

## Section 2: Dutch New Amsterdam, 1600-1664

### Introduction:

<i>Slavery and the Slave Trade Built New Amsterdam and New Netherland</i> by Alan Singer .....	69
--	----

### Lesson Plans:

What was life like for Africans in colonial New Amsterdam? .....	70
What was life like for enslaved Africans during the colonial era? - Images of Slavery in Colonial Amsterdam and New York .....	74

### Additional Documents Available on the Internet

1629-1655. New Amsterdam and the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade  
 1643-1664. Black Landowners in Manhattan's "Land of the Blacks"  
 1657-1664. Documenting Slavery and Freedom in Colonial New Amsterdam  
 1658. Petition for the Return of Slaves  
 1659. Charter of the Ship Eyckenboom  
 1663. Voyage of the Gideon

## Slavery and the Slave Trade Built New Amsterdam and New Netherland

### Sources:

Donnan, E. (1969). *Documents Illustrative Of The History Of The Slave Trade To America, V. III, New England And The Middle Colonies* (New York: Octagon Books).

Katz, W. (1997). *Black Legacy, A History of New York's African Americans*. New York: Atheneum Books, 1-15.

New York State Freedom Trail Commission (2001). "The Freedom Quest in New York State," *Social Science Docket* (2001, Summer-Fall), 19-22.

The Dutch New Netherland colony claimed territory that included all or part of the current states of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Delaware, and Maryland and the West Indian island of Curaçao. Jan Rodriguez was a free Black sailor working for Dutch merchants. In 1612, he was left behind on Manhattan Island to establish trade with the local native population. Rodriguez was the New York region's first known non-native resident.

In 1625, the Dutch West India Company established the village of New Amsterdam on Manhattan Island. The first people of African ancestry in the colony were eleven men who arrived in 1626. They had Portuguese names and were probably captured from either Portuguese or Spanish ships. These men worked for the company and were assigned to clear land, plant and harvest crops, build houses, roads, bridges and fortifications. Two years later, three enslaved Angola women were brought into the colony. At the time, New Amsterdam was little more than a muddy village with thirty wooden houses and a population of less than two hundred people.

During Dutch colonial rule enslaved Africans fortified a wall along a path that would later be known as Wall Street, constructed a road to Haarlem on the northern end of Manhattan Island, helped build Fort Orange in what is now Albany, and worked on farms in the Hudson River Valley. They were so important to the economic development of the Dutch colony that officials passed a series of laws in 1640, 1648 and 1658 to prevent escape and in 1646, the Dutch West India Company promised to provide "as many Negroes" to the colonists as they were "willing to purchase at a fair price." A 1642 Dutch print with the heading "Nieu Amsterdam" shows two large European settlers (a man and a woman) in the foreground, with Africans behind and below, doing the physical labor needed to make the colony economically successful.

In 1647, Peter Stuyvesant, became the Director General of New Netherland. Stuyvesant increased the number of enslaved Africans in the colony and became the largest owner of enslaved African in New Netherland. In 1660, he supervised what was probably Manhattan's first public auction of human beings. The largest cargo of enslaved Africans, 290 people, arrived in New Amsterdam in 1664 on the *Gideon*, just before the colony was taken over by the British.

Despite these developments, the legal and social status of the first enslaved Africans was not completely resolved while the territory remained under Dutch control. Some Africans were welcomed into the Reformed Church (Protestant) where they were offered education and religious training and allowed to marry and baptize their children. In 1644, eleven enslaved African men petitioned the local government and obtained their freedom in exchange for the promise to pay an annual tax in produce. They each received the title to land on the outskirts of the colony where they would be a buffer against attack from native forces. Black farmers soon owned a two-mile long strip of land from what is now Canal Street to 34th Street in Manhattan. One of the emancipated Africans, Jan Francisco, became a founder of Boswyck (Bushwick) in Brooklyn. – Alan Singer



**Bust of Peter Stuyvesant at the Church of St. Mark's-in-the-Bowery.**

**AIM: What was life like for Africans in the New Amsterdam colony?**

**BACKGROUND:** In 1625, the Dutch West India Company established the village of New Amsterdam on Manhattan Island. The first people of African ancestry in the colony were eleven men who arrived in 1626. They had Portuguese names and were probably captured from either Portuguese or Spanish ships. These men worked for the company and were assigned to clear land, plant and harvest crops, build houses, roads, bridges and fortifications. Two years later, three enslaved Angola women were brought into the colony. At the time, New Amsterdam was little more than a muddy village with thirty wooden houses and a population of less than two hundred people. During Dutch colonial rule enslaved Africans fortified a wall along a path that would later be known as Wall Street, constructed a road to Haarlem on the northern end of Manhattan Island, helped build Fort Orange in what is now Albany, and worked on farms in the Hudson River Valley. They were so important to the economic development of the Dutch colony that officials passed a series of laws in 1640, 1648 and 1658 to prevent escape and in 1646, the Dutch West India Company promised to provide “as many Negroes” to the colonists as they were “willing to purchase at a fair price.” A 1642 Dutch print with the heading “Nieuw Amsterdam” shows two large European settlers (a man and a woman) in the foreground, with Africans behind and below, doing the physical labor needed to make the colony economically successful. Note: While the ad for a slave sale actually comes from the British colonial period but it is illustrative of the time.

**DO NOW:** Review instructions for the History-Mystery.

**MOTIVATION:** Brainstorm prior student knowledge about slavery in the New World.

**ACTIVITIES:** Students will use the documents in this “History-Mystery” to discover what life was like for Africans in the New Amsterdam colony.

**KEY QUESTIONS:** What was the role of the Dutch colonial government in regulating slavery? What rights, if any, were there for Africans in the New Amsterdam colony?

**SUMMARY QUESTION:** Based on your research, how were Africans treated in the Dutch New Amsterdam colony?

**HOMEWORK:** Using the information gathered from the history mystery, students create an encyclopedia entry on the African American Experience in the Dutch New Amsterdam Colony.

**APPLICATION:** Was the way slavery was practiced in the Dutch New Amsterdam colony similar to or different from slavery in other places throughout the world?

Lesson developed by Douglas Cioffi

### History-Mystery: What was life like for Africans in the New Amsterdam colony?

#### Slave Sale Advertisement (1669)

Source: [http://www.pbs.org/wnet/newyork/laic/episode1/topic3/e1\\_t3\\_s2-ls.html](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/newyork/laic/episode1/topic3/e1_t3_s2-ls.html)



1. How many enslaved Africans arrived on this ship?
2. What added value to the shipment?

#### Slave Auction (1655)

Source: [http://www.pbs.org/wnet/newyork/laic/episode1/topic3/e1\\_t3\\_s2-ls.html](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/newyork/laic/episode1/topic3/e1_t3_s2-ls.html)



1. Describe what is happening in the picture.
2. How do you think the African felt? Why?

### Slavery at Philipsburg Manor

Source: [www.hudsonvalley.org/web/phil-main.html](http://www.hudsonvalley.org/web/phil-main.html)

In 1624, the Dutch West India Company (DWIC) began settling the colony of New Netherland which eventually came to encompass the areas now known as New York and New Jersey as well as parts of Delaware and Connecticut. The Dutch had acquired the land from Native Americans through purchase as well as through confiscation. This colony was set up as a business, and the main goal was for the DWIC to profit from trading beaver pelts and other goods from America with Europe. In 1625, the Dutch brought the first group of eleven enslaved male Africans to New Amsterdam (Manhattan Island) in order to build and support the infrastructure (e.g. roads, houses, forts) of the new colony. By the 1590s, the Dutch were involved in the slave trade, so their use of slave labor in developing this new enterprise was not unexpected.

Despite these efforts at settlement, the population of the colony did not grow enough to support a trading post outside of the Netherlands. Because of this labor shortage, the DWIC decided to bring more enslaved Africans to New Netherland. By the 1660s, the DWIC, rather than any individual, was the largest slaveholder in New Amsterdam.

Peter Stuyvesant, Director General of New Netherland from 1647 to 1664, was hired by the DWIC to impose order on the loosely structured colony. Under Stuyvesant's direction, enslaved Africans labored as caulkers, blacksmiths, bricklayers and masons to make improvements to the slow-growing colony. In some cases, the enslaved were given "half-freedom," meaning when their labor was not needed and in order to cut expenses for the company, they would be given their freedom. However, this freedom was contingent on the fact that they were bound to provide labor upon demand. (However, their children were not born free.)

Alongside enslaved Africans were free men and women of African descent -- individuals who had purchased or otherwise gained their freedom. Free blacks owned land, married in the Dutch Reformed Church, and passed along inheritances to their children. Though few in number, the free blacks formed a critical part of the black community, providing the enslaved population with support as well as proof that freedom was attainable.

### Questions

1. What European country first settled the Hudson River valley?
2. Why were the first enslaved Africans brought to Manhattan island?
3. What is meant by “half-freedom”?
4. What role did free Blacks play in New Amsterdam?

### D. 1657-1664. Documenting Slavery and Freedom in Colonial New Amsterdam (Donnan)

**Source:** Burrows, E. and Wallace, M. (1999). *Gotham, A History of New York City to 1898*. NY: Oxford, 55-56.

Towards the end of Dutch control over New Amsterdam (New York), most Africans in the colony continued to be owned and work for the Dutch West Indies Company. The governor of the colony, Peter Stuyvesant and company officials in the Netherlands corresponded about the need for additional labor and the importing of more enslaved Africans. Because of the labor shortages, Africans gained access to skilled trades. Other Africans worked as field labor or as domestic servants. Stuyvesant, who owned forty slaves, was the largest private slave owner. Many enslaved Africans now lived and worked on small farms across the East River in Brooklyn. During this period, the practice of offering Africans limited or half-freedom continued.

### Questions

1. Who was the governor of New Amsterdam?
2. What role did he play in bringing slavery to New Amsterdam?

### E. 1664. Director Stuyvesant To The Directors At Amsterdam.

**Source:** Elizabeth Donnan, *Documents Illustrative Of The History Of The Slave Trade To America*.

... This day fortnight arrived here your Honors' Vessel, the Musch [Sparrow], with forty head of slaves, sent to us by Vice Director Beck to procure provisions and all sorts of timber work, fix ox carts and a new rosmill. The negroes and negresses have all arrived safely and in health, but were, on an average, quite old, and as the skipper alleges, rejected by the Spaniards. The product of the greater part appears by the accompanying account of the public vendue. They would have brought more, had they not been so old. Five of the negro women, who were, in our opinion, unsalable, have been kept back and remain unsold. In like manner, six negroes also, to help to cut the required timber and to perform some other necessary work for the honorable company. 10 June, 1664.

### Questions

1. Why were some enslaved Africans not sold?
2. What kind of work did they do?

### F. 1629-1655. New Amsterdam and the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade

**Source:** Burrows, E. and Wallace, M. (1999). *Gotham, A History of New York City to 1898*. NY: Oxford, 31-33; Hodges, G. (1999). *Root & Branch, African Americans in New York & East Jersey, 1613-1863*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 13-33.

While there are few remaining details, slavery was probably introduced into New Amsterdam soon after its founding by the Dutch West Indies Company in 1624. In either 1625 or 1626, eleven “bondsmen” were brought to the colony, including the Africans Paulo d’ Angola, Simon Congo, Anthony Portuguese and John Francisco. Three African women from Angola were taken to New Amsterdam in 1628. In 1635, the Dutch West Indies company hired a special overseer to supervise the work of the “negroes belonging to the company.” Among other tasks, the men repaired the fort on the foot of Manhattan Island and cleared forest land for cultivation. Separate slave quarters were reportedly established along the East River north of the main settlement.

The legal and social status of the enslaved Africans was originally not clearly defined. They followed the same laws as the White population, could own property and testify in court, bear arms in emergencies, attend church and

marry. By 1643, the Dutch West Indies Company recognized land claims by Africans in the area on Bowery Road just north of the main settlement. Records survive of 1641 weddings where Anthony van Angola married Catalina van Angola and Lucie d'Angola wed Laurens van Angola.

On the other hand, a 1638 ordinance banned sexual relations between the White population and “heathens, blacks, or other persons” and company policy excluded Africans from skilled trades. In 1644, a group of African men petitioned the Dutch West Indies Company for emancipation and were granted partial or “half-freedom.” The men and their wives were freed and received leases on land on condition that they pay the company an annual tribute in farm goods and continued to work for the company when their labor was required. Their children, however, remained enslaved. Many of the families in this group settled in farms around the periphery of the main settlement where they could act as a barrier between the European community and potentially hostile native people.

The leadership of the Dutch colony clearly recognized the value of the African population. In 1644, Governor Willem Kieft argued that “Negroes would accomplish more work for their masters and at less expence, than farm servants, who must be bribed to go thither by a great deal of money and promises.” The direct trade in slaves between the New Amsterdam colony and Africa began in 1655 with the arrival of a ship with 300 enslaved Africans. By 1664, the African population of the Dutch colony was about 800 people or ten percent of the total population of the colony. In New Amsterdam, 375 Africans made up about a fourth of the settlement's total population. A 1664 tax list for New Amsterdam showed that approximately one out of eight citizens of the colony owned enslaved Africans with a number of large plantations, including ones owned by Captain John Lawrence in Hempstead and by Captain Thomas Willet's in what would become Queens County.

### Questions

1. When was slavery introduced into New Amsterdam?
2. How did the legal status of enslaved Africans change?
3. How large was the African population of New Amsterdam?
4. In your opinion, why was slavery crucial to the development of the colony?

### G. 1643-1664. Black Landowners in Manhattan's “Land of the Blacks”

Source: Howard Dodson et al., ed. (2000). *The Black New Yorkers*. NY: Wiley, 23.

Landowner	Date Received	Landowner	Date Received
Catalina Anthony (widow of Jochem)	July 13, 1643	Anna D'Angola (widow of Andries)	Feb. 8, 1647
Domingo Anthony	July 13, 1643	Francisco D'Angola	March 25, 1647
Cleyn (Little) Manuel	Dec. 1643	Anthony Congo	March 26, 1647
Manuel Gerrit de Reus	Dec. 1643	Bastiaen Negro	March 26, 1647
Manuel Trumpeter	Dec. 12, 1643	Jan Negro	March 26, 1647
Marycke (widow of Lawrence)	Dec. 12, 1643	Manuel the Spaniard	Jan. 18, 1651
Gracia D'Angola	Dec. 15, 1644	Mathias Anthony	Dec. 1, 1655
Simon Congo	Dec. 15, 1644	Domingo Angola	Dec. 2, 1658
Jan Francisco	Dec. 15, 1644	Claes Negro	Dec. 2, 1658
Pieter San Tomé	Dec. 15, 1644	Assento Angola	Dec. 2, 1658
Manuel Groot (Big Manuel)	Dec. 21, 1644	Francisco Cartagena	Dec. 2, 1658
Cleyn (Little) Anthony	Dec. 30, 1644	Anthony of the Bowery	1658
Paulo D'Angola	Dec. 30, 1644	Anthony the blind negro	1658
Anthony Portuguese	Sept. 5, 1645	Manuel Sanders	1662

### Questions

1. What do we learn about these people from their names?
2. In your opinion, why did many receive land on the same day?
3. In your opinion, why is it important to know that Africans in New Amsterdam owned land?

**AIM:** What was life like for enslaved Africans during the colonial era?

**BACKGROUND:** In 1625, the Dutch West India Company established the village of New Amsterdam on Manhattan Island. The first people of African ancestry in the colony were eleven men who arrived in 1626. They had Portuguese names and were probably captured from either Portuguese or Spanish ships. These men worked for the company and were assigned to clear land, plant and harvest crops, build houses, roads, bridges and fortifications. A 1642 Dutch print with the heading “Nieu Amsterdam” shows two large European settlers (a man and a woman) in the foreground, with Africans behind and below, doing the physical labor needed to make the colony economically successful. The Dutch New Netherland colony came under British control in 1664. Part of the colony and a major settlement were renamed New York in honor of James II, the Duke of York. James was a major shareholder of the Royal African Company, which held a royal monopoly on the British slave trade. With the British in power, slave trading vessels were granted port privileges and warehouse priorities and a slave market was established on Wall Street near the East River docks. Under British rule, the status of enslaved Africans was codified and their lives became increasingly more regulated.

**DO NOW:** Look at the four images and describe what you think is happening in each image.

**MOTIVATION:** Explain rules for the African Burial Ground writing contest. Examine sample student work.

**ACTIVITIES:**

Write a paragraph describing each image.

Use the image and your paragraphs to write either a story, poem or “rap” about slavery in colonial New Amsterdam and New York.

**KEY QUESTIONS:**

What roles did enslaved Africans have in building New Amsterdam?

Why were enslaved Africans kept separate from Whites even after death?

**SUMMARY QUESTIONS:** What do these images tell us about the experience of enslaved Africans in New Amsterdam and New York?

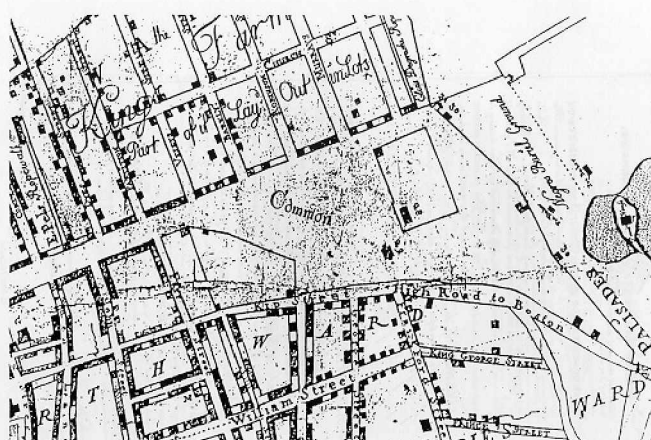
**FOLLOW-UP:** The New York African American Burial Ground sponsors an annual writing competition for students. The theme for the contest is the African presence in colonial New York City. Poems should be 150 words or less. Students should use the pictures on the activity sheet to help them write their poems. It is okay to be angry about images. To learn more about the contest, contact its sponsors at: (212)377-2001 or <http://www.africanburialground.com>.

## Images of Slavery in Colonial New Amsterdam and New York



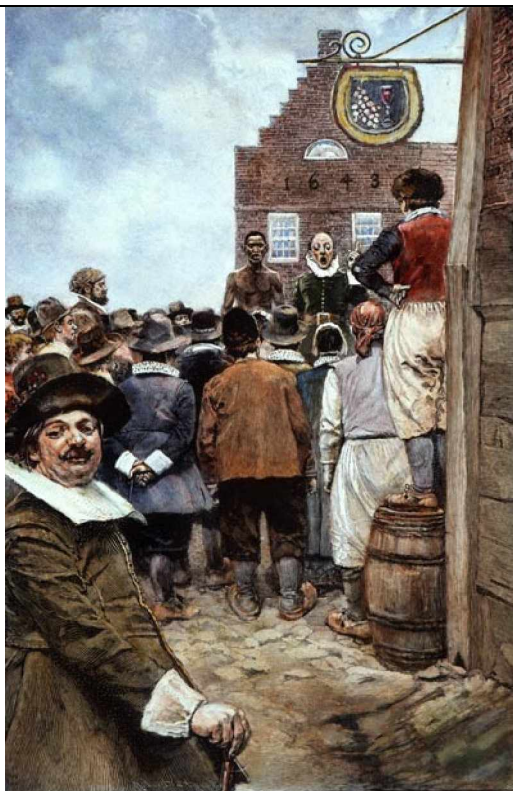
Figure 1. "Neu Amsterdam" is the first detailed print depicting Dutch New York, circa 1642. (From I. N. Phelps Stokes, *The Iconography of Manhattan Island*, Volume 1, plate 5, Robert H. Dodd, 1916.)

This woodcut from 17th century New Amsterdam shows a group of enslaved Africans doing the work of the city.

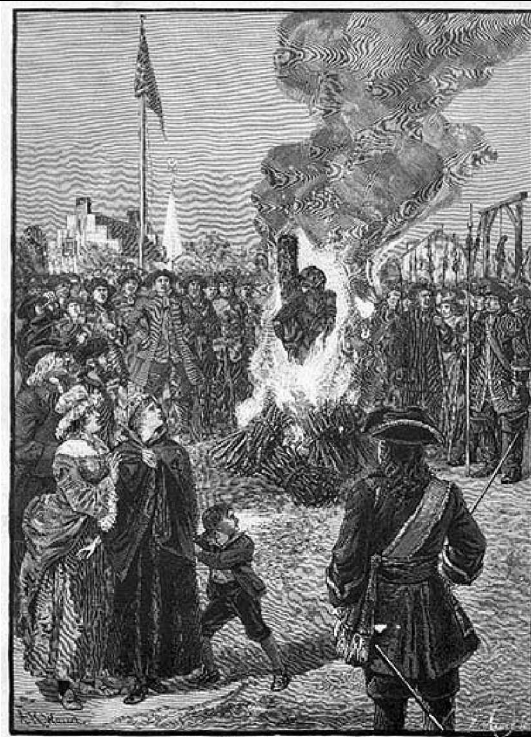


Maerschalk Map dated 1755. (From I. N. Phelps Stokes, *The Iconography of Manhattan Island*, Volume 1, plate 34, Robert H. Dodd, 1916.)

This map from 1755 shows the African American Burial ground in lower Manhattan. It is outside the city walls because Africans could not be buried inside the city limits.



This painting shows the sale of an enslaved African in 1655 at the Wall Street slave market.



EXECUTING NEGROES IN NEW YORK.

New Yorkers feared a slave rebellion. In 1741 they executed enslaved Africans suspected of plotting a slave rebellion. They were burned alive.

### Sample Student Work

**Slavery in Colonial New York** by Harrison Chicas  
Turtlehook Middle School, Uniondale, NY  
Teacher: Adeola Tella

Your heart beats fast  
As you run across the field  
You look at the sky  
Hoping it is not real  
You're caught in a corner  
Fighting in a chain  
They put you in a cage  
And take away your fame  
You're in the middle  
As other blacks stare at you  
You think it's a dream  
Or is it really true  
You are put on a ship  
Chained with others  
As you think of your parents  
Your sisters, your brothers  
That's slavery.  
  
Africans brought to this country  
Whipped, bounded, and starved

Not knowing what's free  
That's slavery.  
  
After two months  
You arrive at Wall Street  
Whites check out your face, hair, arm and feet  
You're sold to a man  
A man very strange  
He looks at you  
And gives you a name  
Everyday you work harder  
You wish you were further  
Wish you were better and smarter  
But you're a slave  
Months pass, March, April, and May  
And what you get in return is being fed  
But you prefer to be dead  
That's slavery.  
  
Africans brought to this country  
Whipped, bounded, starved  
Not knowing what's free  
That's slavery.

**So Long** by Charlycia Strain  
Law, Government and Community Service Magnet  
High School, Cambria Heights, Queens  
Teacher: Michael Pezone

We were running, out of breath, dying of hunger and thirst. I saw her and stopped for her, picked her up and keep running. I could hear them coming closer and closer. My heart was pounding like village drums. I turn to put her down, I told her "I'll be back". I tell her not to worry I promise I'll come back. I start running again, my legs ache, my head pounds. I feel is if I she'll die.

There I saw him, he saw me. Soon they all came. I heard one say, "Hang him we must show what will happen". They tied me, I fought, bite, scratched. I bleed. I now have taste of blood in my mouth and a bleeding wound on my legs. They walk me through a crowd hitting and poking at me. They tie me to a wooden pole.

I stand there, my heart aches, I have butterflies in my tummy as if I'm to be married. I don't know what to think, all I know is I will die tonight. This is my end I should have done more. I should have fought harder. I shouldn't have tried.

But then I thought if I she'll die this is the way to die, the reason to die. Dieting to be free, to be human, to have a chance.

I look up and I knew he would be the one, the one to end my life. The powerful man just the one to do it. A stick in his hand, with a gun and sword by his waist. He is walking up slow now and he says "ANY LAST WORDS NIGGER". I look at him and the crowd and scream "IT WILL ALL CHANGE SOMEDAY FREEDOM". He throws the flame on my flesh. I let out a scream, as well I should. It felt like thousands of hot needles poking at my flesh. The fire paces my knees now and I can no longer feel the bottom.

With my last words I scream "the girl." Tears run down my face. I cried not from the pain but because I made a promise that wasn't being kept. Is she scared, heavens oh how I'm sorry. God please save her. The flames now reach my neck, I look down at the man and next to him is the little girl. My heart dropped. I soon felt nothing; I think that's when I died.

That's how it happened. This is how you see it. "In 1741 they executed enslaved Africans suspected of plotting a slave rebellion. They were burned alive."

**THINK ABOUT IT.**