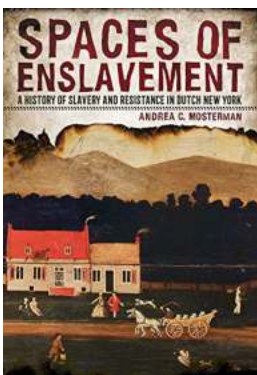


# Uncovering the Untold Stories: History of Slavery and Resistance in Dutch New York

In the popular narratives of American history, the focus on slavery largely centers around the Southern states. However, the untold stories of slavery and resistance in Dutch New York reveal a historical reality that is often overlooked.

The Dutch colonization of North America began in the early 17th century when the Dutch West India Company established the colony of New Netherland. At first, the colonists primarily engaged in fur trading, but the colony soon expanded its economic activities, including the use of enslaved Africans to the region.

Slavery in Dutch New York differed from the chattel slavery system that developed in the Southern colonies later on. In the early years, slaves in New Netherland had some legal rights and the ability to own property. These rights, however, gradually eroded over time as the colony's economy became increasingly dependent on plantation agriculture.



## Spaces of Enslavement: A History of Slavery and Resistance in Dutch New York (New Netherland Institute Studies) by Andrea C. Mosterman (Kindle Edition)

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 30047 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 236 pages



Despite the presence of slavery, there were numerous instances of resistance and resilience among the enslaved population in Dutch New York. From small acts of defiance to organized revolts, these stories provide a crucial counter-narrative to the dominant accounts of slavery in America.

One of the most well-known acts of resistance is the 1712 New York Slave Revolt. On April 6th, a group of enslaved Africans set fire to a building in Manhattan, where their captors resided. The revolt resulted in the death of several white colonists and the execution of 21 enslaved Africans. This event challenged the power dynamics of the colonial society and served as a powerful reminder of the resilience of the enslaved population.

Another prominent figure in the history of slavery and resistance in Dutch New York is Venture Smith. Born in Africa and brought to New York as a slave, Smith eventually gained his freedom and became an active participant in the abolitionist movement. His memoir, "A Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Venture, a Native of Africa", provides valuable insights into the experiences of enslaved Africans in Dutch New York.

The historical records also shed light on lesser-known stories of resistance, such as the formation of Maroon communities. These were self-sustaining communities comprised of escaped slaves who sought refuge and freedom in the uncharted territories of the region. These communities developed their own political and social structures, existing as a testament to the determination and resourcefulness of the enslaved individuals.

The legacy of slavery in Dutch New York can still be traced in the city's streets and landmarks. For instance, Wall Street, one of the most iconic financial districts in the world, takes its name from the wall that once marked the boundary of New Amsterdam. This wall served as a means to keep enslaved Africans from escaping and to segregate the population along racial lines.

Efforts to uncover and acknowledge the history of slavery in Dutch New York have been gaining momentum in recent years. The New Netherland Institute, an organization dedicated to promoting the study of the Dutch colonial experience in America, has played a crucial role in these endeavors.

The New Netherland Institute has systematically collected and preserved historical documents related to New Netherland, including those pertaining to slavery and resistance. By digitizing these records, they have made significant strides in making this history accessible to a wider audience.

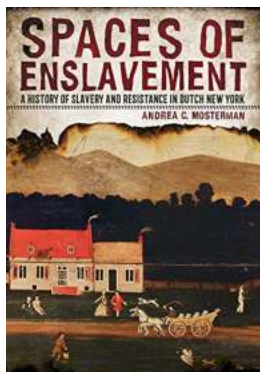
Furthermore, the organization has been actively engaging with scholars, educators, and communities to shed light on this lesser-known aspect of American history. Through seminars, workshops, and public programs, they have been able to connect with individuals who want to learn more about this significant chapter in Dutch New York's past.

Understanding and acknowledging the history of slavery and resistance in Dutch New York is crucial for a comprehensive understanding of the American experience. By shedding light on these overlooked stories, we can challenge the dominant narratives and highlight the resilience and agency of enslaved Africans.

The journey towards uncovering these untold stories is ongoing, but organizations like the New Netherland Institute are leading the way. By continuing to investigate and share these hidden histories, we can ensure that the

experiences and struggles of those who were enslaved in Dutch New York are remembered and honored.

So, let us delve deeper into the history of slavery and resistance in Dutch New York, and together, rewrite the narratives that have been overlooked for far too long.



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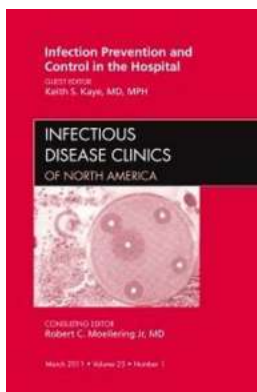
In *Spaces of Enslavement*, Andrea C. Mosterman addresses the persistent myth that the colonial Dutch system of slavery was more humane. Investigating practices of enslavement in New Netherland and then in New York, Mosterman shows that these ways of racialized spatial control held much in common with the southern plantation societies.

In the 1620s, Dutch colonial settlers brought slavery to the banks of the Hudson River and founded communities from New Amsterdam in the south to Beverwijck near the terminus of the navigable river. When Dutch power in North America collapsed and the colony came under English control in 1664, Dutch descendants

continued to rely on enslaved labor. Until 1827, when slavery was abolished in New York State, slavery expanded in the region, with all free New Yorkers benefitting from that servitude.

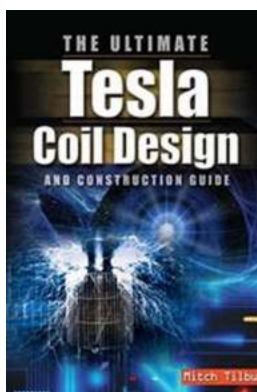
Mosterman describes how the movements of enslaved persons were controlled in homes and in public spaces such as workshops, courts, and churches. She addresses how enslaved people responded to regimes of control by escaping from or modifying these spaces so as to expand their activities within them. Through a close analysis of homes, churches, and public spaces, Mosterman shows that, over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the region's Dutch communities were engaged in a daily struggle with Black New Yorkers who found ways to claim freedom and resist oppression.

Spaces of Enslavement writes a critical and overdue chapter on the place of slavery and resistance in the colony and young state of New York.



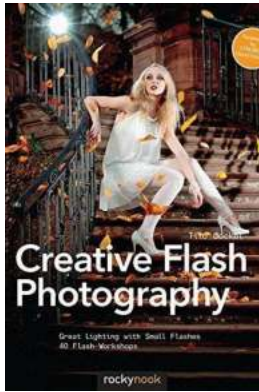
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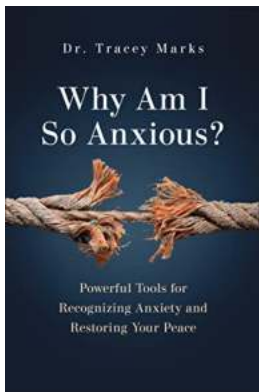
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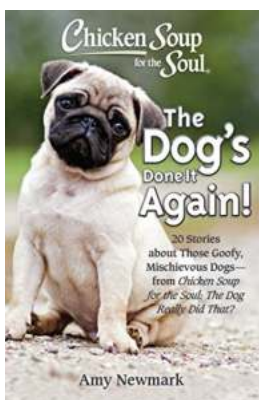
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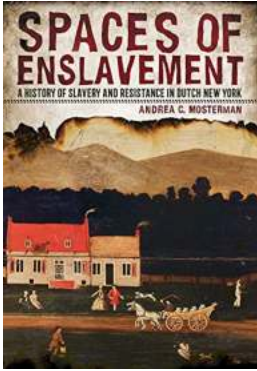
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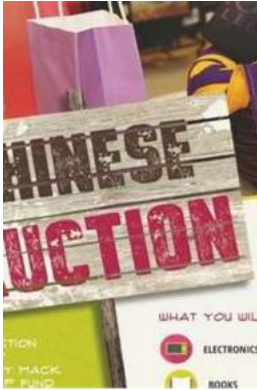
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