single structural aspect of the walk or industrial remains) where would you stage it and what message would your performance convey?

If I was to stage a performance at the Newtown Creek it would be to stand there with posters saying something like help stop pollution to help restore these greeks. I could probably dress up like a sad or dead fish implying that fishing from this place is not accessible to fish from because humans have made it highly toxic due to there poor actions. There for help save these creeks by helping to stop pollution so that fishing here can become accessible in the future.

FURTHER RESEARCH

Research Question *(should follow directly from your above observations, and be complex, specific, and researchable)*:

What effects did the bad smell of Newtown Creek have on its local residents back then and today?

Find an article from a journal, website, or newspaper that you believe will help you answer your question

MLA Citation for source:

"Figure 2f from: Irimia R, Gottschling M (2016) Taxonomic Revision of Rochefortia Sw. (Ehretiaceae, Boraginales). Biodiversity Data Journal 4: e7720. Https://Doi.org/10.3897/BDJ.4.e7720." doi:10.3897/bdj.4.e7720.figure2f.

How many sources did you look at before selecting this one? Why did you select this source? How does it address all or part of your research question? Be specific.

I looked at two other sources after selecting this one. I selected this one because the title seemed more related to what I was looking for. This article answers some of my questions in terms of how bad the smell was in Newtown Creek back then. It stated how Dr. Lederlee a chemist that investigated the bad smell at night and analyzed that the smell was an offensive of bones emanating from the acme fertilizing works, covered with black mud; in which gave bad orders as well as sewers on the Brooklyn side of grand avenue.

Is this source credible? How can you tell (what criteria did you base your evaluation on)?

This source is credible because I got it from the school library database which lead me to ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times, being that it's a historical newspaper with the date author and publisher makes it a credible source. The criteria that I based my data on was emphasizing the bad Smell in Newtown Creek in my search.

What other sources or further information would you need to answer your question? Where would you look for them?

I think what I search was good enough to answer my question, I don't feel like I needed something else in my search