



THE PUTNAM VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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OUR AMERICAN HISTORY
A FREE PROGRAM SERIES - OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Understanding Slavery in New Netherland and Colonial New York



With
Dennis Maika
Senior Historian & Education Director,
the New Netherland Institute
Saturday, May 13, 2017 at 10:00 am

When Americans think of slavery, they typically conjure up images of a large Southern plantation in the decades before the Civil War. Most New Yorkers, then, are surprised to learn that slavery existed in their state for almost as long as it survived in the southern United States. Slavery in New York began with the arrival of enslaved Africans in Manhattan in the 1620s and lasted until all slaves were formally made free in 1827. The experiences of enslaved people and the institution of slavery changed significantly over the course of 200 years, revealing a very different, distinct, but no less sad history than what evolved in the American south.

What helped make New York slavery distinctive was its origins in the Dutch New Netherland period, which has been much misunderstood and mischaracterized. New research, including investigation into seventeenth-century Dutch sources, has provided a more accurate understanding of the experiences of both the enslaved and the enslaver. This presentation will focus on the origins of slavery in 17th century New Netherland and the Hudson Valley, and will provide an overview of the final century before the official end of slavery.



Dennis Maika

Dennis J. Maika, Senior Historian and Education Director at the New Netherland Institute, received his Ph.D. in History from New York University; his dissertation was awarded the Hendricks Manuscript Prize. He is a Fellow of the Holland Society of New York, the New Netherland Institute, the New York Academy of History, and was the Senior Scholar in Residence at the New Netherland Research Center (2012-2013). As a historian of colonial New York, he has served as a consultant for local history and education projects and has written numerous articles and papers. He is currently working on a book about Manhattan merchants and their city in the Dutch and English periods of seventeenth-century New York history. As a professional educator, he taught History and Psychology at the high school and college levels for several decades.



This FREE program will be held at the Putnam Valley Free Library
30 Oscawana Lake Road ♦ Putnam Valley, NY 10579 at 10:00 am