“Historians Who Walk”: Historical Thinking and Urban Landscapes in New York City and Philadelphia

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THIS ARTICLE AIMS to assess how historical thinking, as defined in the research literature and practiced in schools, can be accessed by analyzing physical spaces. Since the 1990s, “historical thinking” has typically been associated with doing the work that historians do, meaning analyzing documents, weighing evidence, and making arguments.[1] More recently, these inquiry-based approaches to learning history have been extended to physical spaces such as museums and historic sites. As Christine Baron noted, “acting and thinking like a historian requires considering historical sources beyond traditional text.”[2] This study proposes expanding the concept of historical thinking further by using urban landscapes as sites of inquiry. To explore this idea, five historians and ten beginning college students took part in “historical walks” around neighborhoods in New York City and Philadelphia, using their observations to draw conclusions and interpret the histories of the places they visited. In this undertaking, these individuals emulated the now largely forgotten figure of the “walking historian,” who collected evidence not in archives, but in three-dimensional spaces.

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Review of Literature

Historical Thinking at Historic Museums and Historic Sites

While early research on historical cognition mainly employed documents and written sources as the basis for inquiry, more recent literature uses museums, historic sites, and three- dimensional spaces for such analyses. Christine Baron and Christina Dobbs, for example, noted the necessity of expanding the idea of historical text to include "historical places and material culture" and argued that such an approach helps develop literacy skills, disciplinary understanding, empathy, and knowledge of people and groups that might not produce written evidence.[3] Kristy Brugar further argued that "learning via cultural institutions of a metropolitan area" and "engaging students with their community" can help promote civic education and make students more informed and empowered citizens.[4]

Baron explored these ideas in several empirical studies. In one case, a methodology was employed modeled on historical thinking research related to how historians analyze and make sense of evidence.[5] This research suggests that historical knowledge is reflected in a unique set of cognitive attributes that transcend a specific understanding of content.[6] Baron's study used a protocol that assessed how historians worked to find "meaning"[7] as they investigated a prominent historical site (the Old North Church in Boston) and introduced five cognitive "heuristics" suitable for analyzing historically significant spaces such as museums and buildings. These included "origination" (evaluating the factors that led to a building's construction) and "stratification" (considering the uses of a building across different periods of its existence). Baron subsequently used these heuristics to assess how fifteen working teachers interpreted two historic sites in Boston.[8] Baron concluded that while this process did not come intuitively, proper training made the teachers more proficient at analyzing a historic building and improved their ability to design curricular approaches related to these places.

Numerous studies have assessed the role of museums and historic sites in enhancing students' learning, values, and attitudes.[9] Research pertinent to the design employed here focus specifically on historical thinking and how students interpret evidence and generate

conclusions at museums and historic sites. Irene Kriekouki-Nakou, for example, used a sample of 141 secondary school students to study how these individuals employed historical thinking approaches as they completed learning tasks related to visits to museums in Greece.[10] Using a coding protocol that defined historical thinking through various levels of sophistication, ranging from "describer thinking" to "explainer thinking," the author concluded that a significant majority of the sample (82%) displayed evidence of historical thinking in their interpretations of the artifacts and exhibits they encountered at the museums they visited. This study also noted that these museum visits promoted students' ability to think historically and that "historical thinking appeared as going beyond the limits set by their traditional history education."[11]

In a similarly framed study, Megan Martinko and Jessica Luke videotaped twenty-nine students (aged 10 to 12) as they explored interactive exhibits at three museums.[12] Their responses were coded using a template of six historical thinking skills defined by Peter Seixas, such as the ability to use historical evidence to generate conclusions, place events in a historical perspective, and identify instances of continuity and change.[13] The authors found that all the participants displayed evidence of historical thinking, especially evidence use and perspective-taking. They also concluded that working in a museum space and learning with physical objects developed historical thinking skills in a way that a traditional classroom setting would not, suggesting the importance of these materials in developing "higher cognitive processes."[14] Cynthia Wallace-Casey employed a comparable design using twenty-five seventh-grade students as they participated in workshops and then completed various projects (including mapping and photograph analysis) at a community history museum in Canada.[15] Here, the author concluded that student participants' ability to think historically was enhanced by their museum experience in that they learned to question dominant narratives and think critically about official knowledge. Based on observations of students' work at this museum, Wallace-Casey noted that they "challenged the authority of the museum and came to recognize complexity in interpreting the past."[16] Collectively, these studies suggest that museums and physical spaces can enhance student learning and stimulate the ability to utilize historical thinking skills in ways that would not be possible in a traditional classroom setting.

Another subset of research that influenced the design used utilizes mapping projects to engage students with their local communities. One such project used students' exploration of the neighborhood surrounding their high school in Toledo, Ohio.[17] Eight students participated in GIS training and created personalized maps of this area. The students were divided into groups, with each group focusing on a topic of relevance to the study of an urban neighborhood (such as housing). The researchers found that this project made the students more connected to this community and more aware of issues that impacted its residents. The authors concluded that the mapping project undertaken by the students made them "engaged as active rather than passive citizens" and that they "were able to use their voices to communicate possibilities for addressing injustices in their community."[18] A similar project called on college-age students to use GIS software to create "story maps" based on observations collected while walking through several communities in Michigan. These story maps allowed participants to catalog how these communities changed over time and trace how industry impacted the environment and transformed living patterns across the region. The authors concluded that this exercise allowed students to "engage with the history of their own communities in ways relevant to their lives."[19] Li-Ching Ho and Tricia Seow suggested a template for how mapping can be used to analyze Chinatown neighborhoods found in cities around the world. Here, the authors provided a methodology that allowed students to analyze and observe a Chinatown neighborhood and create a "transect map" that identifies the structures, businesses, and other institutions typically found in these spaces. This mapping process will, in turn, generate conclusions about "migration patterns" and "social and spatial interactions within ethnic enclaves."[20] Finally, Chris Perkins and Kate McLean introduced the idea of "smell walking" and argued that walking projects typically favor visual cues at the expense of other senses. To address this, they provided a methodology for creating a "smellscape" and mapping a neighborhood based on the smells encountered on an urban walk. The authors concluded that (as opposed to sight) smell "speaks directly to a more embodied approach to mundane experience" that focuses on the "intangible and ephemeral instead of the material and fixed."[21] The authors also made the compelling point that walking through a generic, banal, and gentrified area of a modern city will provide a completely different

olfactory experience compared to walking through working-class and poor areas, where the smells would be "richly offensive and diverse."[22] A "smellscape" can, in turn, help generate conclusions and interpretations about the nature of life in cities.

Walking and Historical Analysis

Also relevant to the design employed here is research that addresses the role of walking as a means of social, cultural, and historical analysis, particularly in urban spaces.[23] One important archetype in this regard is the figure of the "*flaneur*." This term refers to an urban explorer who aimlessly wandered cities in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, observing and trying to make sense of what he surveyed. Gregory Shaya defined the *flaneur* as "an amateur detective and investigator of the city," and Dana Brand described the *flaneur* as a "fantastically gifted urban interpreter."[24] Although often stereotyped as a listless, garishly dressed loafer, many *flaneurs* were prolific writers who published articles, travelogues, and memoirs about their experiences exploring cities. Charles Dickens, for example, began his career as a *flaneur*, writing a weekly newspaper column about his walks through London.[25] Such stories had considerable appeal to rural and small-town populations curious and sometimes anxious about the expanding urban communities of the nineteenth century. The *flaneur*, therefore, served an important historical and philosophical function by trying to find meaning and order in the seemingly chaotic and unknowable character of urban life. Priscilla Ferguson, for example, described the *flaneur* as an individual "propelled by curiosity to investigate the city whose continual metamorphoses challenged the very possibility of knowledge."[26]

A figure similar to the *flaneur* is that of the "walking historian." Although historical inquiry is normally associated with archival work, there is a long tradition in the discipline of individuals who used walking to collect data and evidence. Walking historians were often amateur researchers whose objective was to tell and preserve the stories of towns and communities undergoing rapid change due to industrialization and urbanization. These local historians typically collected evidence through walking and visual observation.[27] This type of historical inquiry had the advantage of being more democratic and inclusive. One did not have to travel to a distant

archive or exhibit mastery of foreign languages to access source material; it was only necessary to walk and observe, using what Les Back called "the hidden archive of the streets" to collect data.[28] Archival evidence also often privileges the histories of elites and those in power, and Samuel Burgum observed that archives possess a "discriminatory gaze" and are "riddled with silences, exclusions and biases."[29] Walking thus offers an opportunity to learn about the history and culture of working-class communities. Jo Guldi noted that walking historians "inaugurated a hunt for alternative sources that would reveal the experience of the illiterate masses by disclosing sources of material and visual culture found in the everyday environment."[30] Exemplifying this idea is the work of the British lawyer Henry Randall, a prominent local historian who argued that "the true history of England [can] be gained in one way and one way only, by tramping the country on foot."[31] Recent examples of works by walking historians include those by William Leuchtenburg and William Helmreich, who used walks around working-class neighborhoods in New York City to assess cultural and ethnographic changes in these communities.[32] More ambitiously, Terry Cudbird walked the entire circumference of France to analyze the pronounced regional and cultural differences present in what is a relatively small country.[33] A discussion especially relevant to the methodology outlined below is provided by the architect Michael Sorkin, who used the twenty-minute walk from his apartment in Manhattan's Greenwich Village neighborhood to his office in Tribeca to illustrate themes and ideas related to urban history and urban life suggested by the commonplace things he encountered every day.[34]

Last, the concept of landscape analysis and the role that walking plays in such analyses also shaped the design employed here. Note that the definition of "landscape" is derived from that used by cultural geographers. Peirce Lewis described a landscape as "everything we see when we go outdoors," and Paul Groth defined landscape as "all human intervention with nature."[35] D. W. Meinig also noted a connection between landscape analysis and historical inquiry, arguing that this practice allows "the historian [to become] a skilled detective reconstructing from all sorts of bits and pieces the patterns of the past."[36] James Epstein similarly stated that "the trajectories of space and place are themselves storied narratives of lived activity and practice," and Charles Withers observed that physical spaces are "the

result of historically-contingent processes and social practices."[37] As such, landscapes can be read as historical evidence, and there is a long tradition in geography studies of using landscape analysis as a way to understand the values and culture of people who have lived (and live) in cities.[38] As Dolores Hayden observed, "social history is embedded in urban landscapes," and "streets, buildings, and patterns of settlement frame the lives of many people and often outlast many lifetimes."[39]

In summary, the essential ideas addressed in this literature review are as follows. First is research that discusses the cognitive processes historians use and how they make sense of and draw conclusions from different types of evidence, whether written or three-dimensional. Second are studies that assess how museums and historical sites serve as settings that can promote historical thinking in students of various age groups. Third is research that addresses how walking and mapping can be used to interpret and understand physical spaces in general and urban landscapes in particular.

Method

Background

This study was conceived with three goals in mind: first, to assess whether and to what extent urban landscapes can be read as historical evidence; second, to evaluate the role that expertise plays when conducting such analyses; and third, to consider how landscape analysis can promote and develop historical thinking skills. Can landscapes be "read" as historical documents, and can meaning be found in places where the evidence is diverse and potentially confusing?

Participants

Fifteen individuals participated in this study, including five historians and ten beginning (first-year) college students, who agreed to participate in "historical walks" in neighborhoods in New York City and Philadelphia. Historian participants were recruited through direct e-mail contact based on their accessibility to the locations in question and their backgrounds in urban history specifically and

	City	Academic Expertise	Neighborhood Visited	Applicable Knowledge Base
H1	Philadelphia	American immigration and urban history	Spring Garden/ Northern Liberties*	Professor of History; grew up and attended undergraduate institution outside of Philadelphia; resident of Philadelphia area
H2	Philadelphia	European urban history	Fairmount/ Brewerytown*	Professor of History; resident of Philadelphia area
H3	New York City	Civil War era	West Village	Associate Professor of History; undergraduate institution was in Manhattan; former longtime resident of Manhattan
H4	New York City	Modern U.S. history (U.S. diplomacy)	East Village	History Ph.D. and full-time administrator at a university in NYC; directs community learning and outreach program there; resident of Manhattan
H5	New York City	American intellectual history; NYC history	Turtle Bay	Full-time administrator at a university in NYC; regularly teaches class in NYC history; resident of Brooklyn

** In the cases for H1 and H2, the individuals traveled from one neighborhood to another.*

Figure 1: Background of Historian Participants

U.S. history generally. Note that these individuals are labeled as "H" (for historian) in the narrative, and **Figure 1** provides additional information about these participants. Recruitment was modeled on the design used in Baron's study of the Old North Church in Boston, in which historians with varying levels of expertise analyzed the site.[40] In Baron's research, which used five participants, only one possessed expertise relevant to analyzing the place they visited, and the other participants needed to use historical cognition (or what Samuel Wineburg called "interpretive acumen"[41]) to "read"

the structure to generate plausible interpretations and conclusions about the site they examined. Of the five historians in the sample here, H5 possessed the knowledge base most appropriate to the task, being a lifelong resident of New York who has taught a class in NYC history for many years and published a book about the topic. This individual could be considered the expert of the participant group. H1 and H2 are both urban historians who walked through neighborhoods in Philadelphia, but are not experts in the city's history (H1's published work is on the southeastern United States; H2's addresses cities in Eastern Europe). With their knowledge of the themes and methodological procedures associated with urban history, these two individuals brought some expertise to the task. H3 and H4 are American historians with no specific expertise in urban history generally or New York City history in particular, but both live and work in New York and have some familiarity with the city's history and culture as a result of this.

To provide a basis for comparison with the historians, ten beginning college students were recruited to participate in the project. These individuals were first-year history majors enrolled at colleges located in New York City and Philadelphia and are labeled as "S" (for student) in the narrative. These participants were recruited through an e-mail solicitation sent to their departments' listservs and were offered a small honorarium for their participation. Four students (labeled S1 to S4) were from Philadelphia, and six (labeled S6 to S10) attended colleges in New York City. The design here is premised on the idea that historical walks and landscape analysis are useful pedagogical approaches at the secondary level, but beginning college students were used here as they had access to the neighborhoods in question and were able to participate in the project relatively easily. Note also that the students undertook these walks early in their college careers, during their first semester in higher education. Being history majors who sought out an urban experience in their choice of college, these individuals also brought some level of preparation and knowledge to the task. Of the ten participants, all counted history as part of their undergraduate course of study (five were declared double majors, and three others planned to study education), and eight took the AP U.S. History exam while in high school. Student participants also engaged in a pre-interview before beginning the walking task, designed to assess their educational backgrounds and familiarity with

topics, terms, and themes (for example, gentrification) pertinent to the project. The conversations were intended to determine students' knowledge base and provide some background before they began their walks. These discussions could be considered analogous to the types of activities students undertake to prepare them for a museum trip. **Appendix A** provides the questions that were incorporated into these conversations.

Protocol

Each participant was assigned a neighborhood and given a map with a route (created by the researcher) and guidelines for completing a historical walk of the area specified. In total, five neighborhoods were incorporated into the study, with three in New York City and two in Philadelphia; one historian and two students walked through each neighborhood. The guidelines indicated that the walkers should: a) mention (in the manner of a *flaneur*) any observation they considered noteworthy or intriguing; and b) identify any historical conclusions (in the manner of a historian) that were suggested by the evidence they encountered as they walked. This evidence could, in turn, be connected to the history of the city in question and/or to American history more generally. Some participants were provided with a digital recorder (others used their phones, where appropriate) and conducted their walk at their convenience. The researcher was absent, and there was no participant-researcher interaction during these sessions. **Appendix B** provides maps and information about the areas that the participants visited. This study's underlying premise is that valuable historical conclusions can be found in the seemingly mundane and ordinary, and that everyday buildings and local culture are important sites of historical inquiry. However, it is noted here that the routes assigned to the participants were selected to include things that were interesting, relevant, and that possessed some historical significance. In this way, the neighborhoods provided clues waiting to be found and offered something of a test to the participants' interpretative capabilities.

For example, one of the neighborhoods used in this study was Manhattan's West Village. The route for this walk began at the intersection of Thompson and West Houston Streets, in front of modernist high-rise apartment buildings representative of the

urban renewal ideas in prominence when they were built in the late 1950s. The walk continued east, where remnants of an immigrant neighborhood, the Italian "South Village," still exist in the form of businesses and street signs. The walk then progressed north along MacDougal Street, an area of bohemian character where historically significant cultural movements such as folk rock and off-Broadway theater began. Then, it ended in the area around Washington Square Park, a space dominated by the NYU campus. As such, the maps the participants followed were designed to provide visual cues that led to conclusions about themes such as urban renewal, immigration, and cultural history. Similarly, much like how historians consult varied types of documentary evidence when constructing a historical account, the participants were also provided with a diversity of evidence from which to generate conclusions. It could be argued, however, that a random walk does not replicate true historical methodology in that historians seek out specific materials to answer specific questions. While there is some truth to this, it should also be considered that the idea of "urbanism" is a distinct field of inquiry and one in which a focused, analytical walk would be considered an essential part of the practice.[42] Urban historians, much like physical and cultural geographers, also typically use walks as part of their research. Finally, much of the pedagogical materials related to historical thinking involve DBQs and prepackaged curriculum materials. These documents are provided to students and similarly fail to replicate how historians identify and seek out evidence. The walks used here, and the maps provided, could be considered a three-dimensional DBQ, perhaps not replicating everything historians do, but providing an opportunity to engage in historical inquiry in a compelling way.

Coding

The walks occurred in the fall of 2023; the recordings were transcribed verbatim, and data were coded using a protocol premised on the idea that an urban landscape presents a different kind of evidence compared to what is typically found in historical thinking literature. Research on historical thinking most often uses either documentary evidence or a specific site (such as a museum or historic building) as the basis for analysis. Here, the historians were presented with multiple types of three-dimensional evidence

that could lead to numerous conclusions with claims to validity or accuracy. With this in mind, statements were organized as to whether they represented "topic knowledge," "procedural knowledge," or "observations." The idea of topic knowledge is premised on the idea that, on certain occasions, the participants displayed expert knowledge and a definitive conclusion. The term was drawn from the work of Gerhard Stoel, Jannet van Drie, and Carla van Boxtel, who defined topic knowledge as "specific, factual knowledge an expert has."[43] Bruce VanSledright and Margarita Limón similarly referred to this idea as "substantive knowledge."[44] Procedural knowledge, defined as "understandings and applications of the specific practices investigators engage in when researching the past and building interpretations," was used to identify cases where participants employed evidence they observed to generate a historical conclusion. This idea of using evidence to produce a conclusion is also referred to as "historical reasoning" and "causal reasoning" in the literature.[45] "Observations" were defined as comments about something perceived by the historian as significant, although not necessarily grounded in historical evidence. A historian is not only an interpreter of the past, but also an analyst who uses these interpretations to help understand and make sense of contemporary life.[46] In walking through urban spaces, the participants were aware not only of historical evidence, but also of how events from the past shaped and influenced these places in the present. These observations and opinions, therefore, represent valuable, relevant statements and are represented in the historical thinking literature in discussions about "second order concepts" and how historians seek to impose logic and coherence on past events and use the past to make sense of the present.[47]

Findings

Summary of Historians' Walks

The conclusions made by the historians are presented in **Figure 2** based on the coding scheme explained in the protocol section. Note that the responses of four of the participants totaled approximately 3800 words for each (equating to 30-40 minutes of talk time). H2

	Word Ct.	Observa-tional Thoughts	Historical Thoughts: Expert	Historical Thoughts: Evidentiary	Evidence Used	Topic or Conclusion Addressed Based on Evidence
H1	3606	5	4	17	Architecture (8) Business/retail (3) Highways (1) People observed (2) Purpose-built building (3) Religious building (2)	Gentrification (4) Housing policy (2) Immigration (4) Race/class (4) Urban renewal (3)
H2	7814	8	3	25	Architecture (10) Business/retail (8) Mural (1) People observed (3) Purpose-built building (2) Religious building (3)	Cultural history (1) Deindustrialization (1) Gentrification (7) Immigration (3) Labor history (1) Race/class (10) Tourism (1) Urban renewal (1)
H3	3822	9	2	12	Architecture (7) Business/retail (3) Graffiti (1) People observed (2) Religious building (4)	Cultural history (2) Gentrification (3) Immigration (2) Urban renewal (4)
H4	3625	5	2	11	Architecture (6) Business/retail (4) Park (1) People observed (3)	Cultural history (1) Gentrification (2) Immigration (3) Race/class (3) Tourism (1) Urban renewal (1)
H5	3741	13	9	7	Architecture (5) Bridge (1) Business/retail (2) People observed (6)	Gentrification (1) Immigration (2) Race/class (1) Urban renewal (3)

Note: "Purpose-built building" refers to a building such as a community center, school, or museum, while "Religious building" refers to a building such as a church, synagogue, mosque, etc. The totals in the "Evidence Used" column will not necessarily equal the number of historical conclusions reached by the historians (indicated in the "Historical Thoughts: Evidentiary" column), as in certain cases, two or more pieces of evidence were used to develop a single interpretation.

Figure 2: Responses of Historians, Organized by Statement Type and Evidence Used

spoke for nearly two hours, with over 7800 words total. Two possible explanations for this discrepancy are that H2 walked the longest distance, and this individual could also be considered an enthusiastic urbanist who took the charge at hand quite seriously. For example, she often doubled back on her walk to provide additional insight about something that was observed.

Figure 2 also provides a quantitative perspective on the data collected, focusing especially on the evidence cited by the historians and the conclusions they made based on this evidence. These are examples of procedural knowledge in which observed evidence was used to construct an interpretation. A few conclusions emerge from the data provided above. For example, all respondents used similar types of evidence to build historical interpretations, with architecture being the most common. The types of architecture encountered on the walks were varied, and ranged from tenement buildings to repurposed industrial sites, townhouses, and rowhomes (which are common in Philadelphia). Churches and other specific purpose-built buildings (these included the Edgar Allan Poe House in Philadelphia and the United Nations in New York) were coded separately. After architecture, business and retail establishments were the most common type of evidence used, followed by people observed by the participants as they walked. Although individual historians used other unique types of evidence in certain cases (for example, H1 used highways, H4 used graffiti, and H5 used the Queensboro Bridge), it is apparent that architecture, people, and commerce are the main types of source material encountered when analyzing an urban landscape. This evidence led to conclusions that reflected both a diversity of interpretations, but also certain points of commonality. For example, all the historians mentioned the topic of immigration multiple times on their walks, which is understandable given the neighborhoods visited. After immigration, conclusions about gentrification and race/class issues were most common, followed by urban renewal. These were topics mentioned by all the historians at some point in their discussions. These data suggest that the interpretations made by the historians were diverse in that their analyses led to a varied set of findings, indicating that urban spaces can generate a multiplicity of meanings. Simultaneously, the historians produced similar interpretations, suggesting that common conclusions emerge in the analysis of urban spaces. These include immigration, issues involving race and class, gentrification, cultural history (such as murals in Philadelphia and punk rock in NYC), urban renewal, and housing policy. This indicates that while this type of inquiry lends itself to a variety of themes and interpretations, there are also limits to the conclusions offered by the investigation of urban neighborhoods.

H1	I'm at 3rd and Fairmount, and here you can see you're getting into hipster-ville here. There is a BYOB restaurant and a yoga studio right in front of me.
H2	It's 9:00 AM…I am standing at the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and 22nd Street. And I'm just kind of taking in what I see. The city is definitely awake already and people are out doing a variety of things. There is a softball game in the park and a cat is staring at me from a window.
H3	And I'm passing a—wow—a phone booth with two payphones. I mean, that really is a relic of the past. I don't know the last time I've seen a phone booth in New York City, but I'm sure that'll be gone soon. Someone must have forgotten to take it away.
H4	I'm turning onto East 6th Street. As always, the East Village is crowded with pedestrians and traffic, a very lively neighborhood. It has a unique New York feel to it in that the sidewalks are crowded and teeming with life.
H5	The streets are a medley. A medley of building styles, and uses, and pedestrians, and bicyclists. Some people are dressed for autumn and some for summer. It's one of those odd New York City days.

Figure 3: Historians' Observations, Part 1

The sections below provide an analysis of statements made by historians on their walks to provide further perspective on the coding procedure outlined above. This analysis is organized by the historians' observations, examples of "topic knowledge," where a definitive conclusion was provided, and "procedural knowledge," where a conclusion was offered based on the evidence that was observed.

Historians' Statements on Observations

Figure 3 and **Figure 4** provide examples of observations provided by the historians. These statements were characterized as things that the historians witnessed and noted, but did not reflect the use of evidence to make a conclusion. These came in two forms, as shown in each figure. The examples in **Figure 3** reflect *flaneur*-like statements that comment on the unique and sometimes idiosyncratic nature of urban life. For example, H4 noted that the East Village "has a unique New York feel to it in that the sidewalks are crowded and teeming with life," and H5 observed that "some people are dressed for autumn and some for summer. It's one of those odd New York City days." In Philadelphia, H1 commented that "you're getting into hipster-ville here," and H2 stated, "I'm just taking in what I see…

H1	It's a very diverse area here with a mix of histories. You have several waves of immigration as well as evidence of the Great Migration. And now wealthy college-educated people are living here. I've only walked three blocks and it's a remarkably rich urban tapestry.
H2	And we have a large African American population here, who've been here a long time. And I've talked to some of the newer residents in the area, and they make the argument that in terms of gentrification, it's not so much of pushing a group out, because there were all these buildings that nobody was living in. So it's more like retrofitting, moving in. But the question becomes, will they price out, eventually, people who have been living here a long time?
H3	I'm passing an upscale-looking bar on my right-hand side here. Very modern storefront, looks like it was recently renovated. There is a lot of money coming into this area and the businesses are all using this exposed brick motif inside. The bricks themselves look weathered and worn, very pretty. Interesting how an old tenement has been reconfigured.
H4	The sign on the door says, "Quiet. Please be considerate of our neighbors." I imagine this neighborhood does get quite loud. Here is also an apartment for rent sign. I can only speculate as to what the prices are around here. This neighborhood was once much less expensive and less desirable than it is today, but those days are gone.
H5	I'm going to desist crossing over to the other side of 55th Street because it's jam-packed with garbage bags. I am looking north at the cars rolling up the access ways to the 59th Street Bridge and thinking about the Vanderbilts and others who moved here and created a tone to the neighborhood that a hundred years on it still preserves. And yet, it can't escape the city that it's part of. I'm hoping that you can hear sirens on the recording. They are both to the north and to the south. The experience of New York is that we all really do rub shoulders with one another.

Figure 4: Historians' Observations, Part 2

there is a softball game in the park and a cat is staring at me from a window." These are the sorts of things that a curious wanderer would notice in an urban exploration. **Figure 4** provides examples of remarks that did not reflect the use of evidence, but nonetheless suggest a historical sensibility, illustrating how things in the present are the legacy of events and decisions from the past. These examples illustrate how a historian is an informed observer who can use the past to provide some insight and perspective on why things are the way they are in the present day. For example, H1 noted the diverse layers of history encountered in the Northern Liberties neighborhood and

the ongoing phenomenon of gentrification occurring there, stating, "You have several waves of immigration as well as evidence of the Great Migration…now wealthy college-educated people are living here. I've only walked three blocks and it's a vibrant urban tapestry." H2 similarly commented on gentrification and the racial changes occurring in Philadelphia's Brewerytown neighborhood, stating, "the question becomes, will they price out, eventually, people who have been living here a long time?" H3 and H4 both commented on how life in New York reflects the increasing expense of the city and how its character is changing as a result of this. H3 noted of the West Village that "there is a lot of money coming into this area," and H4 said of the East Village that "this neighborhood was once much less expensive and less desirable than it is today." Such statements are not historical conclusions, but they do reflect ideas related to change and continuity and how history informs life in the present.

Historians' Statements on Topic Knowledge

Figure 5 provides examples of "topic knowledge" provided by the historians. These responses reflect something definitively known about the area visited and not a conclusion based on evidence that was observed. For example, H1 spoke of the contrast in the Northern Liberties neighborhood between areas that were razed and rebuilt and areas that were preserved as an alternative to this more invasive and controversial style of urban renewal, stating, "if there's one thing that mayors and city councils learned in the twentieth century from the urban renewal debacle, it is to repurpose older buildings, rather than bulldoze them." H3 made similar comments about the controversies that urban renewal policies prompted in New York (citing "hideous modernist high rises") and referenced two important figures in the city's history, Robert Moses and Jane Jacobs. H2 commented on a wall mural, which one could easily notice in passing without being aware of the importance of these artworks to local culture, stating, "Philadelphia has a real tradition of the murals where things are painted onto the sides of buildings…these are a real attempt to capture some of the diversity of the city." Seeing graffiti along his walk, H4 noted that "The East Village was the center of New York's graffiti movement, and I think this speaks to the historically nonconformist character of the area." Finally, H5's comments illustrate an idea noted

H1	I think it makes a huge difference that the older buildings are preserved and rehabilitated. And if there's one thing that mayors and city councils learned in the 20th century from the urban renewal debacle, is to repurpose older buildings, rather than bulldoze them. And so to the extent possible, I think that's part of the charm of this intersection, is that mix of old and new. Old spaces that are being remade into restaurants, coffee shops that are really appealing to a new generation.
H2	I'm looking now at a mural. Philadelphia has a real tradition of the murals where things are painted onto the sides of buildings. It's been a substantial movement in Philadelphia for 20 or more years. These are a real attempt to capture some of the diversity of the city. An artist I heard speak about this said that they work with communities to kind of say what do they want to see in their mural. And then when the mural is designed by the artists, community members can even help to paint what goes into it.
H3	I am walking south on LaGuardia Place. On my right are tenements and old industrial lofts. On my left are these hideous modernist high rises, like something out of the book *1984*. I heard a lecture about this once, and those date to when Robert Moses tried to bulldoze the Village and turn it into a huge apartment complex. He only partially succeeded, thanks to the efforts of Jane Jacobs and other neighborhood activists.
H4	It's interesting that East Village retains some of its 1970s graffiti culture. I see graffiti at the top of some of these buildings; must have been difficult to get up there, but people probably went up the fire escapes. The East Village was the center of New York's graffiti movement and I think this speaks to the historically nonconformist character of the area.
H5	I am looking over at the UN, just a few blocks south of here, the site of the original Beekman Mansion from the late 1700s. The Beekmans having come over here with Peter Stuyvesant, one of the oldest Dutch families in New York. Later that was where New York's slaughterhouse district was located. The UN with its curtain wall is one of the great embodiments of New York City. Fortunately, it came to New York City rather than Philadelphia, in no small part thanks to the Rockefellers, who purchased and donated the acreage.

Figure 5: Examples of Historians' Topic Knowledge

in geography research about how a landscape can be "duplicitous," meaning that what is visible does not accurately convey the history or full story about what is being observed.[48] A park, for example, will not, at first glance, reveal information about the political machinations used or people displaced to create it. In this case, H5 provided a short history of the site on which the UN was built: "I am looking over at the UN, just a few blocks south of here, the site of the original

Beekman Mansion from the late 1700s. Later, that was where New York's slaughterhouse district was located." Looking at the sleek, modernist UN, there is no evidence of any of this history, and only expert knowledge of the area would allow for this conclusion. This suggests that while an urban landscape provides evidence that can be read and interpreted, there are also some conclusions that are only possible with specialist knowledge and background.

Historians' Statements on Procedural Knowledge

Figure 6 provides examples of the historians' use of evidence to generate historical interpretations. Two examples are provided for each participant, and several conclusions are indicated by the statements below. In some instances, there are straightforward examples in which things observed are utilized to produce a tentative (but valid) conclusion. For example, H4 commented on the numerous churches in the East Village and used this evidence to suggest that religion was an important component of the culture of the many immigrant groups that settled in this area, stating, "I didn't realize how many churches the East Village had. You can really see how important religion was to the immigrant communities that settled here." Similarly, H3 observed various Italian-themed businesses in the West Village and concluded that "this suggests that this area was settled by Italian immigrants" (here, he was identifying some remaining vestiges of what was once the Italian South Village neighborhood). Finally, H5 noted that the many tenement buildings observed suggest that the now-wealthy Turtle Bay area was once a working-class community, stating, "this is one of the wealthiest areas of Manhattan, but it's interesting that I still see a lot of tenements as I walk. This gives a sense of how this neighborhood was once a working-class area and that the expensive apartment buildings came later."

In other cases, the historians' thought processes reflect a more sophisticated approach, illustrating Samuel Wineburg's arguments about how historians construct knowledge by using an "appropriate principle-oriented knowledge structure."[49] H1's statements provide some indication of this idea in that, here, prior knowledge was combined with observed evidence to generate conclusions. In this case, H1 viewed evidence through things he knew about

H1	a) Walking along North Seventh and there is a low-income housing development here, the structures are two stories high and looks a lot like the garden apartment style from the 1940s. The construction was probably funded by federal money in part. I'm curious to see old maps of what was here before. The original grid was bulldozed to make room for this housing development and that's something we see across the country in cities in the mid-20th century. b) This neighborhood has also experienced urban renewal in that highways are running through it. You can see 95 to one side of the neighborhood and then the Vine Street 676 at the other end. So we see that this neighborhood has been kind of bounded by some of the decisions made in the mid-20th century, in this case the Highway Act of '57.
H2	a) In terms of historical evidence, we definitely see that this is a more prosperous part of the city because you've got this ornate, sometimes imposing 19th-century architecture. People who would have lived here would have been people with money, industrialists, finance, doctors, and lawyers. Also noticing cars that are parked here, a Mercedes, an Alfa Romeo SUV, and a BMW all parked right along one, two, three. This is still a well-off neighborhood. b) I'm always interested in the mix of the types of businesses there are because, I think this shows who lives and who has lived in a neighborhood. There is a place on my right where I got pizza the other day. I've actually talked to the owners—two men, one black, one white in maybe I would say their early 30s. They have been here a while now, and they do good business. It's kind of a newer style pizza place, with organic toppings and cheeses and things like that. Perhaps it is because of who the owners are, they're really involved in the community, and you see that there is racial diversity in this area but also changing demographics and character.
H3	a) Across the street are these 1960s towers I mentioned, reminds me of a Mitchell-Lama type of building. More modern than the 19th-century character across the street. Looks like the tower-in-a-park style where there's green space in between the buildings. This speaks to the sort of construction that occurred in Manhattan after World War Two. b) I'm passing another church, St. Cyril's. I didn't realize how many churches the East Village had. You can really see how important religion was to the immigrant communities that settled here.
H4	a) I just walked past a pasta store called Raffetto's, which says that it was established in 1906. If that's true, that dates the neighborhood to the early 20th century, when a lot of these buildings were probably put up. There is a restaurant called Villa Mosconi across the street, and there's also another pizzeria next to it and a bar with another Italian name. This suggests that this area was settled by Italian immigrants. b) I have crossed Bleecker to the other side of MacDougal and we're in the heart of the Village right now. The buildings are five, six, or seven stories high. Different color bricks. There are bars, restaurants, and different kinds of clubs. I wish that I knew more about the bohemian history of this area, but you can tell that a lot of these buildings have connections to the cultural legacy of the Village.
H5	a) This is one of the wealthiest areas of Manhattan, but it's interesting that I still see a lot of tenements as I walk. This gives a sense of how this neighborhood was once a working-class area and that the expensive apartment buildings came later. b) I don't know if I would call it evidence, but when I see the 59th Street Bridge, I recall what F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote in *The Great Gatsby* and how the bridge acts as a symbolic gateway to the opportunity and promise represented by Manhattan.

Figure 6: Examples of Historians' Procedural Knowledge

urban renewal policies, and this was used to make the evidence he observed meaningful and useful: "the original grid was bulldozed to make room for this housing development, and that's something we see across the country in cities in the mid-20th century." H4 also referenced ideas about urban renewal when he encountered evidence of these policies when walking through the East Village: "This speaks to the sort of construction that occurred in Manhattan after World War Two." H3 admitted that he did not know much about the cultural history of Greenwich Village, but even basic familiarity with this aspect of the area's history allowed him to make sense of the evidence he observed walking on MacDougal Street: "You can tell that a lot of these buildings have connections to the cultural legacy of the Village." Reflecting on the innovative use of evidence, H5 made a comment about the Queensboro Bridge and used knowledge about literature to connect this structure to New York City's influence on American culture. One of H2's statements also illustrates how historians use evidence in sophisticated ways. In one case, she made a fairly linear observation that the ornate architecture found in the Fairmount section of Philadelphia suggests that this was a neighborhood built for (and still populated by) wealthy people: "also noticing cars that are parked here, a Mercedes, an Alfa Romeo SUV, and a BMW all right along one, two, three." Her second observation was more illustrative of how historians often use creativity and innovation when considering evidence, as, here, a local business was used to illustrate the racial and demographic changes occurring in the Brewerytown neighborhood: "I'm always interested in the mix of the types of businesses there are because I think this shows who lives and who has lived in a neighborhood… you see that there is racial diversity in this area but also changing demographics and character."

Summary of Students' Walks

Figure 7 provides a summary of students' walks, the evidence they used, and the conclusions that were made. Even though the students took the same walks, they generally spoke less, and their total words ranged from 1500 to 2200. Generally, the students were focused on the task they were assigned, sought out evidence, and made conclusions from what they saw. There were also few displays of procedural

	Word Ct.	Neighbor-hood Visited	Observa-tional Thoughts	Examples of Procedural Knowledge	Evidence Used	Topic or Conclusion Addressed Based on Evidence
S1	1376	Spring Garden/ Northern Liberties	4	4	Architecture (2) Business/retail (3) People (1) Religious building (1) Landmark (Poe House)	Gentrification (2) Historical change (1) Immigration (1)
S2	1453	Spring Garden/ Northern Liberties	5	4	Architecture (2) Business/retail (3) People (2)	Gentrification (2) Immigration (2)
S3	1761	Fairmount/ Brewerytown	4	4	Architecture (3) Business/retail (4) People (2)	Gentrification (2) Immigration (1) Race/class (1)
S4	2002	Fairmount/ Brewerytown	5	5	Architecture (4) Business/retail (4) People (2) Landmark (Eastern State Penitentiary)	Gentrification (1) Historical change (1) Immigration (2) Race/class (1)
S5	1381	West Village	4	5	Architecture (3) Business/retail (3) People (2) Landmark (Washington Square Park)	Cultural history (1) Gentrification (2) Immigration (2)
S6	1287	West Village	6	5	Architecture (3) Business/retail (3) People (2)	Cultural history (1) Gentrification (3) Immigration (1)
S7	1876	East Village	6	4	Architecture (3) Business/retail (5) Religious building (1)	Cultural history (1) Gentrification (2) Immigration (1)
S8	1457	East Village	3	4	Architecture (3) Business/retail (3) People (1) Religious building (1)	Immigration (4)
S9	1575	Turtle Bay	4	3	Architecture (5) Business/retail (2) Landmark (United Nations)	Immigration (2) Urban renewal (1)
S10	1489	Turtle Bay	5	4	Architecture (5) Business/retail (1) People (1) Landmark (Queensboro Bridge)	Cultural history (1) Immigration (2) Urban renewal (1)

Figure 7: Responses of Students, Organized by Statement Type and Evidence Used

knowledge and examples of the use of expertise. The students were able to identify and use the same types of evidence observed by the historians and draw similar conclusions from this evidence, however. As **Figure 7** illustrates, all the students referenced architecture and the businesses they encountered during their walks. Other evidence used by the students included people observed, religious structures, and certain prominent landmarks such as the Queensboro Bridge, the United Nations, the Edgar Allan Poe House, and the Eastern State Penitentiary. All the students provided conclusions about immigration, with comments about gentrification also occurring repeatedly. Several students also provided sophisticated ideas related to urban renewal and cultural history.

Students' Statements on Observations

The students proved themselves to be capable observers, and many of their comments reflected an insightful sensibility about the nature of urban life in the twenty-first century. Perhaps due to their interest in an urban experience, they were attuned to issues impacting cities, such as gentrification, tourism, and affordability. For example, S3 questioned if a deli observed in the Fairmount neighborhood of Philadelphia was "built for hipsters," and S2 noted of the Northern Liberties neighborhood that "There is a real difference between the older rowhomes I just passed and the new restaurants, gyms, and stores I am seeing now." The examples presented in **Figure 8** suggest the students were careful in their analysis and knowledgeable about the vagaries and realities of urban life. Many of the comments also reflected *flaneur*-like sentiments about cities and the people in them. For example, S6 stated, "There is graffiti on my right. This is definitely a liberal area of the city because it is talking about Fox News and how it's bad," while S10 noted simply, "I always appreciate how everything is mixed together in New York," and S1 referred to this diversity as "prototypically urban." Several students noted the uniqueness and the diversity of experiences found in cities, while others commented on how cities have changed and evolved over time, becoming more amenable to wealthy people, would-be (but not really) bohemians, and tourists. S5 and S7 provided useful illustrations of this idea, with S5 commenting, "I am looking at a thrift shop clothing store. It is real artsy and not fake artsy, which you see

S1	There is an interesting mix of buildings and businesses here, including an Indian restaurant, a nail salon, and a Russian orthodox church. Prototypically urban, I think.
S2	There is a real difference between the older rowhomes I just passed and the new restaurants, gyms, and stores I am seeing now.
S3	I see a deli. Is it an old neighborhood landmark or was it built for hipsters?
S4	I am close to the Rocky Steps at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. This is feels like a prosperous area and there are a lot of tourists walking around.
S5	I am walking by NYU. I kind of want to see what an NYU student from the 70s or 80s would think of the Village these days.
S6	There is graffiti on my right. This is definitely a liberal area of the city because it is talking about Fox News and how its bad.
S7	I am looking at a thrift shop clothing store. It is real artsy and not fake artsy, which you see a lot of in Manhattan now.
S8	The line of people going into the Starbucks is around the block. Must be tourists.
S9	The street is lined with trees. I am surprised by all the green there is here.
S10	There are apartment buildings, restaurants, and other businesses. I always appreciate how everything is mixed together in New York.

Figure 8: Students' Observations

a lot of in Manhattan now." S7 noted the gentrified character of the West Village, stating, "I am walking by NYU. I kind of want to see what an NYU student from the 70s or 80s would think of the Village these days," and S8 commented on a crowd in front of a Starbucks, "The line…is around the block. Must be tourists."

Students' Statements on Procedural Knowledge

Note that except for a single isolated instance, no examples of topic knowledge were provided by the students. As such, the discussion here focuses on their use of procedural knowledge and how evidence was used to generate historical interpretations. As **Figure 9** suggests, the students were able to effectively use the evidence they observed to generate appropriate conclusions about the things they saw. For example, students in both Philadelphia and NYC were attuned to the issue of gentrification and could routinely identify evidence about this phenomenon. The students who analyzed the Philadelphia neighborhoods all referenced this idea, using different commercial

S1	a) There is a lot of new construction, bars, restaurants, and young people here. This area is undergoing gentrification, I think. b) The Poe House doesn't look like anything around it. It gives a feel of what was here in the early 1800s.
S2	a) I just passed a second Russian Orthodox Church, indicating that a large Eastern European population might have once lived here. b) Looking at some of the businesses, it seems that Northern Liberties used to be a place for families. The greater presence of bars, coffee shops, and gyms now seem to cater to a younger demographic.
S3	a) I'm reading a sign in front of a restaurant. It says "craft burgers and craft beers." Doesn't sound appealing to working-class Philadelphians. It does sound appealing to young people with money. b) When I walk down this street, everything seems older and less renovated. The neighborhood has changed from when I began walking. Gentrification has not occurred here as much as it did a few blocks before.
S4	a) The Whole Foods in front of me is a sign of gentrification. b) The neighborhood must not have been wealthy when the Penitentiary was built here. It has changed over time, I think.
S5	a) I am passing by some Italian restaurants and old-style coffee shop. It makes me think that Italian immigrants must have once settled here. b) I am walking down LaGuardia. On the right side there are old buildings with a nail salon, a dry cleaner, and a grocery store. On the left side there are high-rise apartments sitting in kind of a park. These definitely came later and seem out of place with the rest of the village.
S6	a) I'm at the corner of West Houston and Thompson. There is some live music going right on this corner, which I think illustrates the Village's historic nature of being a hub for theater and music and bohemian types. b) I'm in front of a some boring-looking modern apartment buildings. Nothing much to say about them other than gentrification. I think this is a huge problem.
S7	a) It is nice to see that in the East Village multiple cultures are represented. You can see it with the restaurants, the churches, and even the bars. b) You get a sense of the City as a melting pot and all the immigrants that have settled here. There are these high rises I'm walking by and in the distance I see a 21st-century modern skyscraper where everything is all glass. You can see how this area has changed and keeps changing.
S8	a) I just passed a synagogue and then a Roman Catholic Church. A conclusion I can make from this is that New York City has attracted many immigrants over time. b) I can picture immigrants living in a number of these buildings during the Second Industrial Revolution.
S9	a) I always imagine NYC to be full of people, but these streets are quiet and have few pedestrians. This makes me think that this is a wealthy, isolated area. b) I am looking at the UN. It is modern in appearance and different from a lot of the other buildings I have passed. It definitely came later.
S10	a) When I face west, I see a lot of modern skyscrapers. When I look behind me, I see older buildings. This furthers my inference that this route was once a working-class neighborhood that has changed over time. b) The streets are very narrow. They must have been here before cars were invented.

Figure 9: Examples of Students' Procedural Knowledge

establishments (such as the presence of a Whole Foods) as evidence. S2, for example, commented that "Northern Liberties used to be a place for families. The greater presence of bars, coffee shops, and gyms now seem to cater to a younger demographic." Students also effectively used evidence to identify how different areas evolved and changed over time. S9 cited the modern UN as being out of place with the neighborhood that surrounds it, and S5, S6, S7, and S8 all cited (what S6 called "boring-looking") modern apartment buildings as evidence of how the East and West Village changed over time. S5, for example, noted that some apartment buildings are located "in kind of a park," which provides a strong connection to post-World War Two urban renewal philosophies that, in fact, often used the phrase "tower in the park" in their design philosophy. S7 similarly provided a perceptive observation about how these structures suggest that New York is in a constant state of change and that architecture reflects this reality: "There are these high rises I'm walking by and in the distance I see a twenty-first-century modern skyscraper where everything is all glass. You can see how this area has changed and keeps changing." S1 noted that the Poe House in Philadelphia seems out of place with the buildings around it and that this provides evidence "of what was here in the early 1800s." S3 used the Eastern State Penitentiary to make a similar conclusion.

The students were also able to make accurate conclusions about immigration and found numerous examples to support these inferences. S2 noted the presence of Eastern Orthodox Churches in Northern Liberties as evidence of the fact that "a large Eastern European population might have once lived here." S5 was able to identify remnants of the Italian South Village neighborhood, observing that "Italian immigrants must have once settled here." S2 and S8 both used churches as a way to identify the immigrant character of the areas they walked through, and S7 noted that much of the East Village's built environment provides evidence of "all the immigrants that have settled here." S8 made a similar connection between tenement buildings and immigration, noting, "I can picture immigrants living in a number of these buildings during the Second Industrial Revolution." S6 also made a perceptive connection to NYC's cultural history, noting that the presence of live music in the West Village serves as a reminder that this area is "a hub for theater and music and bohemian types."

Discussion

Evidence of Historical Thinking by Historians

Did the interpretations and conclusions made by the participants on their walks reflect the use of historical thinking? To answer this question, the participants' responses are discussed in the context of literature on historical cognition and historical thinking, focusing specifically on the idea of evidence use and on various standards and benchmarks for historical thinking as defined by prominent scholars. Many researchers note the role of evidence use as an important element of historical thinking. VanSledright and Limón identified "constructing evidence-based arguments" as a component of historical thinking, and van Drie and van Boxtel referred to historians' "ability to use document information when executing a historical inquiry" and "supporting claims with evidence" as an indicator of "historical reasoning."[50] All the historians displayed the ability to read the evidence they encountered and effectively used this evidence to generate plausible and appropriate conclusions. This suggests that three-dimensional spaces can be "read" as documents and used to answer questions and generate interpretations.

Wineburg's three "sourcing heuristics"—sourcing, corroboration, and contextualization—are also a useful way to assess historical thinking.[51] These heuristics occupy an important place within historical thinking scholarship and are a recurring element in both historical thinking research and instructional materials.[52] Of the three heuristics defined by Wineburg, two—sourcing and corroboration—were evident in the participants' responses. Sourcing suggests that historians consider a document's author when seeking to assess its meaning. While Baron argued that it is sometimes difficult to source a single building or structure, this idea did nonetheless emerge in the historians' responses.[53] Here, they were (even if unknowingly) borrowing from the field of cultural geography and the idea of the "authored landscape." As Marwyn Samuels noted, every urban area has a "biography that has as its central concern the role of individuals in shaping it."[54] Although it might be difficult to identify the "author" of a specific, anonymous building, the physical and cultural landscapes of cities are the product of choices and policies made by those in

power. For example, four of the respondents noted the legacy of New York's Robert Moses, perhaps the most eminent landscape author in U.S. history, in things they observed. H1 also noticed a planned, organized pattern of urban renewal in his walk through Philadelphia's Spring Garden neighborhood, and although he did not mention the name specifically, he saw here the influence of Edmund Bacon, the Philadelphia counterpart to Robert Moses.[55] Similarly, H2 mentioned the term "suburb in the city," while H3 used the phrase "tower in the park" in their observations. Both of these statements reflect the ideas of the Swiss architect Le Corbusier and his beliefs about urban planning, which had a significant influence on urban renewal policy in the United States in the years following the Second World War.[56]

Dolores Hayden also argued that urban spaces are often contested sites, stating that "an ordinary urban neighborhood will also contain the history of activists who campaigned against spatial injustice."[57] Reflecting this view, H4 mentioned Jane Jacobs, a reformer who came to prominence through her battles with Robert Moses and whose ideas about urban life remain influential to this day.[58] Three other historians repeatedly discussed the phenomenon of gentrification on their walks, mentioning the idea of urban spaces being "repurposed" or "reconfigured." These observations reveal the influence and legacy of Jacobs' beliefs about the unique character of urban life and how municipal governments now adopt policies (such as zoning laws and tax abatements) to bring them to fruition.[59] Based on the historians' responses and the terms and individuals they mentioned, urban landscapes do lend themselves to the idea of authorship, and the historians provided evidence of this dimension of historical thinking from their walks.

Wineburg described another of his heuristics, contextualization, as "the act of situating a document in a concrete temporal and spatial context," meaning that historians will work to place evidence in the setting of the time and place in which it was created.[60] The work of cultural geographer Peirce Lewis helps connect this idea to the process of landscape analysis. Lewis referred to what he called "historic lumpiness," and argued that history is defined by "great leaps" such as wars and depressions and that after such occurrences, a "landscape is likely to look very different than it did before [but] obsolete relics of a different age will nonetheless remain."[61] This

idea was apparent in all the historians' responses, as they repeatedly worked to place historical evidence from numerous periods into historical context, using a building's antiquated character as the basis for analysis. For example, tenement buildings often no longer serve the purpose for which they were originally built (to house immigrants), yet they remain in large numbers across Manhattan and Philadelphia (these are the "lumps" that Lewis alluded to in the quote above). The historians repeatedly connected these structures to the period in which they were built, while also noting how they are used for different purposes in the present day.

Further, while the historians placed structures in the context of the time in which they were created, something unique to landscape analysis is the idea of a building being "out" of context. As noted earlier, Baron's work on historic sites supplemented Wineburg's conclusions with heuristics that were more appropriate for analyzing three-dimensional physical spaces. One of these, "stratification," is defined as "sifting and relegating anachronistic elements to their appropriate period or place" and is particularly suitable to the practice of landscape analysis.[62] For example, *The New Yorker*'s review of the massive Hudson Yards development on Manhattan's West Side notes that the buildings "bear the same relation to New York City as a police-sketch artist drawing does to a face."[63] A glassy, modern residential tower does not integrate well with the traditional architecture and temperament of old, working-class, low-rise neighborhoods, and these newer structures seem ill-fitting and out of place with the buildings that surround them. This modern construction was present in all the areas visited by historians (in both New York and Philadelphia), and several commented on how these buildings did not fit the character of the places they were exploring. These observations were, in turn, used to make conclusions about the demographic and racial changes occurring in these areas. From the historians' responses, it is evident that landscape analysis lends itself well to the idea of contextualization. Indeed, unlike a document or set of documents that date to a certain moment in time, an urban landscape provides evidence from different time periods all at once, providing more diverse and challenging opportunities to place evidence in a historical context. All the historians provided evidence of this idea and were able to connect the varied things they observed to different and diverse moments in history.

Another useful measure of historical thinking can be found in the six benchmarks outlined by Peter Seixas. Seixas cited evidence use as one of these benchmarks, but he also defined historical thinking through "underlying concepts that guide and shape the practice of history," such as the ability to recognize historical significance, identify cause and consequence, analyze change and continuity, place events in historical perspective, and detect the moral dimension of history.[64] These benchmarks were also prominent in the responses of the historians, and ideas related to evidence use, historical perspective (similar to contextualization), and continuity and change (similar to stratification) are discussed above. Other of Seixas' benchmarks also emerged in the historians' responses. For example, "historical significance" is defined as the ability to consider "why we care, today, about certain events, trends and issues in history" and this idea was evident in the way the historians discussed how topics such as gentrification and demographic change impacted the areas they analyzed. The historians' comments suggest that an urban walk is an especially useful setting for considering this concept, illustrating how decisions made in the past impact life in the present and can be observed in three-dimensional spaces. "Cause and consequence" are defined as the ability to recognize "how and why certain conditions and actions led to others," and this idea emerged repeatedly in the historians' responses, as they were able to situate the things they encountered in the context of historical events such as the urban renewal policies of the 1950s, the Great Migration, and urban decline in the 1970s. Finally, Seixas identified the "moral dimension of history" with the idea that "we should expect to learn something from the past that helps us in facing the moral issues of today." This, too, was evident in the historians' responses, and their observations reflected a sensibility about how decisions from the past have created inequity in the present. This is apparent, for example, in their discussions about how cities have been transformed through racial and demographic changes to become increasingly expensive and exclusionary.

Based on the criteria outlined above, the findings presented here suggest that the analysis of urban spaces through walking is a viable approach to developing proficiency in historical thinking. At its most basic, the historians were able to use the evidence they observed to generate conclusions. They also displayed the use of the various

sourcing heuristics defined by Wineburg and Baron in their research. Finally, reflecting on the research of Peter Seixas, historians were also able to connect their observations to concepts such as "historical significance" and "cause and consequence."

Evidence of Historical Thinking by Students

Although the students did not reach the level of sophistication displayed by the historians, their responses nonetheless reflected evidence of historical thinking. Most basically, all the student participants were able to use the evidence they observed to generate plausible and accurate historical conclusions. This reflects their use of procedural knowledge and the ability to use evidence to answer questions and generate conclusions. The students also displayed some use of Wineburg's historical thinking heuristics. Although they did not reference the names directly, students' conclusions did reflect some evidence of sourcing in their references to urban renewal and gentrification, and how these concepts in turn reflect evidence of an "authored landscape." The students also provided numerous examples of contextualization and were able to situate things they observed in different time periods and historical eras. S8, for example, noted, "I can picture immigrants living here during the Second Industrial Revolution," and S10 observed different types of architecture and concluded that "this was once a working-class area that changed over time." In the spirit of Baron's idea of stratification, the students were also able to identify when something seemed out of place or did not fit in with the evidence they observed. S7, for example, made a point of referencing the modern, all-glass apartment towers that now punctuate the NYC landscape and how they clash with the character and architectural profile of many of the buildings found in lower Manhattan. The students also displayed the use of Seixas' ideas and were attuned to issues impacting cities, commenting frequently on issues involving gentrification, inequality, and the impact of tourism. This suggests the use of concepts such as "historical significance" and the "moral dimension of history" that are discussed in Seixas' research. As will be discussed further below, while the students did not match the sophistication of the historians, they did nonetheless display the ability to use evidence to create conclusions and to think abstractly about this evidence.

Comparisons Between Historians and Students

It is a common theme of historical thinking research that beginners, be they elementary, secondary, or college students, often have difficulty replicating the work that historians do and that "thinking like a historian" is a difficult process that requires practice and training.[65] There is some evidence of this fact when comparing students' work to the historians who participated in this study. The students did not provide the depth of the historians' interpretations, and even though they took the same walks, they spoke less and provided fewer interpretations overall. For example, the historians generally spoke for about 40 minutes, while the students only spoke for 20 minutes. The students also did not display the use of topic knowledge and did not offer "expert" insights about the areas they visited. Overall, the historians were able to provide deeper descriptions and, when they made a conclusion, were able to amplify this conclusion and provide rich context and background related to it. H1, for example, who walked through the Northern Liberties neighborhood, skillfully connected his observations to the history of urban renewal and was able to construct a compelling argument around this theme. The historians also saw things that the students did not. One example of this is a comparison between the individuals who walked through the Fairmount neighborhood in Philadelphia. As noted above, when H2 observed a mural, she provided a lengthy discussion about the importance of murals to local culture in Philadelphia. Passing by the same mural, the two students who walked through the neighborhood noted its presence, but were not able to make similar interpretations or deeper connections, only noting, "there is a mural on my left" and "I am passing by an interesting mural."

These differences are a matter of degree, however, in that while the historians provided more detailed descriptions and evidence of topic (or first-order) knowledge, the students still replicated many of the same conclusions and interpretations as the historians and provided many instances of the use of domain-specific knowledge. Both groups, for example, identified similar themes suggested by the evidence, and both used the same types of evidence to draw conclusions. This is found in students' use of tenement buildings, churches, commercial establishments, and notable landmarks as evidence, as well as the conclusions they made about immigration,

cultural history, and urban renewal. Indeed, the fact that students possessed less background knowledge and were still able to generate conclusions that matched those of the historians indicates their effectiveness at interpreting urban landscapes. Unlike what is often indicated in the historical thinking literature, the students, in this case, were able to replicate the ideas and the thought processes of the historians who participated in the project. This, in turn, suggests that landscape analysis is a viable medium in which to teach historical thinking, as well as one that is conducive to students accessing and interacting with these approaches. This also corroborates conclusions in historical thinking literature suggesting that museums and historical sites enhance students' abilities to use cognitive approaches that would otherwise be difficult to access in typical classroom settings. Jeremy Stoddard also noted that museums and historic sites are locations "where informal history education can occur" and provided a list of such places: "museums, memorials, battlefields, preserved houses, living history sites, and archives or historical societies."[66] The findings provided here indicate that urban landscapes could also be added to this list.

Implications for Instruction

Historical Walks and Historical Inquiry

As the findings above suggest, a "historical walk" can serve as a useful way to promote historical thinking and the discipline-specific skills that are embedded in this practice. Several authors note that buildings, structures, and the built environment constitute historical evidence that can be used to generate conclusions and interpretations about the past. David Freeland, for example, argued that buildings provide "clues to the past character of the neighborhoods surrounding them," and Peter Ginna stated that physical structures act as a "historical record in three dimensions" that can be "read as evidence."[67] It is also suggested that the act of walking can also serve "as a mode of inquiry" and that this activity promotes pedagogical benefits not normally associated with work in the classroom.[68] The conclusions made by the participants in this sample illustrate how the visual cues present on an urban walk, such as buildings, people, and businesses, can be read as evidence and used to generate plausible

conclusions and interpretations. The findings also indicate that this practice can promote these skills more effectively than would be the case with analysis of written evidence. Although landscape analysis through walking may be a more informal context than a museum or historical site, it nonetheless offers the opportunity to promote the same competencies and capabilities.

Connecting Local History and Historical Thinking

The idea of local history is a prominent one in social studies education, and it is often argued that an advantage of this approach is that students become more engaged and interested in learning historical content when that content relates to matters of importance to them, such as their homes and communities.[69] As John Stilgoe noted, "Students with no particular interest in schoolroom history… often awaken to the richness of spatial or visual history simply because objects and landscapes from the past have shaped their lives and shaped them still."[70] This literature also promotes the idea that analysis of something small (such as a town, village, or neighborhood) can, in turn, advance knowledge of wider, more expansive themes and conclusions. There is also a body of empirical research that suggests an association with one's community and region promotes positive attitudinal, emotional, and civic benefits and that teaching local history is a way to promote these connections.[71] The research design here suggests a connection between local history, walking, and historical thinking, and that landscape analysis allows students to practice a distinctive form of historical inquiry that also promotes connections to the communities in which they live.

Social Justice and Citizenship Education

Landscape analysis also offers unique ways to promote civic competence and awareness of social issues. In their present-day form, the neighborhoods visited by the participants are the product of decisions made by a combination of civic leaders, moneyed elites, reform-minded citizens, interest groups, and the federal government.[72] As such, a walk along an urban street is a lesson in civic decision-making and illustrates not only how choices made by those in power impact the lives of citizens, but also how

these decisions reverberate across time and shape history. Urban landscapes also offer evidence of how "progress" often comes at the expense of poor and working-class people. A walk in Manhattan, for example, demonstrates how a largely working-class city was turned into a tourist destination and haven for the super-rich through conscious policies and decisions made by those in power.[73] Although Philadelphia is behind New York in the process of gentrification, a recent building boom there suggests that the city is following a similar pattern of development.[74]

Landscape analysis not only offers lessons about history, but also presents opportunities to learn about civic decision-making, promote awareness of social issues, and empower students to be agents of change in their own communities. This approach also provides a way to democratize the gathering of historical evidence and make it more inclusive. Most students' interactions with historical inquiry in school settings will be in the form of prepackaged materials prepared and provided by someone else.[75] Using landscapes and walking as bases for historical analysis diversifies historical inquiry by making it more meaningful, personal, and multifaceted. Les Back, for example, noted that "walking—even through streets that are well trodden—challenges us to think differently with almost every step," and Jo Guldi stated that "history is not some jewel locked in a rare archive accessible only to the privileged few. History is around us all the time, in the ever-present archive of the built environment."[76]

Limitations

A criticism of the design employed here is that the walks occurred in two famous cities through neighborhoods rich in history and character. The findings suggest, however, that the idea of landscape analysis is applicable not only to less prominent places, but also to other types of developed environments (e.g., exurban, suburban, and rural areas). For example, the West Village neighborhood in Manhattan contains many examples of historically prominent buildings and no shortage of important events that occurred there or well-known individuals (from Alexander Hamilton to Edgar Allan Poe to Jackson Pollock) who lived there. The focus of the interpretations outlined above was not on extraordinary events or famous people, however, but on themes and ideas such as

immigration, urban renewal, and gentrification. Although, in a few cases, well-known landmarks were mentioned, the participants referred mostly to what geographers call "vernacular architecture" and structures (such as tenements and industrial lofts) that address the lives and experiences of working-class people.[77] Rather than tell the story of exceptional places, the participants provided a template for how to use types of evidence common to any urban landscape to generate themes and conclusions that have universal applicability. It could also be argued that using urban spaces as the basis for analysis excludes the histories and experiences of people living in other types of communities. While the focus here was on urban neighborhoods, rural and suburban locations are also useful sites for this type of investigation. The field of landscape analysis began with the study of rural areas, and there is a long lineage of research of this type.[78] As geographer Dolores Hayden noted, "more has been written about farmhouses and barns than urban saloons."[79] For example, the most well-known and prominent walking historian was Maurice Beresford, and he used walks around the English countryside to illustrate how elites during the Early Modern period utilized control of land to maintain their power and influence.[80] Walking projects are also conducive to a suburban setting and visual cues found in suburban areas such as the curved roads, prominence of lawns, similarity of the architecture, and proliferation of cars all lend themselves to useful and valuable historical interpretations. In one such study, James Duncan walked around suburban Westchester, New York, to evaluate how landscaping was used to convey social status.[81]

A note should also be made about the students used in the design here, who were first-year college students and who had completed their high school careers. As a study that used a similar participant sample noted, the conclusions made by these individuals "might not be made by younger, less epistemologically mature students."[82] All these individuals also had an interest in history, as evidenced by their choice of major. While these are areas that merit further investigation, the findings here suggest that proper preparation (as would be provided before any field trip) combined with the intrinsic level of engagement engendered by local settings would allow secondary-level students to use landscape analysis to generate evidence-based conclusions.

Conclusion

This study was conceived with three goals in mind. First, to evaluate how walking can be used as a means to collect data and gather historical evidence when analyzing urban landscapes. To this end, fifteen individuals conducted "historical walks" through neighborhoods in New York City and Philadelphia, emulating the traditions of the *flaneur* and the walking historian. From the data presented above, it is evident that historical research does not have to be confined to archives, documents, and the written word. The participants illustrated how various aspects of the built environment, such as buildings and businesses, could be used as historical evidence and to generate interpretations applicable not only to the neighborhoods and cities they visited, but to U.S. history more generally. These included topics such as immigration, urban renewal, public housing, racial and demographic change, cultural history, and gentrification. This study also sought to contribute to the historical thinking literature that addresses the role played by expertise and disciplinary knowledge in generating historical interpretations. To explore this idea, five of the participants used in the sample were academic historians, and ten others were beginning college students. While numerous studies indicate that expertise is a necessary prerequisite for effective historical thinking, the findings here suggest that this plays less of a role when analyzing three-dimensional spaces as opposed to documentary evidence. This is confirmed by the ability of the student participants to generate plausible and applicable interpretations that match the ideas of the historians. This finding, in turn, relates to the third goal of this design, which was to investigate how landscape analysis can help develop historical thinking skills. The findings here confirm what is proposed in historical thinking literature about museums, historical sites, and other examples of informal learning and that urban landscapes can help develop the ability to use inquiry approaches in ways that more traditional approaches cannot.

The findings here also suggest several implications for instruction in history and social studies. Recent literature on historical thinking has sought to expand the idea of historical inquiry beyond documents, written evidence, and DBQs to museums and historic sites. Baron, for example, concluded her study of historical thinking at the Old

North Church by noting that her protocol provided "the means through which to bring a wider range of historic materials into the discussion of what it means to think historically."[83] This study was conceived in part to expand this idea still further by illustrating how urban landscapes can serve as sites of historical inquiry. The use of landscapes as instructional resources offers unique opportunities to engage students by providing a way to use local communities as historical source material that can be read and interpreted. Not only can this provide a compelling way to teach the disciplinary skills associated with history, but it also offers a way to incorporate issues involving civics and social justice into a curriculum and to illustrate how the past shapes life in the present. Landscape analysis also provides a means to connect historical analysis to social history and the history of everyday life and to help students find meaning in the places in which they live and in the seemingly innocuous and ordinary. As such, it offers, perhaps, a new phase of historical inquiry.

Notes

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7. Baron, "Understanding Historical Thinking at Historic Sites," 835.

8. Christine Baron, "Using Inquiry-Based Instruction to Encourage Teachers' Historical Thinking at Historic Sites," *Teaching and Teacher Education* 35 (2013).

9. Libby Bischof, "The Lens of the Local: Teaching an Appreciation of the Past through the Exploration of Local Sites, Landmarks, and Hidden Histories," *The History Teacher* 48, no. 3 (May 2015); Robert Guyver, "Teaching Historical Thinking through Contextualised Sites, Archives, and Artefacts," *Agora* 47, no. 3 (January 2012); Alan S. Marcus and Thomas H. Levine, "Knight at the Museum: Learning History with Museums," *The Social Studies* 102, no. 3 (2011); Jeremy D. Stoddard, "Learning History Beyond School: Museums, Public Sites, and Informal Education," in *The Wiley International Handbook of History Teaching and Learning*, ed. Scott Alan Metzger and Lauren McArthur Harris (Medford, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2018); Andrew H. Myers, "Teaching History in the Backyard," *The History Teacher* 35, no. 4 (August 2002); Susan Wunder, "Learning to Teach for Historical Understanding: Preservice Teachers at a Hands-on Museum," *The Social Studies* 93, no. 4 (2002).

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15. Cynthia Dawn Wallace-Casey, "'I Like to Take Everything and Put It in My Own Words': Historical Consciousness, Historical Thinking, and Learning with Community History Museums," *Canadian Journal of Education* 40, no. 1 (2017): 1-24.

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Appendix A

Pre-Interview Questions for Project Participants

1) On a scale of 1-10 (10 being best), how would you rate your knowledge of U.S. History?

2) Did you take the AP U.S. History Exam?

3) Can you define the term "Gilded Age"?

4) Can you define the term "tenement"?

5) Can you define the term "gentrification"?

6) How you ever heard of Robert Moses?

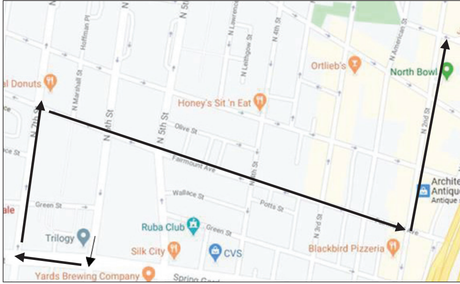
7) Why did you choose to attend college in New York City (or Philadelphia)?

8) What do you like most about living in a city?

Appendix B

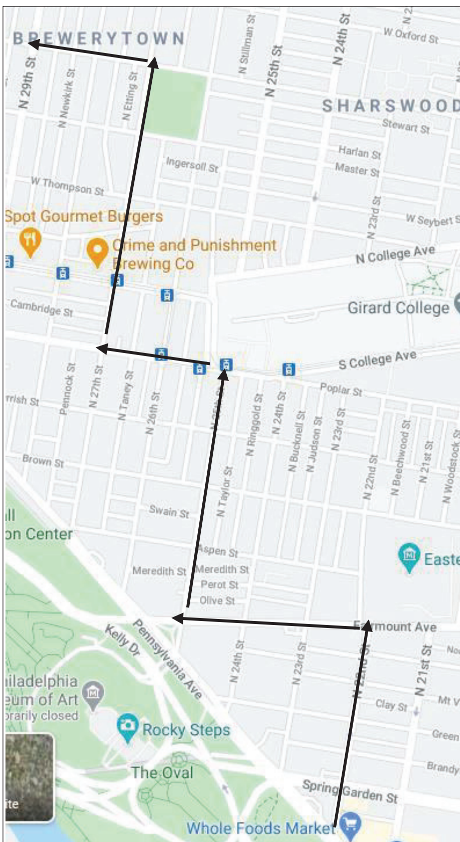
Routes Taken on the Walks

Philadelphia - Route 1

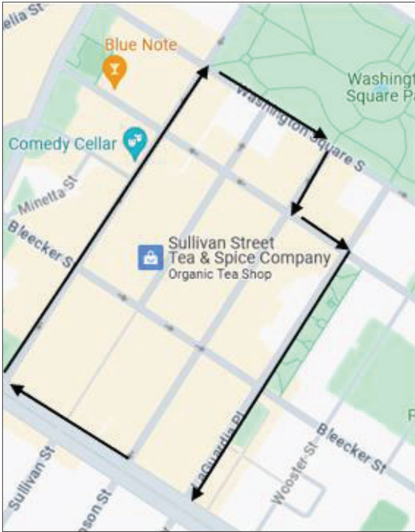


This walk began in front of the Edgar Allan Poe House in the Spring Garden neighborhood of Philadelphia. Participants then walked west on Spring Garden Avenue and north to Fairmount Avenue on North 7th Street. Once on Fairmount Avenue, they walked east to North Second Street. Now in the heavily gentrified Northern Liberties neighborhood, they walked north to Poplar Street and finished there.

Philadelphia - Route 2

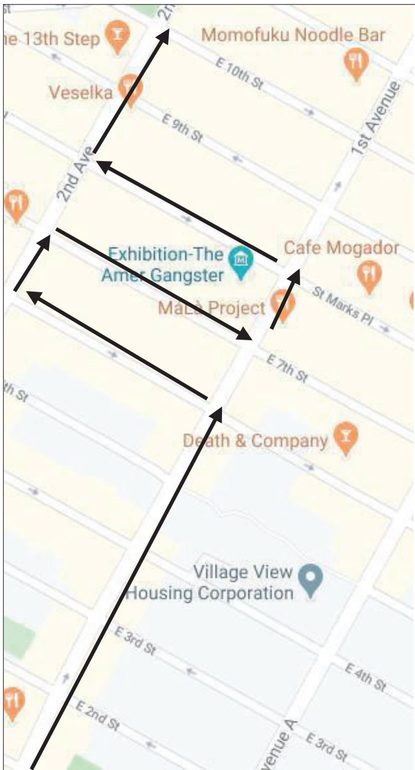


H2, S3 and S4 began their walks in front of the Whole Foods in the wealthy Fairmount neighborhood. They then walked north on North 22nd Street and west on Poplar Street. They then walked north on North 27th Street and west on Girard Avenue, finishing in the Brewerytown neighborhood.



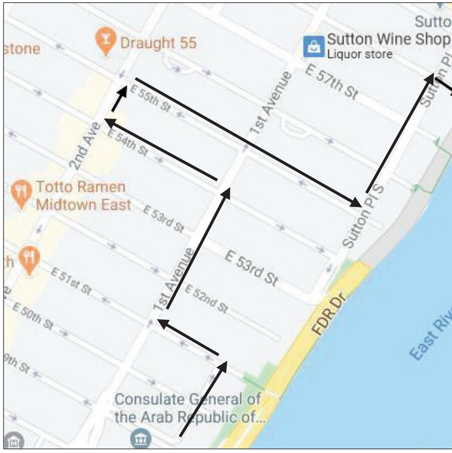
New York City - Route 1

This walk began at the intersection of Thompson Street and West Houston Street. Participants then walked west on Houston Street and turned north on MacDougal Street. They turned right on Washington Square South (an area largely characterized by the presence of NYU), walked east and then headed south along LaGuardia Place, ending back on West Houston Street, one block west of where they started.



New York City - Route 2

This walk began at the intersection of 1st Avenue and 1st Street (the "nexus of the universe" according to the TV show *Seinfeld*) and continued north along 1st Avenue. Participants then turned left at East 6th Street (through the East Village's "Little India") and walked west. They doubled back on East 7th Street and walked east back to 1st Avenue and then west again on St. Mark's Place. Reaching 2nd Avenue, they walked several blocks north and ended at East 10th Street, where some remnants of the East Village's Ukrainian neighborhood still remain.



New York City - Route 3

This walk began on Beekman Place and West 49th Street. This is an exclusive enclave that sits on a ridge that overlooks the United Nations site. Participants walked north and then east to 1st Avenue. They then walked north along 1st Avenue turned left at East 54th Street and continued to 2nd Avenue, walking one block north. They then walked east back to 1st Avenue and continued to Sutton Place on 55th Street. They then walked north and ended on East 58th Street and Sutton Place, overlooking the East River and close to the 59th Street Bridge.